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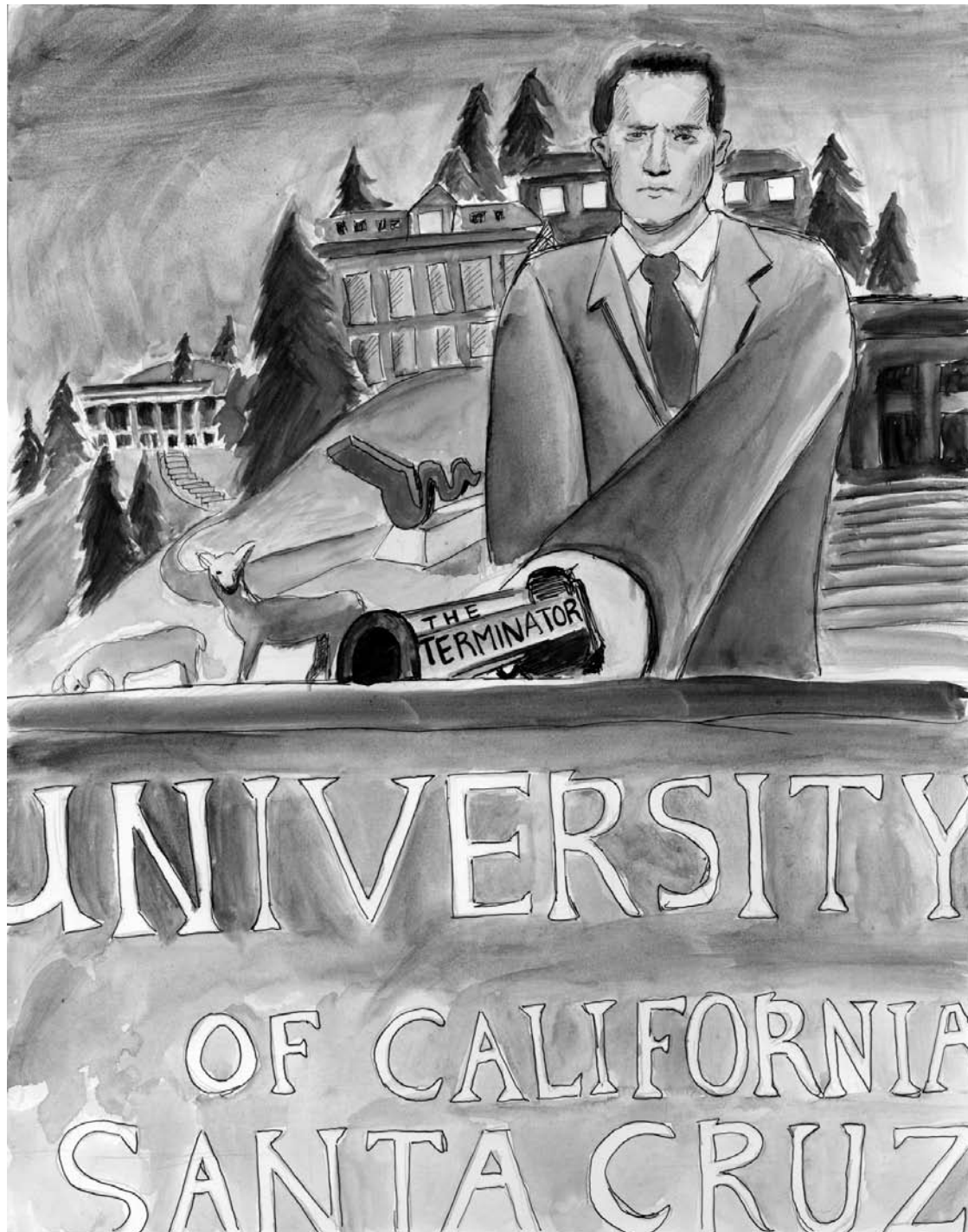
BUDGET CUTS

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One Man's Trash...

The freegan lifestyle you didn't know about

The Governor's "Year of Education"



Annie Cantwell | CHP

California's looming budget cuts threaten public education

Daniel Zarchy & Katia Protsenko
Co-Managing Editors

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Just when you thought things couldn't get worse, they did.

As California faces a \$14.5 billion budget gap, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has announced 10-percent reductions for all general fund departments and programs, including education.

Schwarzenegger proposed the new state budget on Jan. 10, declaring, "We must rise to the challenge and fix California's budget system once and for all."

Schwarzenegger reasoned the severity of across-the-board cuts by saying, "We have to be disciplined this year and look at it as an opportunity to solve this problem."

Given the turbulent history of California's public education system, many don't see these cuts as necessary, but rather just another blow to a system that's already struggling.

"It can't be good news. There's just no ques-

tion about it. It's not good for any UC system," said Quentin Williams, an earth and planetary science professor and chair of the UC Santa Cruz Academic Senate. "There are sort of three ways to make cuts work. Either [you] do less, you do more—in the sense that you do more things that make money for the campus—or you charge more. As far as individual programs, I don't know that [any will be cut] at the moment. But this will be a topic of really active discussion, which has only just started: how we can cut a budget that's already been cut several times in the last 15 years."

In the 1960s, standardized test scores ranked the California public school system as one of the best in the country. The system received much of its funding from state property taxes. This changed in 1978, when the state electorate voted for Proposition 13, which lowered property tax by an average of 57 percent, squeezing out a significant amount

of funding for state education. Since then, California's K-12 education has dropped to the bottom of national rankings.

"The impending budget cuts will no doubt further undermine the public education system in California," said Rodney Ogawa, chair of the UCSC Education department. "The public education system in California has changed substantially over the past 3 decades. It went from being a relatively well-funded, high quality system to one that is chronically under funded and thus underperforming. Services to students have been cut-back over the past 30 years, despite efforts at educational reform."

With higher education, however, a separate public fund is divided amongst three tiers: community college, California State University and University of California, with the UC getting the biggest slice.

Those in higher education have worked to assure increased funding. January's cuts came just three years after the establishment of the Higher Education Compact, which guaranteed the UC to a budget increase of 4 percent per year. Another part of the compact was an agreement that the UC would not raise student fees by more than 10 per-

cent in a given year.

“What the governor did this year [is basically say], ‘I’m fully funding the compact [including the 4 percent increase], and then I’m cutting it 10 percent.’ We’re supposed to get a net increase every year, and the 10 percent ate up all of that and more,” said Williams, an earth and planetary science professor and chair of the UC Santa Cruz Academic Senate. “I actually think past budget cuts have really improved the efficiency of the campus. We’ve pared down and gotten a bit more efficient. But I look at [proposed] budget cuts, and I’m a little less worried with the present budget. We’ll figure out some way to make the budget work this year. I’m scared about next year. If we have this same conversation next year, it’s going to be even grimmer.”

UC spokesperson Ricardo Vázquez explained that UC estimates its loss by comparing the Regents’ budget proposal and the Governor’s latest budget outline. “If you look at those two numbers, the difference is about \$417 million,” he said.

Still, the Regents’ proposed budget is not set in stone, Vázquez explained. Both the UC administration and the Regents are engaged in discussions with the legislature and governor to minimize impact on the UC. Before the final state budget is released this summer, the California legislature will review the governor’s plan and make adjustments to it. Although the governor has suggested a 7.4-percent UC tuition increase, the final decision regarding the UC budget falls to the Regents.

While the Regents have not yet made any decisions, they have considered a variety of options, like eliminating compensation and salary increases for faculty and staff, raising student fees and increasing enrollment. “But all of these are very difficult decisions and in some cases very

painful decisions. That’s why at this point they have just discussed these options but taken no action,” Vasquez said.

Students on UC campuses, who are already paying top dollar for their educations, are in the process of fighting the cuts.

“Now is the time when the Regents should step it up, and start lobbying the legislators themselves,” said Hailey Snow, external vice chair of the UCSC Student Union Assembly (SUA). “It will be interesting to see how many of them get on the ground and get on the Hill and lobby the legislators to give us our money back.”

While UC President Robert Dynes has not been able to sway the Governor, he addressed the travesty of cuts to higher education in an official statement.

“This budget proposal will have serious impacts on our ability to deliver on our mission for our students and for the people of California,” Dynes said in his statement. “State funding for the university is not an expenditure but an investment – an investment that produces real returns through an educated workforce, a dynamic economy, job creation and new tax revenue.”

UCSC spokesperson Jim Burns echoed these sentiments.

“Cutting higher education seems shortsighted. UC officials have certainly discussed with the governor’s staff the impacts of cuts to the 10-campus University of California system,” Burns said. “And those discussions will continue. As was discussed at yesterday’s UC Board of Regents meeting, it’s imperative that we make the case for protecting higher education from these cuts. It is the belief of UC officials and the Regents that higher education trains the very people who will be needed to help stimulate California’s economy, thus increasing revenues to the state.”

Though funding cuts hurt many on a personal financial level, it’s hard to ignore the impact these cuts will have on the state.

California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jack O’Connell strongly opposed the governor’s cuts to primary and higher education, also citing the potential damage to the economy.

“At a time when California must make substantial investment in schools in order for our young people to survive and succeed in the global economy, the governor’s budget takes a giant step backward,” O’Connell wrote in a Jan. 10 press release. “I fear that the ‘year of education’ will become the year of education evisceration. This budget will not help us close the achievement gap that threatens the futures of our students and our state. It will not help us effectively prepare the well-skilled workforce our state desperately needs to remain competitive.”

Although O’Connell refers to the overall education system, his office is responsible for primary education; he declined to comment funding for specifically higher education funding.

With the actual repercussions of these cuts still uncertain, the administration may have to resort to an increase in student fees. This puts the university in a very awkward position, Williams said.

“Does the university [continue to] adhere to the compact after it’s been cut by the governor?” Williams questioned. “I don’t think [fees] will stay the same, and they’re not going to drop.”

According to Snow, \$331 million was cut from the UC system, and fees can potentially increase by 30 percent. “For the average student, that’s not manageable,” she said. “If the cost of our education is as much as a private school, there’s no use going to a

public school anymore. Student fees have gone up between 7 to 9 percent in past years, and that was before these huge cuts. We had a board of director’s meeting two weeks ago, and after speaking with members of the legislature, if none of the funding is restored to the budget, the Regents would have to increase fees by 30 percent. That’s the number the Regents are going with.”

Burns emphasized that if there are cuts, the administration will take steps to soften the blow to students.

“While fees may have to be raised at a UC system-wide level in order to deal with a budgetary shortfall, UC people are always concerned about the impact raising fees can have on student access to a 10-campus system that was created to be affordable and accessible,” Burns said. “That’s why, when fees have been raised in the past, UC officials have also been careful to dedicate a portion of that revenue toward increasing the financial aid available to needy students.”

UCSC Assistant Director of Financial Aid Patrick Register stressed this point, as well.

“Along with the Office of the President, the UCSC Financial Aid Office is monitoring the state budget situation closely,” Register said in an official statement to City on a Hill Press. “Although it is too early in the process to determine the impact to our campus, we are committed to maximizing the aid to our financially-needy students.”

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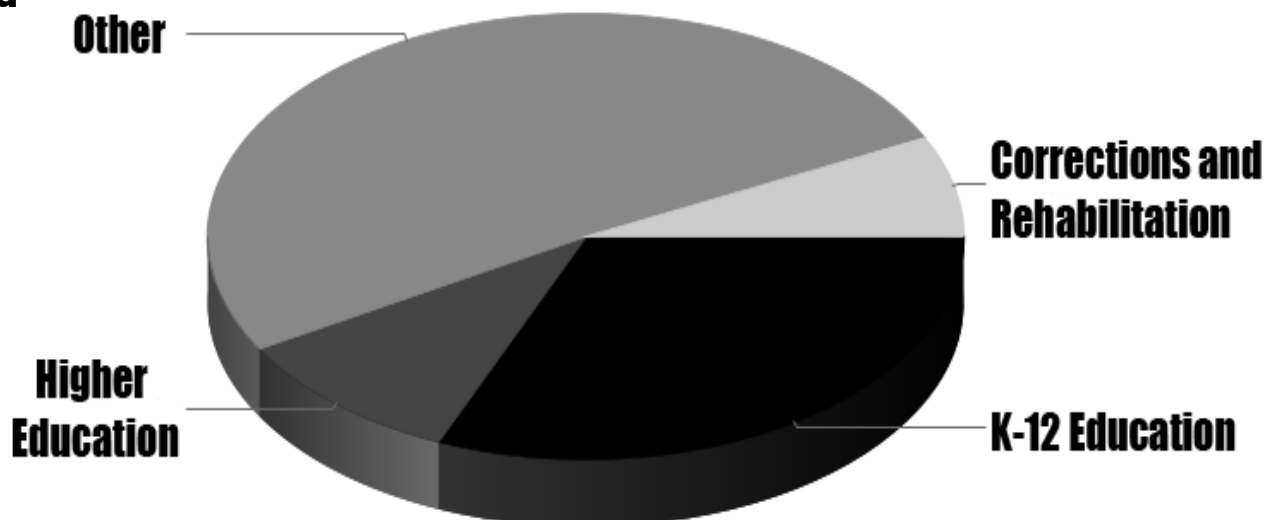
The Governor’s Proposed 2008-2009 Budget

In millions of dollars

K-12 Education (\$43,710): 31.0%

Higher Education (\$14,567): 10.3%

Corrections and Rehabilitation (\$10,290): 7.3%



Men's Tennis Season Starts a Little More Sluggish Than Usual

Former national champions take losses, optimistic about rest of season

Nicole Ramsey
Sports Reporter

The UC Santa Cruz men's tennis team was put to the test this weekend in a rough double header against UC Davis and Santa Clara University last Saturday that resulted in losses for the team. The Slugs, winners of last year's Division III National Championship, found themselves outside of their comfort zone with last weekend's losses after closing out so strongly last season.

"We were a bit disappointed," junior Colin Mark-Griffin said. "We had high expectations going into the match."

The Slugs struggled to defeat their opponents in a series of close matches, but came out with results of 5-1 against UC Davis, a DII school, and 1-2 against the DI Santa Clara University.

"It was a good way to start the season with these close matches," Coach Bob Hansen said. "We actually had a chance of winning."

In addition to the early losses for the team, the Slugs entered this season having lost one of the best players in the history of the program, Matt Seeberger, who graduated in the spring. However, that loss did not stop new and returning players from stepping up and playing exceptionally well throughout the team's early season matches.

Coach Hansen commented on the potential of the team's impressive freshman newcomers, including Silvio Chiba and Donald James. Hansen has seen both players putting in hard work so far this season and becoming great assets to the team. Chiba won both his matches over the weekend and is playing in the top six positions for the team.

The Slugs took this weekend's losses as a lesson and are working on keeping their focus and staying optimistic for their season.

"We were used to winning," Griffin said. "Losing this weekend was a real eye-opener for us."

Since winning the Division III championship, the expectations for the team are much higher. Instead of basking in the glory, the team is striving to rebuild and focus on making players more prepared to take on tougher competition.

"Our team had been a lot deeper this year," junior Jared Kamel said. "We have a pretty tough schedule as far as the



Phil Carter | CHP

UCSC men's tennis team during practice. Despite losing to UC Davis, the team is hopeful for the upcoming season.

teams we play, but it's not rare."

The team feels confident that it can bounce back from this bump in the road and keep moving toward that national championship title at the end of it.

"Playing hard in the lineup and being able to play at a higher level is a major precedence," Griffin said. "We know we have

the skills, we just need to buckle down."

The Slugs will take on Cal Poly San Luis Obispo on Sunday, Jan. 27, a team they defeated last year in a crucial match that advanced them closer to the championship.

"[Cal Poly is] much improved now and they are coming for us," Hansen said. "It will be an intense match."

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Slug Sports Schedule

Men's volleyball traveled to Milwaukee last weekend for the Milwaukee School of Engineering Invite where they faced many of their Division III rivals, including Carthage College. The Slugs came out of the tournament having won all four matches, and dropping only one game to Carthage, leaving their record at a solid 5-0 in DIII matches. The team will host its Alumni Match at 5 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 26 and then head to UC Irvine on Tuesday for a 7 p.m. match against the Division II school.

Men's basketball will travel to the state of Washington this week to face Whitman on Saturday at 6 p.m. and Whitworth on Sunday at 2 p.m.

The swimming/diving team will host the Walnut Creek Masters on Saturday at 11:30 a.m.

Women's tennis will travel this Sunday to take on Santa Clara at 12 p.m.

The men's tennis team will serve it up against a rival team, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, at 1 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 27.

Budget Cuts

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According to Acting Director of Admissions Michael McCawley, these budget cuts may act as a deterrent to prospective students who won't want

to enroll in a university with an uncertain price tag.

Because a lot of students will have had to make their admissions decisions by the time the budget is set, a tuition hike will be a "disincentive" at the beginning. "I feel for all of higher education. It sends the wrong message to prospective students," McCawley said. "A lot of politicians are very upset at students having to bear the brunt of this."

Jamal Atiba, third-year student and commissioner of academic affairs in the SUA, also feels that the quality of education will decrease, making it more difficult for students to progress through the UC system.

"It means bigger classes, but less faculty," Atiba said. "[With] less and less resources...[students] will have to stay longer because they can't get into the classes they need. We really start to see that management problems are a real issue."

Williams emphasized the role of citizens, as well as administrators, in rallying public support and securing stable funding for public education.

"As a system, they should be more proactive about supporting the university system," Williams said. "It's not like cuts are announced to the UC, and people are marching on the legislature. But if they say they're going to cut prisons, to turn prisoners loose, people get mad. It becomes a football, it gets on editorial pages. They go to their opponents, and say 'You're soft on crime.' I believe that for the last couple decades, they've been soft on higher education."

For Snow, it is also an issue that students need to be involved in.

"As SUA, we're going to be campaigning on this," Snow said. "We're going to be taking people to Sacramento monthly. I think this is a good opportunity for students to mobilize and get more involved."



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