



## **POLICY POSITION ON CSU's BUDGETARY RESPONSE TO THE PANDEMIC**

(Amended May 26, 2020)

Consistent with its commitments to inclusion, diversity and sustainability CSU should be a leader in adopting those best practices from around the country that reaffirm these values and prioritize its core educational mission as we face the impacts of the pandemic. The present statement is intended to address the budgetary issues currently under consideration. We invite the Board of Governors and the Administration to consult with the American Association of University Professors at Colorado State University, as well as all stakeholders, in crafting institutional responses to the pandemic crisis on the Fort Collins campus.<sup>1</sup>

1. The pandemic highlights the need for stronger shared governance, as outlined in AAUP – CSU's statement of March 2020.<sup>2</sup>
2. The bodies representing tenure track faculty and non-tenure track faculty, as well as those representing state classified, and administrative professionals – including both full-time and part-time employees- are an essential part of the Colorado State University community and must be involved in current deliberations.
3. Before its June 3-5 budget meeting the BOG should actively solicit the views of all affected CSU stakeholders, such as the NTF, whose contracts it has recently decided not to renew.
4. The crisis must be addressed at the level of the whole university. The burdens of addressing the crisis should not be devolved to colleges, departments and other units alone. Such a strategy will aggravate existing inequities and will run against the values and goals of CSU.

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<sup>1</sup> AAUP (May 2020). *Principles and Standards for the Covid-19 Crisis*. At: <https://www.aaup.org/aaup-principles-and-standards-covid-19-crisis>

<sup>2</sup> AAUP – CSU (March 2020). *The Goals and Means of Shared Governance in the Pursuit of Inclusive Excellence at CSU*. At: <https://aaupcsu.files.wordpress.com/2020/03/march2020newsletter.pdf>

5. Personnel reductions and tuition increases will have profound and long-term negative impacts. Not only will they damage the commitment of faculty, staff and students to CSU, but will also affect their retention.<sup>3</sup>
6. CSU should first address the deficit by halting new hires, discretionary spending, spending not central to our core educational mission and new construction projects<sup>4</sup>. Fair and early retirements for those eligible can provide an additional source of savings. Before any of these steps, however, CSU should take advantage of low interest rates to save money by refinancing its debt and, if still necessary, borrow.
7. If necessary, progressive furloughs and temporary salary reductions<sup>5</sup> are preferable to permanent salary reductions and must apply to all personnel above a minimum salary. Furlough-induced and temporary salary reductions should be calculated in a manner that is the least onerous for those affected.
8. CSU should specify a minimum salary, across the University, below which no furloughs or temporary salary reductions would apply. Categories covered should include, but not be limited to, graduate assistants, post-doctoral students, student employees, and non-FTE appointments.<sup>6</sup>
9. Contributions to retirement accounts as well as benefits should not be lowered as these are already modest at CSU.
10. CSU should support state level policies for unemployment and related benefits for university employees, whether FTE or not, while providing paid sick leave and health insurance during the interim period.
11. This crisis, as was the Great Recession, is particularly hard on non-FTE personnel, particularly adjuncts, and raises fundamental questions of equity and educational effectiveness. During the next 5-10 years CSU should deliberately, gradually and equitably convert non-FTE to FTE positions, with limited exceptions, such as GTAs and student employees.

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<sup>3</sup> Nelson Schwartz (May 24, 2020) "Employers choose pay cuts to avoid outright layoffs." *New York Times*. At <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/24/business/economy/coronavirus-pay-cuts.html?searchResultPosition=1>

<sup>4</sup> Harvard University (April 13, 2020). *Economic Impact of Covid – 19*. At: <https://www.harvard.edu/president/news/2020/economic-impact-covid-19>

<sup>5</sup> KU – The University of Kansas (2020). *Furlough and Temporary Salary Reduction Policy, Lawrence Campus*. At: <http://policy.ku.edu/provost/furlough-temp-salary-reduction-policy>

<sup>6</sup> WKOW (April 29, 2020). "UW-Madison to mandate staff furloughs over the next six months." At: <https://wkow.com/2020/04/29/uw-madison-to-mandate-staff-furloughs-over-the-next-six-months/>