

# Agenda for the California Student Movement





## PREAMBLE: "COMING OF AGE"

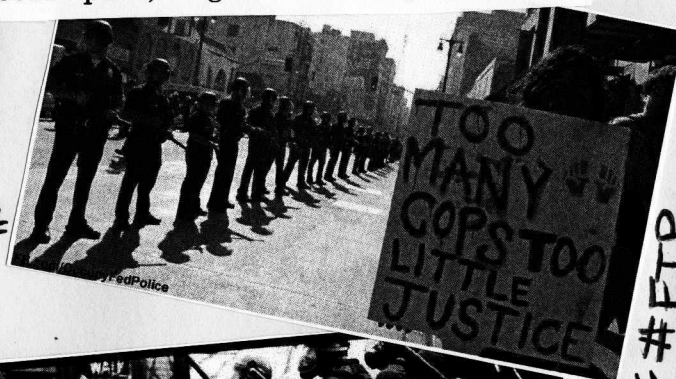
We are People living in the new millennium, bred in the modest comforts afforded to us by the technological revolution, housed now in colleges and universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we will inherit. When we were children we were led to believe that we lived in the most powerful nation on Earth, in whose society one found justice and equality for all, a government of, by and for the People—these American values we found good, principles by which we could live. Many of us matured in complacency as we acquiesced to the values of the American Dream. As we grew, however, our comfort was penetrated by events too troubling and disturbing to dismiss. The Los Angeles Uprising of 1992 taught us that American society still had not yet dealt with the color line. A collective amnesia exacerbated by a corporate owned, propaganda saturated media took hold of the People of this nation; lessons of the recent past, forgotten to the pages of history.

"IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL, THE NEWSPAPERS WILL HAVE YOU HATING THE PEOPLE WHO ARE BEING OPPRESSED, AND LOVING THE PEOPLE WHO ARE DOING THE OPPRESSING."  
-MALCOLM X

#WEAPONSOFFMASSDISTRACTION

As we came of age at the turn of the twenty-first century, we came to realize that the values we were taught to hold dear rang hollow in the lives of people of color and the poor throughout this country. The attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001 served as a reminder to our generation that despite America's military prowess, it was nonetheless vulnerable; Hurricane Katrina proved that our political system was apathetic to the plight of communities of color and the poor; while the 2008 Financial Bailout exposed where our government's and our elected official's loyalties and priorities truly were. We now live in an age of militarization, surveillance and over policing, in an age of injustice and unresponsiveness by a political system we have been taught to blindly and unquestionably comply with. We are a generation of educated debtors, faced with few prospects of employment and a bleak future not only for ourselves, but our children as well. We are the first generation to be less likely to achieve the same successes as our parents; to take on a debt to better our lives, only to find that the promises of

#MILITARIZATION



the "American Dream" were but a hollow dream. For young people of color, we are more likely to see the inside of a jail cell than the inside of a dorm room. We young people of color are more likely to receive a four-year prison sentence than a four-year college education.

#ENDPOLICEBRUTALITY

#PLP

#NOPEACE

#MILITARIZATION

#BLACKUNITY

#BROWNUNITY

## A CALL TO ACTION

#OURSTRUGGLESARE1

#OURVICTORIESARE1

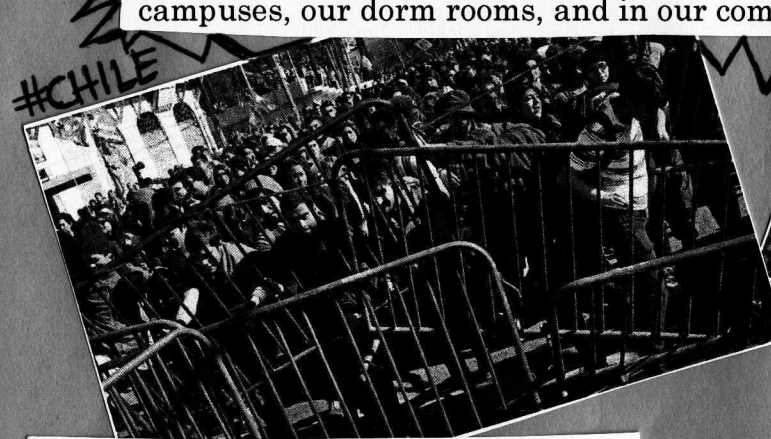
We have been consistently told by our elders and our leaders that if we participate in the formal political process and remain civil, that our grievances and demands would be met. Yet, we have come to find that our cries often fall on deaf ears. We have consistently been belittled and dehumanized by

AYOTZINAPA  
SOMOS TODOS

BLACK LIVES  
MATTER

paternalistic leaders whose interests are neither ours nor the People's. As our fellow brothers and sisters in Ferguson, Baltimore and Mexico—among other places—have come to discover, the formal political process has marginalized and disenfranchised us while its judicial system has criminalized us.

Our conclusion: we must build political power from the grassroots through alternative decision-making processes that are inclusive, intersectional, and cross-cultural, in our campuses, our dorm rooms, and in our communities.

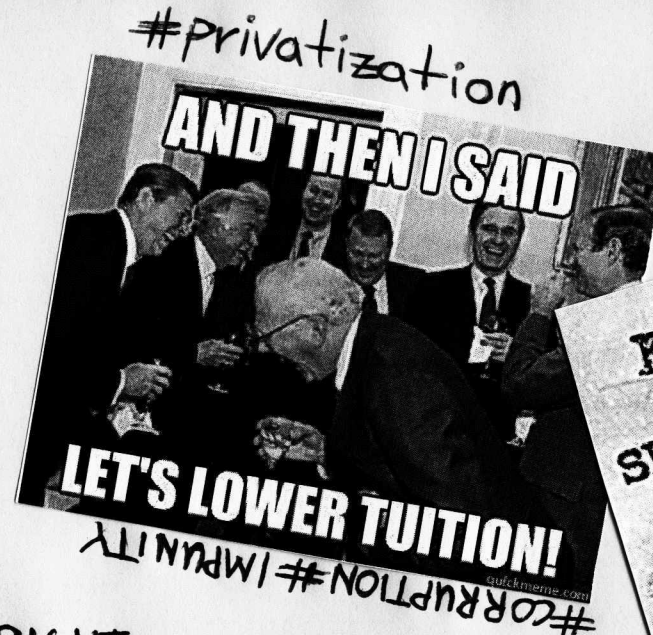
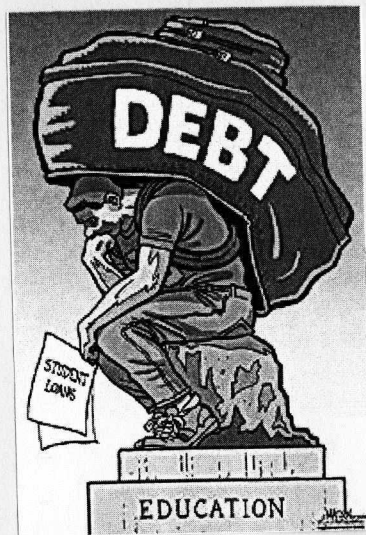


We believe that in order to secure our future and that of generations to come, we must push to divest from war and imprisonment and reinvest in America's Youth. The war on drugs has criminalized an entire generation and has cost thousands of lives both at home and abroad, while wars of aggression around the globe has made us less secure and has resulted in wasteful spending at the cost of the American People. These conditions have resulted in the militarization of American life, from its borders to its schools and universities. The paranoia and fear of terrorism and the selling out of our elected officials has led to

the violation of the rights of the American People and the erosion of the already undemocratic political process, which in turn has bred corruption and mistrust between the People and the political system. The inability of our elected officials to respond to the plight of the poor while at the same time handing out billions of dollars in financial bailouts speaks to the corruption of the state and its apathy towards the needs of its People. We must struggle to decriminalize our brothers and sisters throughout this nation; we must struggle to refund public education. Our survival is contingent on this agenda.

WHEN THEY SAY CUT BACK, WE SAY FIGHT BACK!





#privatization

THE'RE ALWAYS MONEY FOR WAR BUT NOT FOR EDUCATION

EDUCATION SHOULDN'T BE A DEBT SENTENCE

# # EDUCATION IS A RIGHT

Today, we, Students of this generation, are witnessing the dismantling and privatization of higher public education throughout America. Colleges and universities have progressively received smaller budgets in response to what politicians and economists claim to be a weak and fragile economy. Programs, departments, classes and vital student services are consistently being permanently cut while there is less full-time tenured faculty, many of whom have gone years without pay increases. All of this has occurred in the midst of ever growing administrative positions with obscenely high wages and countless privileges as higher public education adopts the profit motive and corporate structure. Today in the state of California, higher public education receives most of its funding from tuition rather than the state itself; this situation is occurring throughout the nation, thus cementing the end of an affordable four-year university education.

#YOU ARE NOT A LOAN

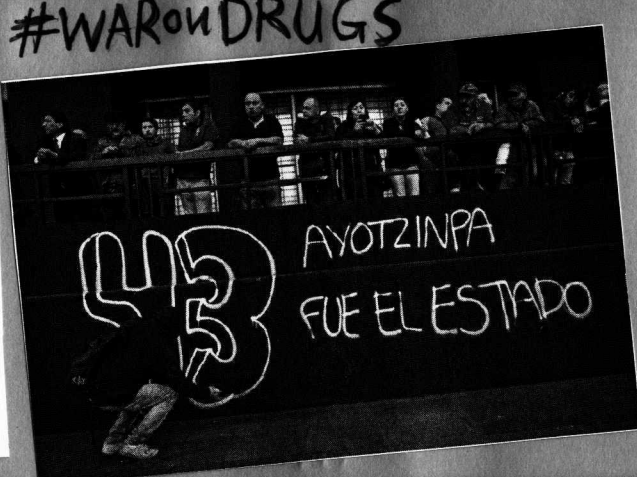


WE ARE STUDENTS NOT CUSTOMERS

#WTFee!?!

#OUT of the CLASS INTO the STREETS

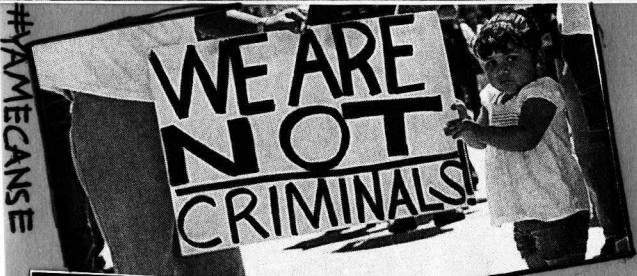
While these and other problems directly oppressed us, rankled our consciousness and became our concern, we began to see complicated and disturbing paradoxes and connections in America and abroad. The war on drugs institutionalized racist



oppression as mass incarceration has sent millions of Black and Brown lives to prison. It has resulted in the criminalization of an entire generation, marginalizing and disenfranchising them from the economic system and political process, and has fueled the growth of



drug cartels that have corrupted and bribed governments abroad and locally in many levels. This corruption was demonstrated in the early fall of 2014 in the case of the 43 missing Mexican students of the Ayotzinapa Normal School in Iguala, Mexico, who were kidnapped by municipal police officers and delivered to a local crime syndicate at the behest of the city's mayor. Similarly in the United States, occupying forces have gunned down thousands of Black lives in poor and working-class communities, as young Black people and their allies witnessed in Ferguson, MI, and Baltimore, MD. Statistically, one Black



life is murdered every 28 hours. This number decreases to every 22 hours when you add the number of Brown lives that have been killed in the American southwest, and more specifically near the U.S.-Mexico border. Throughout the southwest, cases of police brutality against Latinos and undocumented communities often go unreported and unheard. All of this has occurred under the guise of fighting the war on drugs, under the pretext that more law enforcement and surveillance makes our communities safer.



#H8 EVERY # los que remos vivos

#REVOLUCION

#fue el estado #it was the state

#ICANT BREATHE

#43

#MEXICODE

#DREAMERS

#PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX



Mass incarceration has had a major impact on Black and Brown lives, as funding for education and other social goods have gone down, prison spending has shot up dramatically. This dramatic increase in investment in the prison industrial complex has had a devastating impact not only Black and Brown lives living in America, but the lives of undocumented immigrants. Thousands of undocumented men, women and children are now undergoing the deportation process. A process that imprisons their bodies and denies all of them the basic human rights that America claims to spread throughout the globe. In the last eight years since President Obama took office, over 2 million people have been deported under his administration, a number that easily surpasses that of his predecessor, George W. Bush.

#NOT1MORE  
→ MURDER @ HANDS OF POLICE  
→ DEPORTATION  
→ PEACE  
→ JUSTICE



#BLM

We were raised in one of the wealthiest nations on the globe. Yet despite this, year after year, we witness cuts to education and other public goods. However, notwithstanding these cuts, there appears to be sufficient capital for ceaseless wars and the backing of governments who consistently commit themselves to corruption and brutality against their own People. The priorities of this nation becomes clear when we look at the national budget, as over fifty percent of the People's tax dollars are allocated to the war machine, while less than five percent goes to educating the People's Youth. In California alone, we spend five times more in the imprisonment of our Young People rather than educating them. Our generation has come to the conclusion that there is no financial deficit but rather a moral deficit, a deficit of priorities and a deficit of accountability towards the People and its Youth. It has become clear to us that this country needs a desperate and radical change of values and priorities, changes that will not come unless we, the People, demand it.

#schooltoPrison Pipeline

Our permanent war economy has led to the militarization of our public schools and universities, our border and local police departments throughout the nation, while at the same time has allowed the American government to support repressive regimes abroad. The state repression we face in America today is directly linked to the state repression experienced by other people throughout the world. We have grown in an age of insecurity, as rampant unemployment and violent poverty has greatly diminished our communities sense of worth and dignity, while state violence and brutality at the hands of America's militarized police forces continue to challenge our integrity and our very right to exist peacefully within this country. Injustice and inequality have pushed our generation to the breaking point and has thrust us into action. We can no longer be quiet and complacent with a social, political and economic system that blames us for our plight, and yet is the source of our condition.

A SYSTEM CANNOT  
FAIL THOSE IT WAS  
NEVER MEANT TO  
PROTECT.  
- W.E.B DU BOIS

#BALTIMORE  
#FERGUSON  
#NOTINCARCERATION  
#WASSW

RICH man's War  
POOR man's Fight

Zero tolerance = #criminalization

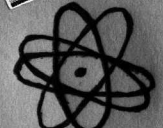
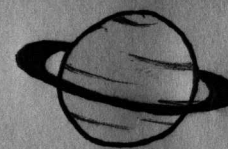
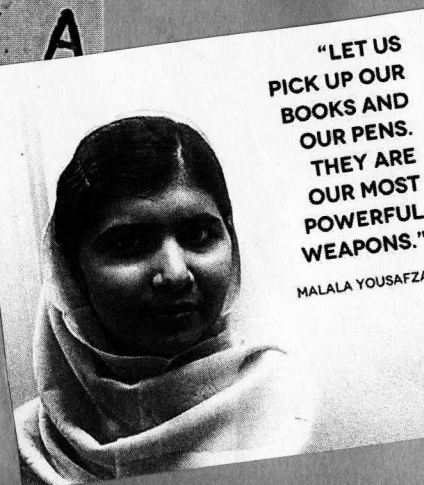
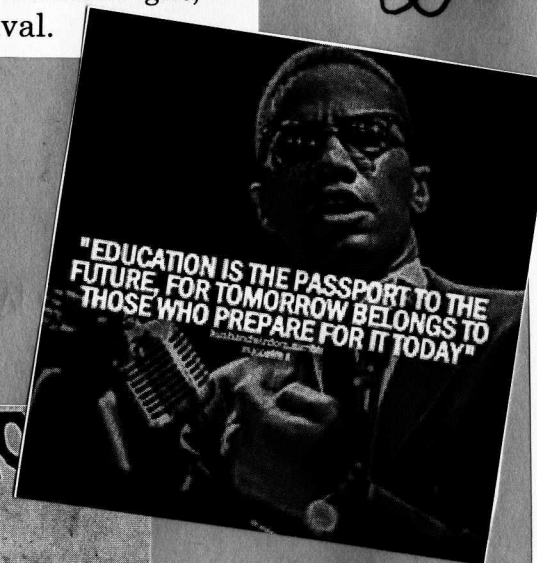
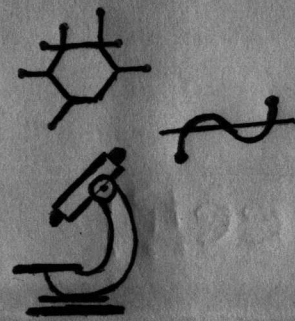
## EDUCATION AS A HUMAN RIGHT

Students for Quality Education (SQE) believes in the fundamental human right to an education whose highest goal is to empower each individual through inquiry of the universe and the human condition, and the creation of new solutions to the problems that plague our world and society. We believe in an education that helps us search the riches of the past, allows us to internalize it, and helps to guide us. We believe education is a powerful tool for people of color, the poor and other marginalized communities to rise from the injustices of poverty and oppression. As such, we believe that education is not only a human right, but necessary for survival.

$$E = mc^2 \quad \frac{10}{100}$$



EDUCATION  
IS A  
RIGHT  
NOT A  
PRIVILEGE



When we were young students, growing into young adulthood, we were given a dream of living the college experience in hopes that we could one day live out the American Dream. For many young people of color and the poor, public education was an obstacle course; there was zero tolerance for any wrong move, any slip up, any mistake. Our socioeconomic condition only added to the obstacles we faced in the classroom; hunger distracted us, zero tolerance imprisoned us, the streets or the police killed us. Higher education for us was our ticket out of poverty and up the socioeconomic ladder. When we had finally arrived, however, we were given a choice; pay with the money you don't have or go back home. We knew little about the implications and ramifications of the debt we would inquire. For people of color and the poor, there was no choice. In our attempts to improve our present condition, we signed and sold away our future.

#EDUCATEtoLIBERATE!

EDUCATION  
IS A LUXURY  
IS A MORTGAGE  
IS A BUSINESS  
IS A RIGHT



## A Timeline of CSU Student Victories

- 1968: A 5-month strike led by Black Student Union & Third World Liberation Front students at San Francisco State results in the creation of the first College of Ethnic Studies in the United States.
- Spring 2004: Mass student protests prevent the elimination of the Educational Opportunity Program and restores \$40 million to the CSU.
- 2008: An alliance of students, staff, faculty, and admin hold rallies and protests that result in \$98 million restored to the CSU.
- 2009-2010: Historic walkouts, occupations, and protests (including the March 4th National Day of Action) result in an additional \$365.6 million in funding for the CSU.

#RECLAIMtheCSU

#LONGBEACH



#BOT  
OUT OF THE  
CLASSROOM!  
INTO THE  
STREET!!



- 2012-November: Students help pass prop.30, which prevents a \$250 million budget cut to the CSU, and results in a refund of a 9% student fee increase.
- 2012-December: Chancellor Reed resigns, following years of student protests, and demands for his resignation. Students also defeat CSU "punishment fees" by lobbying legislators and trustees.
- 2013-Summer: Middle Class Scholarship Act passes, cutting tuition by 40% for families that make less than \$100,000. CSU students win a tuition "freeze" for the coming years, and an additional \$125 million in funding for the CSU.
- 2014: Students at several CSU's defeat and roll back "Student Success Fees" by educating, organizing, and petitioning fellow students and campus community members. This resulted in the Board of Trustees adopting more "democratic" ways to implement campus fees statewide; selective votes by fractions of the polity and considered legitimate.

#CSULA



#STUDENT  
#POWER!

YOU RAISE  
FEES  
We RAISE  
HELL



#UCBERKELEY

## THE STUDENT MOVEMENT HISTORICALLY

Since the genesis of formal education in America, student organizing has been a powerful tool for change. Fighting alongside Workers and other groups with an agenda of social change, Students have braved abuse, social stigma and have survived severe economic hardships to achieve many of the rights we now take for granted. Since the early twentieth century, the student movement in America has been particularly influential and a powerful force for enacting social and political change.

#WOOLWORTHSIT-INS



Students of the 1960s played a critical role in the history of social movements whilst also having a major impact on the campuses that nurtured them. Students of all racial and class backgrounds rose up against the oppressive educational system that saw them as inferior and incompetent as they demanded accessibility to and quality education. Student organizing exerted tremendous pressure on the state by working in tandem with other organized groups, leading to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the 1960 sit-in of four Black students in North Carolina. The Woolworth sit-ins ignited a firestorm which led to major protest and other forms of political activities throughout the American

#WOMYNLIBERATION



#GAY LIBERATION



#CHICANO



South. Similarly, in 1969 students from San Francisco State and the University of California, Berkeley, established the Third World Liberation Front to demand scholarly programs that reflected the stories and struggles of marginalized communities. Students and their allies began a strike, with subsequent protest and demonstrations, to display their solidarity and their determination to struggle against the mainstream Eurocentric educational system that sought to erase their voice and histories from history. This struggle and effort led to the creation of the multi-cultural and critical discipline of Ethnic Studies, thus demonstrating the power and effectiveness Students can achieve when their organize for social change.

#YOU DONT NEED A WHITE MAN TO SAY THE WORD BLOW



The Student movement in California is not an isolated effort, however, as threats to public education have occurred throughout the world. After Hugo Chavez was elected as Venezuela's president in 1998, students and youth chapters from several pro-Chavez parties contributed much to the preservation of democratic ideals that were responsible for fighting poverty, granting of free healthcare, and a rise in educational enrollment. The struggle for quality education continued in 1999, as students in Mexico City performed a year-long strike at the *Universidad Nacional Autonoma de Mexico* (UNAM) in response to rising fees. Similarly in 2012, hundreds of thousands of students filled streets of Quebec, to protest a raise in their tuition. Later, in

2014, London saw over 10,000 students march to the steps of Parliament to protest the rising cost of their education and the rise in student debt throughout the country. And between 2011 and 2013, students in Chile led massive rallies and demonstrations that rocked the political stability of the nation.



The Student movement is more than just a story found in a history book; it remains a force of immeasurable power and influence. In 2004, mass Student protests across the state of California prevented the elimination of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). In 2011, Students across the nation organized in solidarity with the Occupy Wall Street movement against social and economic inequality. That same year, Students at the University of California, Davis grabbed national attention as a result of the malicious and brutal assault by the police against students engaging in a peaceful sit-in. Since 2002, over forty million Americans have accrued more than 1.2 trillion dollars' worth of student debt. In the

state of California alone, over fifty-five percent of all higher education students have student debt, with most of that debt averaging out to \$20,000 per student.

## STUDENTS FOR QUALITY EDUCATION

#EDUCACION  
#GRATUITAEDUCATIONAL  
JUSTICE!  
NOW!

NOT SURE IF DEBT OWNS ME

OR I OWN DEBT

#REFUND  
the CSUMAKES YOU PAY  
100 GRAND  
BEGS FOR DONATIONS  
AFTER GRADUATING

#SQUE

Students who acquire large debts putting themselves through school are unlikely to think about changing society. When you trap people in a system of debt they can't afford the time to think. Tuition fee increases are a disciplinary technique, and by the time students graduate, they are not only loaded with debt, but have also internalized the disciplinary culture. This makes them efficient components of the consumer economy.

-NOAM CHOMSKY

Tuition and fees have exponentially risen throughout the state of California. In fall 2002, the average undergraduate state university tuition was \$1,428 for each campus. By 2011, however, tuition had risen to \$5,472, where campus-based fees brought the total cost to nearly \$8,000 or more per year at several campuses. (A 283% increase in less than ten years!) Some of the hardest hits occurred in the 2007-2008 academic year, during the Great Recession, which prompted the inception of SQE. Over the years, SQE has organized to dismantle the growing trend of underfunded, inaccessible and mono-cultural higher education. On March 4, 2010, SQE, alongside many other allies, participated in a National Day of Action to protest the defunding of education in the United States, specifically for public institutions like K-12 and higher public education. Thousands of demonstrators across California marched in the streets of their towns and cities, where some saw thousands rally and occupy administrative offices.

## #EDUCATIONSHOULDBEFREE

Students for Quality Education (SQE) is an organization born from a tradition of student advocacy and leadership. Founded by California State University (CSU) students in 2007, SQE has claimed many victories in the fight to make quality education available and accessible to all Californians. Alongside faculty and staff, SQE secured the restoration of \$96.7 million to the CSU budget in 2008, a crucial victory during the Great Recession. In 2012, students once again allied with faculty and staff to ensure the passage of Proposition 30 which not only protected the CSU from \$250 million budget reduction, but resulted in a refund to students of a previously enacted increase. SQE's most recent victory, an increase in funding along with a moratorium on tuition increase, proves the power of student organizing and its remaining necessity for change. The ballooning of administrative salaries, stagnant faculty wages, and the increasing financial burden from the shift of funding expectations onto student body all serve to prohibit the CSU from offering quality and accessible education to all Californians. SQE believes that not only are these conditions solvable, but that such a solution is possible through the organization and mobilization of Students.