



## Questionnaire for Community College Board candidates

**General Election, November 4, 2008**

### **Candidate/Campaign Information:**

Candidate name:	Steve Ngo
Office sought:	Community College Board
Contact person:	Steve Ngo
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Anticipated Budget:	\$75,000
Funds raised to date:	\$53,000
Percentage of donations under \$50	About 18 percent.

**General Questions:** Please write a brief response (less than 150 words) to each question. Please return this questionnaire electronically to [contactus@phdemclub.org](mailto:contactus@phdemclub.org) We will make these questionnaires available to our members before the endorsement meeting.

1. Why are you running? Why should we vote for you?

I am running for Community College Board because I believe in the

transformative power of education. If elected as a Trustee, I will push for a K through Life Partnership between the City College, the Unified School District and the City and County of San Francisco to focus on Green Jobs, strategic workforce development, re-entry programs, and issues of affordability, access and retention. I will continue to advocate for the construction of the Chinatown campus and fight for fair and adequate funding on the state and federal level for San Francisco City College and its programs.

2. What sets you apart from your opponents?

I believe most of the candidates share my passion and commitment to education and to supporting faculty and social justice initiatives. However, I believe I am uniquely qualified due to my experience with the state budget. I believe my experience as an advocate and my experience in the legislature will be invaluable in my role as Trustee.

In Sacramento, I worked on the budget committee so I know the budget process well. I also believe my work in state-wide politics has allowed me to build relationships with key partners with whom I hope to continue working when I advocate for better funding and other matters on behalf of the College.

I am also a lawyer who is used to taking on fights on behalf of people who typically do not have a voice in the legal system. I identify with the students at City College on a personal level and I know that they can benefit from having an advocate on the Board or in Sacramento pushing for policies that benefit not only them, but all Californians.

As a former student leader and the first in my family to graduate from college, I know the everyday struggles facing students at City College. This will be my framework when I am trustee. Specifically, City College students will have an experienced advocate on the Board who understands what it is like to hold down a job or two and to care for a family member while taking classes, paying tuition, and other bills. Their struggle has literally been my struggle.

3. What are the top three issues facing San Francisco's community college? What will you do about those issues?

The most pervasive issue is funding because we are always and perennially underfunded by the state. Equalization of state revenue for credit versus non-credit classes is particularly important at City College. I will always be an advocate for more funding from the state and from other sources.

The Chinatown Campus is another important issue, which also implicitly grapples with the funding issue. The campus fight reflects the value that we as a community place on higher education, especially among low-income and immigrant students. It also reflects a broader problem with the College's infrastructure. In addition to the Chinatown Campus, I also believe that John Adams needs significant improvements.

Fiscal accountability.

4. Would you describe yourself as fiscally responsible? Please give an example to support your answer.

Yes.

5. Would you describe yourself as socially progressive? Please give an example to support your answer.

Yes.

### **Issue Questions:**

1. Given the very real probability of reduced state funding for CCSF in the coming years, what combination of budget cuts and tax increases would you suggest to address budgetary shortfalls?

There would be a range of issues on the table.

2. While eleven community colleges in California offer student housing, CCSF does not. Given that housing in San Francisco is in high demand and hugely expensive, what would you propose to solve the problem for CCSF students who need housing?

Given the assumptions of Question No. 1, I believe there should be a long-term solution to this issue.

3. How can CCSF address the needs of disadvantaged students – those with lower grades and educational inadequacies? How would you propose to increase opportunities for them to catch up to the other students?

The arbitrary bureaucratic barriers between K-12 and higher education need to be lessened. Outreach and comprehensive approaches need to be pursued.

4. What measures should CCSF take to improve its fiscal responsibility and public financial accountability, especially with its spending of bond money?

I would explore hiring an inspector general to focus on the audit recommendations recently published.

5. Do you support a voluntary system of Clean Elections – full public financing – of candidates for citywide offices? Would you participate in such a system if it were available?

Yes and yes.

6. Do you support or oppose the following propositions on the November ballot? Please explain why or why not.

- Declaration of Policy of the people of San Francisco that its elected representatives in the US Senate and House should vote against any further funding for deployment of US Armed Forces in Iraq, except funds specifically earmarked for their safe withdrawal

Support \_\_\_\_ Oppose \_\_\_\_ Reason:

Support, but generally oppose non-binding measures on the ballot.

- CA Proposition 4: Amends California Constitution to prohibit abortion for an unemancipated minor until 48 hours after physician notifies minor's parent, legal guardian or, if parental abuse reported, an adult family member

Support \_\_\_\_ Oppose \_\_\_\_ Reason:

Oppose.

- CA Proposition 5: Provides rehabilitation as an alternative to prison for nonviolent drug offenders

Support \_\_\_\_ Oppose \_\_\_\_ Reason:

Likely support, but I have to review the measure.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.