



2024 Candidate Questionnaire: City College Board of Trustees

**Please submit the completed questionnaire as a pdf
to contact_us@phdemclub.org no later than Thursday, September 12.**

Name: Luis Zamora

Contact info: luis@luiszamoraforsf.com (415) 521-6546

Website: <https://luiszamoraforsf.com>

1. Please describe your qualifications for this office.

As a first-generation college student, I've seen firsthand the transformative power that a community college education can have. Growing up, my family had limited resources, and like many families, we were just above the cutoffs where significant financial aid would be available. Four-year college wasn't an option, and I went to community college for my associate degree. I think this lived experience, one that many CCSF students experience, is needed on the Board of Trustees.

I'm running for community college board to bring accountability to CCSF, to improve enrollment numbers, and to right the financial ship. I will champion common sense solutions and transparency to steer CCSF toward stability and regain the trust of our community.

I currently work for the City within the City Attorney's Office, and have also worked in our state legislature as District Director for our 17th Assembly District. I have also worked for various top 100 law firms for over 15 years. That experience included managing (inclusive of hiring, training, coaching, & evaluating) large and diverse teams to both execute day-to-day operations, and long-term projects. In these roles I was an administrative manager, a facilities manager, and was responsible for multi-million dollar budgets, inclusive of forecasting, analyzing profit and loss, producing variance reports when we exceeded or did not meet goals, and made long-term capital project/equipment recommendations.

As a facilities manager (and former President of San Francisco's International Facilities Management Association (IFMA)), I was well versed in building operations and services, campus equipment like HVAC units and boilers, and managed large scale renovation projects for some of San Francisco's high-rises for many law firm clients. All

of these roles required me to have clear communication skills at all levels of the organization, from the service employees to the equitable partners. I know that this skillset will be immensely relevant to CCSF and the role of trustee.

I'm an LGBTQ+ activist, renter, union member, and community volunteer with a proven track record of getting things done. I've organized youth phone banks to help flip the House in 2018, led one of the largest Democratic Clubs in San Francisco, and fought back against Trump-era immigration policy while serving as an Immigrant Rights Commissioner.

2. If elected, what are your top 3 goals for CCSF? Specifically, how do you plan to accomplish these goals?

My top three goals are to bring accountability to CCSF's leadership, long-term financial stability for CCSF, and increasing enrollment & retention.

For Accountability, this means clearly defining the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Trustees and the Chancellor, ensuring there is a proper system of checks and balances. The Board of Trustees needs to follow its own rules. I will also push for regular, public reporting on key performance metrics and progress towards strategic budget goals. This data-driven approach will allow the community to hold CCSF leadership accountable. I am running with a slate of candidates (Heather McCarty & Ruth Ferguson) to bring new leadership to CCSF. We know what needs to be done, and we will leverage all the resources we can, from assistance from the State Chancellors office, to working with our state and local elected leaders, to put CCSF on solid footing for years to come.

On Finance, In light of the looming shortfalls, I would advocate for developing a long term fiscal plan to align with the state's new Student Centered Funding Formula. I would also advocate for implementing more transparent budgeting processes with sufficient time for board to have input. CCSF currently does not show within its budget how much funding is for current Full Time Equivalent Students vs. how much the state is filling in via "Hold Harmless" funding. We need to see that budget transparency, like other community colleges in the Bay Area, in order to budget appropriately. I would also explore ways to reduce costs and increase efficiency without compromising essential programs and ensure that we begin to pay into CCSF's retirement accounts, something that the warning letter from the accreditation commission highlighted as not currently happening.

Finally, on increasing enrollment and retention, to attract more students, we can revamp our marketing, revitalize our course offerings by working with the academic senate around innovative programs around emerging technologies like AI, reinvest in pipelines like skilled trades, and provide the support our students need. I would also advocate for successful programs like partnering with our local High Schools to pilot the highly successful Pathways in Technology Early College High Schools (P-TECH) program, which allows students least likely to attend college an opportunity to receive their High School diploma, a credential, or an associate degree. And I would like to

expand dual enrollment opportunities.

- 3. What allocations in the current budget are higher/lower than needed and why? Please describe your current or previous experience with budgetary oversight.**

According to administration at CCSF, City College is spending about 90% of its funding on salaries, benefits, and retirement. Also according to CCSF administration, that number should be more like 85%. Although we want to avoid cuts of faculty and classes, the fact remains that it is still the largest expense CCSF incurs as it tries to maintain staffing level at pre-pandemic levels. The difficult part is that the student enrollment levels have not been maintained, they have dropped significantly.

As mentioned above, I have managed budgets for multi-million dollar law firms. I will bring that expertise to CCSF and begin by retooling the budget to be more transparent. I will also advocate that we take the extra money (the “hold harmless” funding) that the state is giving CCSF for students it does not have, and place it into our required retirement accounts, another bucket for rainy day savings to avoid future cuts, and a bucket to expand courses that are growing and need more support.

- 4. In addition to what you might have cited in your goals, what is CCSF doing well that needs to be supported and maintained? How would you support these strengths as a trustee?**

CCSF has an amazing pipeline for vocational jobs, and we need to invest in that more. This would include working with the academic senate and our state and federal partners to create more courses around emerging jobs like clean energy jobs. These are avenues we can pursue that would come with federal dollars to train future workers in good paying jobs, in turn, increasing enrollment.

- 5. In addition to what you might have cited in your goals, what is CCSF not doing well and how would you bring about improvement or change as a trustee?**

CCSF needs to follow its own rules and get off accreditation warning. I would do so by immediately honoring the strategic plan that was approved and was transmitted to the state which involves playing into the required retirement accounts. I would also signal to the state that the new leadership on the board would not violate its authority or interfere with the authority of the Chancellor. These would satisfy the concerns in the warning letter by the accreditation committee and would in turn allow CCSF to renew accreditation for the next 7 years.

- 6. CCSF has had 10 chancellors in 12 years and is now searching for an eleventh. What in your view has caused such frequent turnover and what would you do to mitigate it?**

I think many circumstances affected the various Chancellors within those past 12 years, but I firmly believe that the current board undermined and interfered with the last Chancellor who resigned. By not allowing the Chancellor to fulfil their duties, the college was placed in an impossible position where it could not address the concerns brought by the state of California. A clear understanding of responsibilities and adherence to those rules will strengthen the relationship with future Chancellors and send the state the message that CCSF is serious about its future.

7. Please share your personal experience with CCSF.

Unfortunately, I did not have a good personal experience. I attempted to apply online and enroll in some lifelong learning classes at CCSF. My experience was a disaster. The application itself was too long and complicated, and no time were financial assistance tools offered like a FAFSA application, and once I had collected and entered all the information they did request, I received an email stating they received my application, followed by an email later stating there was an issue with my application. I tried calling CCSF's various points of contact and no one was available. Much later, I received another email stating that my application had gone through without explanation, and I was admitted to CCSF. By then it was too late to sign up for the classes I was interested in. There are so many issues with this process, and I hope to address all of these as a future trustee.

8. What else would you like Potrero Hill Democratic Club to know about you?

Please include any aspects of your background and experience that have not already been touched upon, or endorsements you are proud to share.

It would be an honor to receive Potrero Hill Democratic Club's endorsement. I am proud to be endorsed by elected officials like Speaker Emerita Nancy Pelosi, our Attorney General of California Rob Bonta, organizations like the San Francisco Democratic Party, and Equality California, and many unions and organizations like the San Francisco Building Trades, the Teamsters, and the Laborers. For a full list of my endorsements please visit: <https://luiszamoraforSF.com/endorsements/>

Thank you for answering our questions, and thank you for running for office! Please submit the completed questionnaire as a pdf to contact_us@phdemclub.org no later than Thursday, September 10.