

Hello, my name is Ben Valigorsky and I am a student at SCSU in his last semester. I have something to say on the topic of the Board of Regents' proposals on budget and regulations for the Connecticut State Universities.

My biggest concern with the BOR proposals is that they will turn the CSUs into diploma mills. "Diploma mill" colleges were a concern of mine before I even started my college journey. When I was halfway through high school, I believed that colleges were a scam- thinking about having to pay a large amount for more *boring schoolwork*. The only way I saw college being worth it was if the experience and education seemed priceless to me.

A couple years later, I began to search for colleges when I realized that they were not going to a boring money pit, but a life changing experience. As someone who did not enjoy high school, I began to see college as the place where learning could finally be enjoyable. Researching schools and their interesting hands-on programs, study-abroad semesters, and accredited professors got me excited. Having seen the extreme/uninformed cuts and regulations the BOR propose for the CSUs, I now understand how a college can become a place to simply grab a diploma and run. The less funding for the schools (and therefore teachers) means less experiential learning, less departments, less campus clubs, less counselors, larger class sizes and fewer resources. The schools will lose applicants as the students realize that they are largely not cared about and have little resources on campus.

My favorite part of being at SCSU is the opportunity I have getting real working experience by taking classes and practicing in a production studio. However, I can already see what cuts are doing to the production studio and film department at SCSU. Most students must work with outdated equipment and are uninvested because of it. This is even more sad considering how amazing the teachers in that department are. You take those specialized experiences away from students, and you will lose the students.

There are private schools in similar price ranges that offer more richness and diversity in similar programs students are offered at the CSUs. Should the BOR create proposals that help the colleges and make them better, or should they make drastic cuts that will help their downfall? Students don't need high-school 2.0, they need college experience. We need more life-changing, career-making institutions, and less diploma mills. We need to sustain or reallocate the budget for the CSUs.