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Cal Poly Journalism Students Meet With Congresswoman Lois Capps

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Congresswoman Lois Capps, U.S. Representative for California's 23rd District, met with Cal Poly journalism students last week to discuss a range of topics, including the student loan industry.

Capps talked with about a dozen Mustang Daily editors and student reporters about a range of subjects, from the Occupy movement to President Barack Obama's personality. Mustang Daily is the student-produced campus newspaper.

"Congresswoman Capps' visit provided our student journalists with a unique opportunity to put Learn by Doing into action," said Brady Teufel, assistant professor of journalism. "I was impressed by both the breadth and depth of the students' questions, as well as the willingness of our congresswoman to spend an hour discussing important issues with her college-aged constituents."



Her visit gave students a rare opportunity to discuss policy issues with a high-ranking representative. She led a classroom exercise that focused on student loans, specifically the push to standardize student loan forms nationwide. The students' feedback is going to help inform the future direction of this legislation, according to Capps.

Capps said interacting with students is important to her, since one of her top issues in Congress is education. "We have way too many barriers to education today. Most of them are financial. Today a lot of college graduates end up with debt as large as a mortgage," Capps said.

She also noted how difficult it can be for students to repay their loans, given the country's economic recession and high unemployment rates. Capps said the government should be doing more to support students who choose to pursue a college degree, adding that money put toward education should be viewed as an investment not an expense. "There are public interests at stake, and it is in the national interest to have an educated workforce, and for us to be globally competitive. It's a national security issue, frankly."

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About Cal Poly's Journalism Department

The Journalism Department (<http://cla.calpoly.edu/jour.html>) offers a professional program leading to a Bachelor of Science degree in journalism with emphases in broadcasting, multimedia, news-editorial, and public relations. Journalism majors serve as staff members of departmental communications media, including the Mustang Daily, the student newspaper; CCPR, the student-run public relations firm; KCPR, the FM-stereo radio station; and the news and programming operations of CPTV, Cal Poly's television station. The department also sponsors student chapters of the Society of Professional Journalists, Radio-Television News Directors Association, and the Public Relations Student Society of America. Founded in the 1920s, the department has thousands of alumni, many of whom hold high positions in print, broadcast and public relations in state and national organizations.

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