



**AFRIKAN BLACK  
COALITION**

**Student Advocacy Workshop:**  
**Affordable Student Housing in the California Community Colleges**

**Purpose:** To ensure that students have skills to organize and advocate for desired policy outcomes, particularly in the area of affordable student housing.

**Outcome:** Identify where student voice and participation are absent in policy discussions on affordable student housing. Identify where current policy on affordable student housing does not meet the needs of students.

**Process:**

1. Brief overview of current affordable student housing policy landscape.
2. Identify potential policy issues in affordable student housing.
3. Learn a power mapping exercise to identify who has influence over affordable student housing policy.
4. In your Organizing Committees, you will:
  - a. Create the initial step in an advocacy campaign for Sunny California Community College Associated Student Government by
    - i. Defining the goals for addressing your policy issue
    - ii. Identifying potential allies
    - iii. Identifying potential opposition
    - iv. Identifying who you need to speak with to advocate for your issue and your ask.

## **Current Student Housing Policy in California**

In the 2021-22 & 2022-23 budgets, California made historic investments in the creation of affordable student housing across the three public higher education segments (Community College, Cal State University, and University of California). In total, the state is expected to spend \$4 billion in a combination of grants and a revolving loan fund, spread out over 4 years (2021-2025).

### **Key Student Housing Facts**

According to a 2018 California Higher Education Basic Needs Alliance (CHEBNA) report:

- 60% of Community College Students have experienced housing insecurity with at least 19% having experienced homelessness in the past 12 months.
- 10.9% of CSU students are homeless
- 5% of UC students are homeless

According to the 2018-19 CSAC SEARS survey:

- 38% of homeless students were Latinx
- 23% of homeless students were Black/African, despite only consisting of 6% of survey respondents.

Of the 116 community colleges, 12 colleges currently offer student housing. That is about 2400 beds for a system of 1.8 million students.

In 2019-20, the state created the College Homeless and Housing Insecure Pilot Program allocating \$19 million ongoing towards rapid rehousing programs for homeless college students, spread across the three public segments. \$9 million goes towards Community Colleges.



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## **Higher Education Student Housing Grant Program (Education Code Section 17200)**

The Higher Education Student Housing Grant Program (HESHG) was established in the 2021-22 budget. Under the program, Community Colleges were able to apply for planning grants to develop a housing proposal and all colleges & universities were able to apply for construction grants to begin shovel-ready projects. The HESHG set key requirements regarding access and affordability for any student housing project built under the program:

### ***Affordability:***

- Housing must be “affordable” defined as:
  - Rent shall be calculated at 30% of 50% of the area median income for single room occupancy.
- Applies for the life of the facility.
- Rents shall not exceed rent estimates in the application. (r)

### ***Access***

- Housing must be offered to low-income students first. (f)(3)
- Students are required to take an average of “12 degree-applicable” units per semester to live in the housing. (f)(4)(A)
- Students must demonstrate compliance with the unit requirement in order to renew their housing in a subsequent year. (f)(4)(B)
- Students shall be permitted to remain in the housing unit for the entire academic year or calendar year as long as they are enrolled in the campus. (f)(4)(B)
- Colleges are required to deliver at least the number of estimated beds in the application. (r)

11 Community Colleges received a construction grant & 70 Community Colleges received a planning grant in 2022.



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## California Student Housing Revolving Loan Fund Act of 2022 (AB 190)

This bill establishes a revolving loan fund under the authority of the California School Finance Authority and California Educational Facilities Authority (for UCs). Colleges & universities in all three public segments, private colleges & universities as well as “participating non-profit entities” can borrow 0% interest loans to build student housing.

The legislature has stated an intent to allocate \$1.8 billion towards the California Student Housing Revolving Loan Fund.

### ***Affordability***

- Housing projects must be **below** local market rate.
  - “Below local market rate” is not defined.
  - Language around affordability is not as clearly defined as with the grant program

### ***Access***

- The 40 year grant deed must “[r]equire that, to the greatest extent feasible, at least 50 percent of student residents will meet the criteria for need-based financial assistance, as determined by the top administrative official of the affected campus.”
- Students, faculty & staff of the particular campus have first rights of refusal to available housing units.
- No other accessibility requirements in the statute but could be in subsequent regulations and local college policies.

## Affordable Student Housing at Sunny California Community College



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The Associated Student Government at Sunny California Community College (SCCC) in the Los Soles Community College District is concerned about the number of students at their college who are experiencing homelessness.

Recently, an article was published in El Sol Times highlighting the struggles that SCCC students face trying to find a place to live. The article noted that SCCC's reputation as "the best college for student parents" was in peril as rising housing costs forced many student parents to choose between working full time to provide for the immediate needs of their family or attending college. The article also noted that the lack of affordable student housing affected Black and Latinx students most. It highlighted a recent survey that showed that Black community college students represented 23% of homeless students even though they only made up 6% of survey respondents and that Latinx students made up 38% of homeless students.

The article featured an interview with SCCC President Dr. Spicy and Vice President of Student Services Dr. Mild who reported that the college is allowing students experiencing homelessness to sleep in their cars in the campus parking garage. Dr. Spicy will also give the Los Soles Community College District Board of Trustees an update on student homelessness at the upcoming Board of Trustees meeting. The article also featured an interview with State Assemblymember Jose Medina, chair of the Assembly Higher Education Committee who stated that the legislature and Governor will include money in this year's budget to build student housing. Lastly, the article featured an interview with Karen Meme, President of the Conserve the Sun Homeowners Association. Karen expressed great concern about how new affordable student housing would change the current culture of Los Soles and planned to discuss her concerns at their upcoming homeowner association meeting.

In response to the article, the ASG held a forum for student leaders of the various campus organizations to discuss the lack of affordable student housing. At the forum, the ASB President Camille Hope reported that she attended a workshop hosted by Public Advocates where she learned that the state of California was investing \$4 billion in student housing over the next 4 years. She learned about the new Higher Education Student Housing Grant Program that was giving money to colleges and universities to build affordable student housing. She heard that SCCC submitted an application to the grant program but was unaware of what type of housing project they proposed in their application.

The Black Student Union President Ida B. Carmichael reported that she recently attended the Afrikan Black Coalition Conference and learned how students organize for change. She



suggested the students organize a campaign to advocate for affordable student housing at SCCC.



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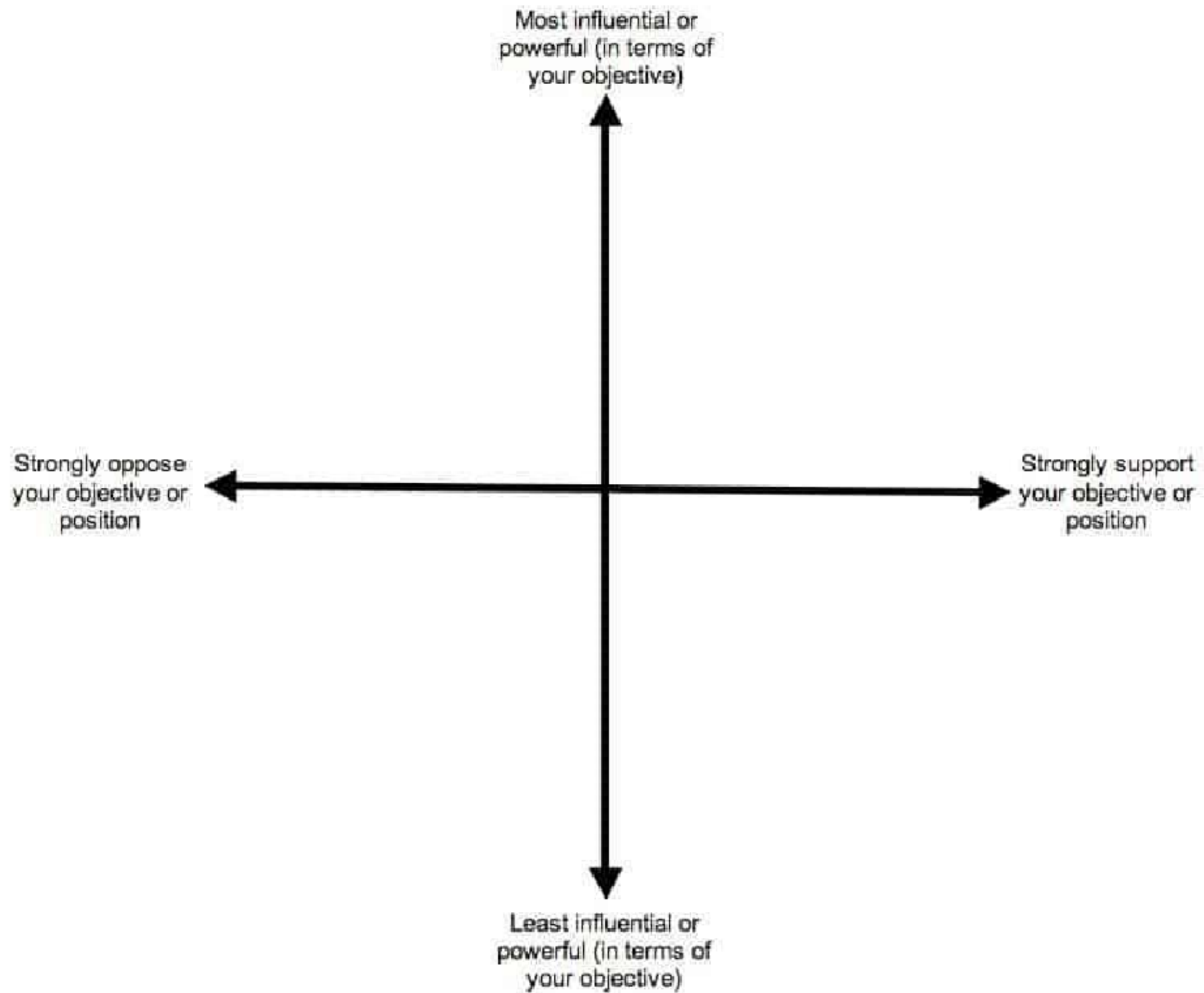
EX.

Define  
the issue

Define  
goals

Identify  
target(s)

EX.





Group 1

