HIGHER EDUCATION

Cabrillo seeks to cut $2.4M

Union negotiations needed to cope with state budget losses, administrators say

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APTOS — Cabrillo Community College has requested a reopening of benefits negotiations with its two major unions in anticipation of having to cut $2.4 million from its 2011-12 budget.

Benefit and salary reductions will most likely hit employees in every component of the college’s operations, from administration to instruction and student services.

“We feel that the budget solutions at the state level rely on faulty assumptions, such as increases in revenues we don’t think will materialize,” said Victoria Lewis, Cabrillo’s vice president of administrative services. “Our planning is not based fully on the state budget. We are assuming that since it is an election year the 2010-11 budget will change things.”

The projected budget deficit for Cabrillo in 2011-12 is $8.6 million, but $2.2 million in reserves has been used to help bridge that gap.

Additionally, for the 2010-11 budget, another $2 million in reserves has been set aside in anticipation of budget changes once a new state budget is proposed in January. Earlier this year, $3.8 million in reserves was used to balance the 2010-11 budget, which was about $9.5 million total.

Cabrillo has still not received $9 million from the state that is credited to the 2009-10 budget, but was deferred. Now that a state budget has been signed, funding to community colleges should resume today, according to Lewis, but the state has not told the community colleges how much they can expect to receive nor on what schedule.

Cabrillo is not borrowing from the county while it waits on deferred funds from the state, but further deferrals could put the college in a precarious position in the spring.

“We will borrow from the county if state funding is delayed,” Lewis said. “The biggest worry is how the state will implement funding deferrals in the budget. We are concerned about continued deferrals or shifting of payments into the future.”

In addition, 120 layoffs for instruction may be coming, as the college needs to reduce its staffing by about 15 positions. The college has already reduced its headcount by 50, Lewis said.

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VICTORIA LEWIS, Cabrillo’s vice president of administrative services