

CABRILLO COLLEGE

Board approves first round of budget cuts

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SCOTTS VALLEY — Cabrillo College has received some good news that will reduce budget cuts, but the news isn't good enough to avoid layoffs and deep reductions.

The administration had predicted a more than 15 percent increase in employee medical costs for next year, but the revised figure is 5 percent. The college also expected its contribution rate to the California Public Employees' Retirement System to increase next year, but it has held steady.

All together, the budget has been padded with \$900,000 that the college did

not expect to have. But for a college facing a \$5.3 million deficit, the savings in employee benefits doesn't cover all the red ink.

On Monday the college's board unanimously approved the first round of cuts, about \$730,000, mostly affecting services and vacant positions. The college will use \$3.7 million in reserves but will still have to identify another \$920,000 in cuts to help close the budget gap.

A total of 13 positions were eliminated or reduced in time, nine of which are vacant. Three of the positions are from the Academy for College Excellence, formerly known as the digital bridge academy, which was funded by a grant expiring this year. The other reduced position that was

filled was a part-time cook for the Children's Center.

Other reductions approved included an array of cuts to various sectors of campus, including maintenance, marketing, legal services, and the Visual and Performing Arts Complex. The number of courses also will be reduced, but the board hasn't determined how many.

"This is very discouraging, especially when you look at the class reductions," said board member Rebecca Garcia.

Now, as the college gets in to the next phases of reductions, the cuts will become harder and will affect more positions. The general operating budget at Cabrillo for 2010-2011 is \$59 million, down \$5.6 million since 2008, according

to Victoria Lewis, Cabrillo's vice president of administrative services.

The Services and Programs Advisory Committee, consisting of two faculty and three staff members, was formed this year to assess the impact of proposed cuts and advise both the College Planning Council and administration. Cabrillo Classified Employees Union President Stephanie Stainback said the advisory committee has reviewed 24 of the positions identified for possible elimination or reduction and has deemed eight to be "problematic or inadvisable."

"We are struggling with morale now and I don't think it's revealing a state secret to say that," Stainback said.

The union head also sug-

gested the board and administration consider pushing back the Aug. 1 deadline for approving the reductions in hopes of receiving more concrete information about the state budget. Gov. Jerry Brown's current budget proposal includes a \$400 million cut to California Community Colleges.

The situation will not get easier next year, with a \$6.7 million projected shortfall for the 2012-2013 budget year, according to Lewis. Student fees are set to increase \$10 per unit, from \$26 to \$36, starting in fall 2011.

The Student Senate of California Community Colleges recently passed a resolution mandating the increased revenue from the added fee go directly to the colleges, instead of into the state's general fund.