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THURSDAY JULY 21, 2011

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COLLEGE CUTS

Cabrillo
nears
budget
target for
2011-2012More drastic cuts
on the horizon

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APTOS — Cabrillo College administrators and other campus leaders are nearing a budget reduction target of \$1.44 million for 2011-2012, with the cuts to be presented for a vote to the Board of Governors on Aug. 1, but harder decisions, and deeper cuts, are looming.

On Wednesday, members of the College Planning Council voted to recommend the approval of a 10 percent reduction in the contract for a senior account specialist, which will bring savings of \$10,164.

"It's an unfortunate cut," Planning Council member and Communications Program Chairman Dan Rothwell said. "It's a small cut, but pretty much all cuts are unfortunate now."

A larger debate was held over the stark numbers before them now that the state budget has passed — and \$400 million in state funding was eliminated from California Community Colleges.

The magnitude of reductions for the coming school year was diminished by the use of \$3.4 million in reserves to help bridge the gap.

Yet, preliminary figures for the 2012-13 budget year, prepared by Victoria Lewis, Cabrillo's vice president of administrative services, show a projected deficit of nearly \$6.5 million.

There was a common sentiment among the planning council that at some point, as cuts have become a yearly occurrence since 2008, the college leadership must take time to look at the broader picture and decide what Cabrillo can accomplish with its new levels of funding.

"It's hard to talk about," Rothwell said. "Planning has become synonymous with cutting. There's no planning here that's creative or exciting."

SEE BUDGET ON B3

BUDGET

Continued from B1

The change leaders on this campus don't agree on where change should occur. They don't agree at all."

The newly sworn in student senate president, Charlotte Achen, has just begun to wade into the tumultuous waters.

"We have to start thinking of what Cabrillo will be down the road," Achen said. "I've seen a lot of trust issues between Cabrillo employees, but we have to find a way to work on this. The biggest cuts are looming in the distance."

If certain revenue projections included in the state budget are not met, midyear funding cuts could be triggered along with an additional \$10 increase in the student fee per credit unit, which was already increased \$10, to \$36 per unit, earlier this year.

"There is quite a bit of risk associated with this budget, and we do expect midyear reductions," Lewis told the planning council. "The question is how much?"

The general operating budget at Cabrillo for 2010-2011 was \$59 million, down \$5.6 million since 2008.

In June, the college's board unanimously approved the first round of cuts, about \$730,000, mostly affecting services and vacant positions.

Additionally, bookstore hours have been cut, and the elimination of a purchasing specialist position was approved earlier in July.

The planning council previously accepted the recommendation to eliminate a math lab tutor and all four staff members in the Academy for College Excellence, which teaches students about organizational and other skills needed for academic success.