March 18, 2009

RCC eyes tuition increase

In-state tuition at Rogue Community College would increase $5 starting summer term 2009 under a proposal before the RCC Board of Education. On Tuesday, the board heard a first reading of a resolution raising tuition to $73 per credit. The board is scheduled to adopt the increase at its April 21 meeting.

Recommended by the RCC Tuition and Fees committee, the increase would go toward helping the college balance its 2009-10 budget. RCC anticipates a $2 million reduction in state funding next year and is exploring ways to meet the shortfall. The college surveyed students, and a $5 per-credit increase was a “comfortable level,” according to Lynda Warren, dean of College Services and chief financial officer. Every $1 increase in tuition brings in about $110,000, she explained.

RCC receives about one-third of its revenue from tuition, a third from state reimbursement for full-time equivalent enrollment (FTE), and a third from local property taxes. Although the Oregon Legislature has yet to decide exactly how much state support community colleges will receive next year, RCC is developing its budget based on $440 million. That’s down from the current year’s allocation of $500 million. RCC’s share would be about $6,329,106, compared with $8,340,597 in the current year.

As well as raising in-state tuition, RCC proposes a $6 increase for out-of-state tuition to $89 a credit, and a $17 increase for international tuition to $244 a credit. Also proposed are increases in some fees.

- Transportation/Bus: The fee for a one-term bus pass, currently set at $20, would rise to $80 a term. RCC works with Rogue Valley Transportation District in Jackson County and Josephine County Transit to subsidize the cost of bus passes for RCC students. “Due to the current economic situation, the college is unable to continue to subsidize the bus services at previous levels,” Warren said. “The proposed fee is still substantially less than an equivalent three-month pass purchased from the transportation district,” she explained.

(more)
• Basic Skills: A $9 increase for Adult Basic Education (ABE), General Educational Development (GED), and English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction is proposed. Currently set at $17, the fee would rise to $26.

• Instructional: The Emergency Medical Technology program is proposing a per-term lab fee for disposable materials used in class, uniforms, and replacement equipment. The fees would be $100 for EMT-Basic, $150 for EMT Intermediate, and $200 for EMT-Paramedic.

In other business, the RCC Board adopted a change in college policy affecting smoking on campus. The revision complies with the Oregon Smokefree Workplace Law, which prohibits smoking within 10 feet of entrances to all public facilities. The RCC Board increased that distance to at least 20-feet from any college facility.

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