RCC plans furlough day in May

Rogue Community College will observe a furlough day May 1, a decision aimed at saving approximately $70,000. Classes will not be held and all college offices will be closed.

That Friday previously was scheduled as an inservice day, during which college staff would receive training. The RCC Faculty and Classified associations agreed to substitute a furlough day for inservice and forfeit a day’s pay. Managers also will be included in the furlough.

The move allows the college to carry the savings into fiscal year 2009-10, which begins July 1. Earlier this year, RCC lost $187,000 in anticipated state revenue when the community college support fund was cut due to the state’s declining revenues. Rogue responded by cutting materials and services expenditures and by not replacing several employees who had retired.

“We are still trying to predict what will happen in the next biennial budget (2009-11),” said Peter Angstadt, RCC president. “We won’t find out how much state support we will receive until the Legislature has a chance to see the state economic forecast May 15,” he added. “Even then we may not get a final decision until June or July.”

But because state law requires that community colleges adopt a proposed budget in May and a final budget in June, RCC is building its 2009-10 budget based on drastically reduced state funding. Funding reductions could be as much as $2 to 3 million less than the state support RCC received this year, so college officials are exploring other ways to cut expenditures or raise revenues.

The Legislature’s Joint Ways and Means Committee will be holding a series of public meetings throughout the state during the last two weeks of April to solicit feedback on the proposed state budget, notes Lynda Warren, RCC chief financial officer and dean of College Services.

The committee will hold a public hearing April 30 in Ashland. The hearing is scheduled from 5:30 to 8 p.m. in the Rogue River Room, Stevenson Union, Southern Oregon University, 1250 Siskiyou Blvd. RCC encourages its patrons to attend this meeting or contact their legislators.