RCC faces two closure days to help balance budget

To help offset future budget deficits, Rogue Community College plans two unpaid budget reduction days in May. The college will be closed and no classes will be held May 13 and 31.

Both the RCC faculty and classified associations agreed to the unpaid days in the current fiscal year, and managers also will be cut two days, saving the college approximately $160,000 or a $1 per credit savings in tuition.

The savings will help the college balance the 2011-12 budget, which will be presented April 19 to the RCC Budget Committee, according to Lynda Warren, chief financial officer and vice president of College Services.

“We sincerely appreciate the personal sacrifices our faculty, classified and exempt staff are willing to make during these difficult financial times,” Warren said. RCC already has 15 unpaid closure days a year: five between fall and winter terms, and 10 in the summer.

“While these historic closure days have no impact on students, they reflect the continued disinvestment in education,” said RCC President Peter Angstadt. “State support for community colleges is less than half of what it used to be.”

Although the Legislature has not finalized educational funding levels for 2011-13, Oregon’s 17 community colleges have already suffered a $90 million or 28 percent reduction in state funding since the 2007-09 biennium. RCC’s share of state funding has dropped nearly 50 percent during that time.

To further offset anticipated cuts, RCC has proposed a $10 tuition increase effective summer term 2011. In-state tuition would be $85 a credit.

“We are always reluctant to increase tuition, but the demand for services continues to rise, and it’s the only mechanism we have to fill the gap,” Warren said. “The two unpaid days in May this year saves us from having to increase tuition another $1 next year,” she added.

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