

March 25, 2011

Important Message to Students Regarding Summer Session, March 25, 2011

Dear Mesa College Student:

As I write this, elected officials in Sacramento and administrators at the college and district levels are in the midst of budget planning discussions regarding severe budget cuts for California community colleges. The outlook is dire.

Over the past three years, Mesa's enrollment has grown while the SDCCCD operating budget from the state has decreased by \$30.4 million. To date, cuts have been made as far away from the classroom as possible.

Now we are facing another massive budget cut of \$10 million for certain, and probably as much as \$17 million more depending on the further actions of the governor, legislature or voters. I am writing this so you understand the context of the actions being considered and that we have limited options remaining.

By necessity, we must consider reductions in course offerings for the summer session. During this budget downturn, our goal is to protect our core of programs and class offerings, especially during the fall and spring semesters. Wherever and however we elect to reduce classes (summer, fall, spring) will impact you in some way. We are reviewing the effect on students' ability to transfer, financial aid, the ability to complete essential courses for progress towards a degree, and other factors. Decisions about the upcoming summer session will be made with all of these important considerations taken into account.

Ironically, we are facing these budget cuts as we continue to build new facilities on our campus. All of the facilities projects currently underway and planned for the future are funded through voter approved construction bonds, Propositions S and N, which passed in 2002 and 2006. By law, these funds may not be used for operating costs for the college; they may only be used for the construction of the buildings which were approved in the propositions.

Again, no final decisions have been made about summer school at this time. Information will be posted on this website as decisions are made. Please be assured that the student needs -- your needs -- are in the forefront of planning. In addressing this extraordinarily difficult situation, we are doing our best to stay true to our mission as well as maintain core programs and classes for our students.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth J. Armstrong

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