

'Drastic' cuts possible by spring at Cabrillo

Cabrillo College 9-28-83

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APTOS — When the state Assembly went home without resolving the funding crisis on which the state's community colleges are teetering, they left community colleges — including Cabrillo — facing what spokesmen call "drastic" cuts in the spring and next fall.

"I really can't believe this is happening" said Cabrillo's Cliff Nichols, vice president, business services. "I can't see how they can leave us in such an unknowing position. It's a very serious situation."

Cabrillo took a \$948,000 cut from the previous year's funding when Gov. George Deukmejian slashed \$238 million from the state's community college funds last summer. He wanted

\$108 million of that cut restored by charging full-time student \$50-a-semester tuition.

The state Senate, before it adjourned Sunday night, passed a compromise in which tuition would be charged if the governor agreed to restore the \$108 million first, to bring the schools up to their previous year's funding.

The Assembly refused to vote for tuition.

Assemblyman Sam Farr, D-Carmel Valley, was one of seven Assembly Democrats who voted in favor of tuition.

"The testimony before the committee showed the (\$108 million) is there," Farr said this morning in a phone call from his home. "The fees will only raise about \$40 million; the governor wants them for

philosophical reasons. That's why it's such a highly-charged issue. But we may be playing out the philosophical game against laid-off professors and students who can't get the classes they need."

Cabrillo last spring cut 10 percent of its faculty and program, but tried to keep the same overall number of classes. Those program cuts, administrators concede, have contributed to an enrollment drop this fall, and fewer students mean fewer dollars from the state.

"We're facing a double problem," said Public Information Officer Bill Gleeson this morning. "Not only will we be missing the \$948,000, we could be missing more because of lower enrollment."

The final count is not in, but first-day figures show enrollment is down

840 students from last year. Each student represents about \$1,200 to the school.

"Let's say the final number is 500, although I hope it isn't that high," said Nichols. "That would mean about \$630,000 to us. We have a \$14 million budget with only \$200,000 in reserves. We'd have to make drastic cuts to get in balance."

Tenure laws prevent mid-year layoff of teachers, "so it boils down to nibbling around the edges wherever you can," he said.

The school has "two choices, actually," he continued. "We can make the cuts, or we can try to to increase the enrollment for spring. . . by eliminating the small classes that don't support themselves, and putting our money into classes everyone wants to take, like science,

mathematics and computer sciences."

When the cuts were made last spring, "we were hoping enrollment wouldn't (decline), because we opened the same number of sections in different areas. We were hoping the people would go for the classes, but they haven't — at least 7 percent of them haven't."

Nichols said if cuts are to be made or tuition charged, schools must begin working on the changes now.

"If the legislature doesn't reconvene and do something immediately, it will be too late in January for the spring semester."

College administrators from across the state are meeting in Sacramento Wednesday to "plead with the Legislature to reconvene," said a spokesman in the state Chancellor's Office.