

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ENROLLMENT EXPLODES AT LOS RIOS COLLEGES

Sacramento—Nearly 7,000 more students are crowding into classrooms at American River, Cosumnes River, Folsom Lake and Sacramento City colleges this first day of the spring semester.

“This looks and feels more like a fall start than the beginning of the mid-year semester,” said Los Rios chancellor Brice Harris.

According to Los Rios officials, a weak economy, high unemployment and skyrocketing fees at four-year universities are all driving more students to Sacramento’s community colleges. “We knew we would see an enrollment increase this spring, but we really didn’t expect 84,000 students on our doorstep today,” Harris said.

The enrollment explosion comes at a time when the State is experiencing the worst budget deficit in its history making future funding uncertain for all state funded agencies including community colleges. The Los Rios District began this 2008-09 academic year with a \$12 million budget cut and has been waiting since November, when Governor Schwarzenegger first asked the Legislature to consider mid-year budget cuts, to see what further funding loss it will sustain.

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“Frankly this growth is unprecedented,” said Harris, “community colleges are increasingly the institution of choice for a growing number of students who feel ‘shut-out’ or ‘priced-out’ of other colleges and universities. We will continue to keep the doors to these colleges open, but funding pressures will make it increasingly difficult for students to get the classes they need and to finish their education in a reasonable amount of time.”

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