

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

More community colleges have taken mid-year budget cuts as the economic crisis has worsened:

- ▶ According to a survey of community college directors conducted by the Education Policy Center at the University of Alabama, just two states reported mid-year cuts to their operating budgets during the 2006–07 fiscal year.
- ▶ By 2007–08, nine states reported taking mid-year cuts to their operating budget. Those states included California and Florida, which are two of the largest community college systems in the country.
- ▶ For 2008–09, 34 states, or 71 percent, reported mid-year budget cuts.
- ▶ Four out of five community college directors said they were worried about more budget cuts in 2011, when the extra funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act runs out.¹



State appropriations and tuition are the two biggest sources of revenue for community colleges:

- ▶ According to the American Association of Community Colleges, state appropriations make up the largest source of revenue for community colleges at 38 percent. The second largest source of revenue is tuition and fees, which provide 20 percent of all community college funding.²
- ▶ As state funding has decreased, the price of tuition and fees has risen to take up the slack. Between 2002 and 2005, tuition revenue increased by an average of \$124 per student. Even when state funding picked up slightly in 2006, tuition continued to increase at a slower rate of \$75 per student.
- ▶ Tuition rates for students are rising at an unprecedented rate. In Florida, college students will pay 15 percent more each year until their traditionally low tuition rate catches up with the national average. California students protested and clashed with police in November 2009 over a 32 percent increase in tuition,³ while community college tuitions in Alabama are rising 27 percent in a two-step increase.⁴

Due to funding cuts and a rapid increase in the number of students trying to enroll, community colleges are beginning to place caps on enrollment:

- ▶ Thousands of students were denied entrance to Miami Dade College—the largest community college in the country—for the fall 2009 semester because of the college's inability to add teachers or sections to classes once they were filled.⁵
- ▶ Wayne County Community College, which sits in the heart of the economic collapse in Detroit, was forced to cap student enrollment for the first time in its history after experiencing a 25 percent increase in enrollment.⁶
- ▶ The Idaho legislature's budget director informed policymakers in fall 2009 that they may have to cap college enrollments. The College of Western Idaho found itself nearly \$2 million in the red for the school year after a shocking enrollment increase of 286 percent in just one year.⁷

Community colleges play a vital role in higher education:

- ▶ Because community colleges have open admission policies, they can be an entrance into the world of higher education for those with blemished academic careers. Sixty-one percent of the students enrolled at a community college take at least one remedial course.⁸
- ▶ Community colleges often educate more vulnerable populations. At community colleges:
 - 35 percent are minorities;
 - 39 percent are the first ones in their families to attend college; and
 - 17 percent are single parents.⁹
- ▶ The training offered by community colleges is vital to the health and safety of communities:
 - 59 percent of all new nurses and most health care workers are educated at community colleges, and
 - Nearly 80 percent of firefighters, law enforcement officers and EMTs receive their education through community colleges.¹⁰

¹ The Education Policy Center. "Funding and Access Issues in Public Higher Education: A Community College Perspective." <http://www.insidehighered.com/content/download/317858/4098893/version/1/file/report.pdf>

² American Association of Community Colleges. "Public College Revenues by Source of Revenue." http://www2.aacc.nche.edu/research/index_institutions.htm

³ Education Week. "Parents, students on edge over soaring tuition." Feb. 1, 2010. http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/02/01/328136_usrisingtuition_ap.html?tkn=PRRF144h4ShnB%2BWN9%2FzZLU51olgcYNnba9G2&intc=es

⁴ The Birmingham News. "Alabama community college tuition to jump 27-percent after board vote." Oct. 22, 2009. http://blog.al.com/live/2009/10/alabama_community_college_tuition_increase.html

⁵ Robert A. Jones. "Turning Students Away: The Plight of Florida's Community Colleges Suggests the Depth of the State's Financial Crisis," *National Crosstalk*, Volume 17, No. 2, December 2009, p. 15.

⁶ Robin Erb. "WCCCD caps spring enrollment, school overloaded by economy," *Detroit Free-Press*. <http://www.freep.com/article/20100112/.../WCCCD-caps-spring-enrollment>

⁷ Times-News. "Enrollment caps on campus? That's a higher ed horror story." http://www.magicvalley.com/news/opinion/editorial/article_651652a5-4a3a-5354-bf07-e6a2bcb854d5.html

⁸ Brookings. "Transforming America's Community Colleges: A Federal Policy Proposal to Expand Opportunity and Promote Economic Prosperity." http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2009/0507_community_college_goldrick_rab.aspx

⁹ American Association of Community Colleges. "Community College Fast Facts." accessible at <http://www.insidehighered.com/>

¹⁰ Ibid.



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STATES	Mid-year Budget Cuts in FY 2008–2009		“I am concerned about a potential cut in the 2011 base budget when the one-time ARRA funds are gone.”		
	CUTS	NO CUTS	STRONGLY AGREE/AGREE	NEUTRAL	DISAGREE/STRONGLY DISAGREE
Alaska	N/A				X
Alabama	9%				X
Arkansas		X	X		
Arizona	8%		X		
California	1.5%		X		
Colorado	17.8%		X		
Connecticut	5%		X		
Delaware		X	X		
Florida	4%		X		
Georgia University System	10.5%		X		
Georgia Technical College System	14%			X	
Hawaii	1.6%		X		
Iowa	1.5%		X		
Idaho	6.5%		X		
Illinois	2.5%		X		
Indiana	1%		X		
Kansas	4.3%				X
Kentucky	2%		X		
Louisiana		X	X		
Massachusetts	X		X		
Maryland	X		X		
Maine	2%				X
Michigan	N/A		X		
Minnesota	2.9%		X		
Missouri		X	X		
Mississippi	5%		X		
Montana		X	X		
North Carolina	5%		X		
North Dakota		X			X
Nebraska		X	X		
New Hampshire	3%		X		
New Jersey		X	X		
New Mexico	2.5%		X		
Nevada	8%		X		
New York		X	X		
Ohio		X			X
Oklahoma	X		X		
Oregon	1.1%		X		
Pennsylvania		X	N/A		
Rhode Island	8.6%		X		
South Carolina	24.4%		X		
South Dakota	N/A		N/A		
Tennessee	3.4%		X		
Texas		X	X		
Utah	11.5%		X		
Virginia	5%		X		
Vermont	6.5%		X		
Washington	4.3%				X
Wisconsin	1.5%		X		
West Virginia		X			X
Wyoming		X			X