

October 21, 2009

With the Fall Semester well underway, it is my hope that each and every one of you is experiencing a productive and academically successful semester.

With the impending Spring Semester 2010 registration timeline a few weeks away, I wanted to give you a brief update on important Southwestern College (SWC) efforts to facilitate your success during financially difficult times. Although the budget climate in the State is one that will have a long-lasting impact on all community colleges, SWC will continue to work diligently to monitor its finances in order to continue to provide you with the services that you need to achieve your educational goals.

### ■ Some Facts That Have a Direct Impact on The State Budget and SWC

- California's unemployment rate rose to 12.2 percent in August.
- State income continues its downward trend, and personal income dropped by over 30% during the first fiscal quarter.
- The federal stimulus monies that SWC will receive to augment cuts made to the categorical programs (DSS, EOPS, Matriculation) will amount to less than 30% of what the state budget had promised.
- The California Department of Finance estimates that California will start its next fiscal year with a deficit of \$7 billion, absent corrective actions.

The result of these facts is that mid-year cuts are almost certain and may well exceed our contingency budgeted for that purpose.

### ■ Southwestern College Proactive Measures/Initiatives

- Continue Serving the Same Number of Students as Last Year  
Although the State is providing SWC with less funding to serve students this year and has reduced our enrollment, SWC has tapped into its resources to continue to serve the same number of students as last year.
- Priority Registration  
The College has a priority registration process that will be offered in the following order to facilitate your degree/certificate completion and transfer preparation:
  1. Students in the following programs
    - Veterans Services, Extended Opportunity Programs & Services (EOPS), Disability Support Services (DSS), and Vocational Rehabilitation
    - CalWORKs, MESA, MEXUS, Puente, ASO (Executive and Senate Members), and University Links
  2. Continuing students
    - 50 to 90 units completed at Southwestern College
    - 30 to 49 units completed at Southwestern College
    - 0 to 29 units completed at Southwestern College
    - 90+ units completed at Southwestern College
  3. New and former students on a first come, first served basis

As our College continues to face additional State budget cuts, the success of our students remains at the forefront of all decisions. I wish you much success this semester and encourage you to register early for the Spring 2010 semester. If you are in need of student support services as you continue with your studies, please visit the Cesar E. Chavez Student Services Center located in the heart of the Chula Vista campus, or any of our Higher Education Centers in National City, San Ysidro and Otay Mesa.

Sincerely,



Raj K. Chopra, Ph.D.  
Superintendent/President