

# Clackamas Print



Bringing  
beauty to  
campus

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An independent, student-run newspaper

Clackamas Community College, Oregon City, OR

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“Everything in the universe has rhythm.

Everything dances.”

Maya Angelou

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Beginning and Intermediate Ballet students practice their form in class Wednesday, Oct. 10, 2007.

Alexandria Vallelunga Clackamas Print

Fall enrollment drops,  
Clackamas steps up to  
retain funding

**Megan Koler**

The Clackamas Print

The statistics are in: Clackamas' full-time enrollment is down by 5 percent, and that means less funding.

Last Wednesday, the Clackamas Community College Board of Education was presented with an enrollment report including statistics for the 2006-2007 school year and early Fall Term highlights.

For the last three years, full-time enrollment has been diminishing, and according to Dean of Enrollment Diane Drebin, the trend continues.

Unfortunately, the money Clackamas receives from the state is based on full-time equivalency (FTE) points.

“The FTE is a formula that the state department has created,” said Drebin.

One FTE is equal to a student who has been at the college for the equivalent of 510 hours spread over a year's time.

“That's how we get funded from the state,” she added. “We get tuition, and we get fees, and then we get this funding based on our FTE.”

The overall headcount, which includes full-time, part-time and non-credit students, is up by 23 percent.

“The economy has improved in our district, and that usually means that more students have less time for school because of work,” said Drebin.

One of the goals of the college has been to improve retention and encourage faculty to be directly in contact with students.

“We expect that the faculty are staying connected with

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## Educational erosion hits home

*Sen. Kurt Schrader asks community colleges to show program achievements to justify legislative budget spending*

**Lydia E. Bashaw**

News Editor

Community college successes are being put into the spotlight once again, but this time the outcome will affect legislative budgeting.

In a Board of Education meeting Wednesday, Oct. 10, Sen. Kurt Schrader laid the future educational budget outlook on the table.

Schrader's goals for 2008 are the same as last year, and he is aware that community colleges need funding. However, there is hesitation concerning how to judge the outcomes of community college programs.

“Everyone should be able to graduate from a community college without debt,” said Schrader. “Only 13 to 14 percent of community college students transfer, and only 24 percent are completing their associate [degree].”

Clackamas is growing in numbers, with more people entering as part-time students, yet the number of full-timers is going down. Between full-time losses and the number of individuals entering non-associate-degree programs, colleges must reevaluate how they assess performance.

“We need results,” said Schrader. “We need to fix these programs.”

The statistics most often used to evaluate success have been those related to degree and transfer programs. A large number of Clackamas' population is enrolled in certificate and other training classes, which is often ignored when it comes to statistics.

Associated Student Government President Tim Lussier shared his concerns with the funding outlook.

“It's frustrating to work so hard for a good amount of funding,” said Lussier, “[and] then still have to raise

tuition and carry the college on the backs of students.”

The legislative budget for 2007 went up, raising the amount of money that community colleges would receive by almost 18 percent. Students in the low-income bracket had their financial aid funding double.

Though the increase helped some students, part-timers and individuals from a higher income class were left hanging. Most grants are only available for full-time students below a certain level of income. Tuition for this year went up as well, raising the overall price of school.

Lussier shared that, even though

Schrader's outlook on future community college funding is low. The money set aside during economic expansion, known as the Rainy Day Fund, has been reduced to nothing. This is a bad indication for community colleges that lack funding already.

“Funding and enrollment is down,” said Schrader, “and that's obviously a bad sign.”

Oregon tuition is already much higher than in most states. According to Statemaster.com, an online database of over 1,000 state government statistics, Oregon is ranked 15th nationwide for tuition costs. We also have a low amount of aid and scholarship help for higher education.

This leaves Oregon on the lowest rungs of education in the United States.

Clackamas itself is predicting having to raise tuition \$2 a year to keep the college at a functioning level. The price of a higher education is going up while the government puts community college funding on the backburner.

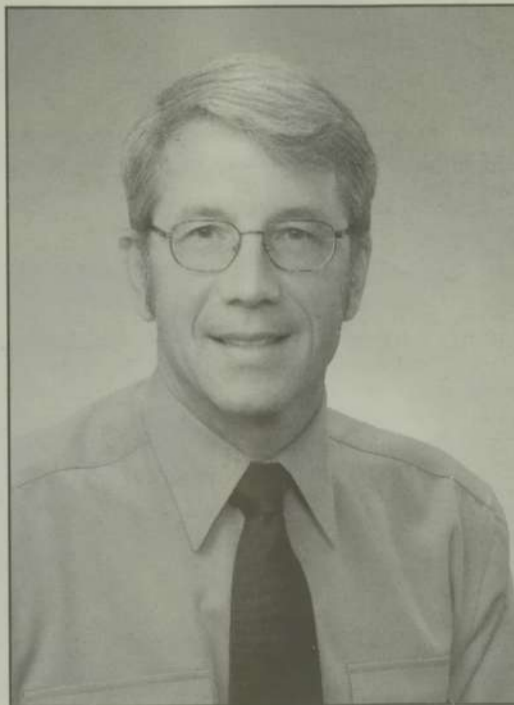
“I think we need to increase the [state's] college budget,” said Lussier, “so we can keep tuition low ... we need to stop this unsustainable raising of our tuition. Why is our college forecasting raising tuition ... every year for the next three years?”

In comparison to other community colleges, Clackamas has the lowest tuition statewide, ranking several dollars below the others. However, with tuition increases on the college's horizon, Clackamas students can look forward to less government help and higher prices for school.

“Oregon does not get a good grade,” said Schrader, “both in the post-secondary schooling levels and on a lower level.”

Many questions are left on the table for legislature, which begins its session in February. The biggest concern for students is where the tuition increases will stop and funding increases will begin.

For now, college funding and student-cost ride the legislative teeter-totter.



SCHRADER