

Next year tight, says RCC board

The Rogue Community College Board of Education approved in June the college's proposed \$26.6 million budget for 2003-04.

Reaching agreements with faculty and classified associations on salary freezes and benefit adjustments played a key role in responding to the severe budget crunch facing the college, said RCC President Rick Levine. Members of each association had previously approved the agreements and the board accepted the changes. RCC administrators' wages have also been frozen for FY 2003-04.

In compiling the budget, college administrators had faced a \$2.86 million revenue reduction in state funding over the next two years. Adding to budgetary problems is RCC's share of the unfunded actuarial liability caused by the shortfall in the Oregon Public Employees Retirement System (PERS), expected to cost the college an additional \$1.2 million per year.

To attain a balanced budget the college has increased tuition and fees, reduced programs, personnel, and expenditures, and attained greater operating efficiencies through a college-wide redesign process. The approved budget returns RCC to 1998 funding levels.

"Thanks to the collaborative spirit of these bargaining processes with the associations we have been able to maintain program quality. The agreements are especially important as we are facing steadily eroding state support. We truly appreciate the hard work that went into this process and the outcomes we've been able to arrive at," Levine said.

RCC had worked to build "zero cost" agreements that would neither cost the college additional money nor hurt employees. RCC uses a unique approach to collective bargaining, working with teams comprised of association member and management representatives, said Tom Bradbeer, employee relations manager.

The agreement reached with members of the RCC Oregon School Employees Association will result in a freeze on classified staff salaries in 2003-04; they will receive a cost-of-living adjustments for the following year.

The agreement also provides a new tiered-rate system for group health insurance, replacing the former composite rate system. The employee share of individual, two-party, or full-family coverage will be specified. Under the new agreement the college share will increase no more than 6 percent per year beyond the new cap. Approximately 178 employees are covered by the agreement.

The faculty agreement calls for a reduction in contract days from 182 to 177, but does not decrease days of instruction. Salary schedule for faculty is frozen for 2003-04.

Instructors eligible for step increases will not receive the raise until January 2004.

The agreement also refines workload adjustments based on class sizes and adds security for adjunct instructors.

SUNDAY EVENING/LATE NIGHT TV schedule grid for July 20, 2003. Columns include time slots (6:00-5:30) and channels (WBTV, FOXFAM, FOX, NBC, ESPN, etc.). Rows list programs like 'The Cable Guy', 'Dumb & Dumber', 'The Restaurant', etc.

MONDAY EVENING/LATE NIGHT TV schedule grid for July 21, 2003. Columns include time slots (6:00-5:30) and channels (WBTV, FOXFAM, FOX, NBC, ESPN, etc.). Rows list programs like 'Frequent Flyer', 'The Sopranos', 'The X-Files', etc.

TUESDAY EVENING/LATE NIGHT TV schedule grid for July 22, 2003. Columns include time slots (6:00-5:30) and channels (WBTV, FOXFAM, FOX, NBC, ESPN, etc.). Rows list programs like 'Frequent Flyer', 'The Sopranos', 'The X-Files', etc.

WEDNESDAY EVENING/LATE NIGHT TV schedule grid for July 23, 2003. Columns include time slots (6:00-5:30) and channels (WBTV, FOXFAM, FOX, NBC, ESPN, etc.). Rows list programs like 'Ripley's Believe It or Not!', 'The Sopranos', 'The X-Files', etc.