



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

March 22, 2012

Contact: Paige Marlatt Dorr

Office: 916.327.5356

Cell: 916.801.8300

Office E-mail: pdorr@cccco.edu

Mobile E-mail: pmarlatt@comcast.net

California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott Returns to Pasadena City College for "State of Community Colleges" Address, Tackles Impact of Budget *Education leader was Pasadena City College president from 1987 to 1995*

PASADENA, Calif. – California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott, in a major address delivered today at a college he once led as president, said the state must come to terms with its disinvestment in higher education and acknowledge the human and economic tolls of shutting hundreds of thousands of students out of college.

Scott, speaking to a campus-wide audience at Pasadena City College, said the latest blow dealt to higher education will mean that another 16,000 community college students will not be able to transfer to California State University in the spring of 2013. He noted that years of budget cuts to community colleges have left masses of high school graduates unable to enroll in the two-year system.

"Last month, we had the February surprise -- a \$149 million mid-year cut we didn't expect, leading to even more course reductions and layoffs in our system. Now, we have the March surprise -- a cruel reality that California State University can afford to take only a handful of our transfer students next spring," Scott said in prepared remarks. "Please, no more surprises. As a state we have to own up to the fact that we are imperiling our economic competitiveness and setting a path to a bleak future for our state and our communities."

The CSU enrollment cuts announced this week, Scott noted, will impact students already in the community college system as well as new students trying to get in. Many of those who are eligible for transfer in the spring are likely to remain at community colleges, further crowding out recent high school graduates and the unemployed who are turning to the two-year system for job training skills.

Chancellor Scott said he understood the position that California State University Chancellor Charles B. Reed is in.

"Chancellor Reed has been put in a tough spot and has to do what he thinks is fiscally prudent to prepare his colleges for the worst if Gov. Brown's tax initiative does not pass in November," Scott said. "We have been working hard together to improve transfer for our students and to make the process more efficient so we can serve greater numbers of students with the resources we have. But there is only so much either of us can do if our systems are not funded to hire the faculty and staff to keep our classrooms open."

For spring 2013, CSU will consider only community college students who have earned the new SB 1440 [Associate Degree for Transfer](#). Those students will be offered admission to eight state campuses (Channel Islands, Chico, East Bay, Fullerton, Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Bernardino and Sonoma). All but three of the state's 112 community colleges have approved Associate Degree for Transfer programs in at least two majors and 10 colleges have them in five or more majors.

In the 2011-12 budget, the California Community Colleges was cut \$400 million, and in December mid-year "trigger" cuts resulted in an additional \$102 million reduction because state revenues fell short of projections. Then, in February 2012, the two-year system took an additional \$149 million unexpected cut. Since 2008-09, the college system has seen its funding slashed by \$809 million, which translates into a 12 percent reduction.

State budget cuts have forced community college campuses to reduce course offerings by as much as 20 percent at a time when more students than ever are seeking admission. The cuts have resulted in a greater number of students squeezing into fewer classes and waitlisted seats soaring in to the tens of thousands. Since the 2009-10 academic year, the California Community Colleges enrollment has decreased by nearly 300,000 students. The decline is directly attributed to the state's funding reductions because students simply cannot get into the classes they need to achieve their educational goals.

Scott made his comments at a "State of Community Colleges" address at the Pasadena campus. The system leader served as president of the college from 1987 to 1995 before being elected to the state Legislature and later becoming chancellor of the largest system of higher education in the nation.

"We should be working together to rebuild California and making it a better place for our children," Scott said. "Dreams are necessary to live. If we keep dashing college dreams and denying opportunities for Californians, we're going to lose our best and brightest to other states which will only further exacerbate our state's economic situation."

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.6 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills education and prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. For more information about the community colleges, please visit <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/>.

###