



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

PRESS RELEASE

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California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Briefs Student Newspaper Editors on Upcoming Enrollment Priority Changes

Information will help current students make adjustments to avoid losing priority, classroom seats

SACRAMENTO, Calif. -- California Community Colleges Vice Chancellor for Student Services & Special Programs [Linda Michalowski](#) briefed members of community college student newspapers and their faculty advisors today on enrollment priority regulation changes set to take effect in the fall 2014 term. The teleconference today gives student newspaper writers and editors the opportunity to present information to current students who may be on probation or facing a unit cap so they can seek help to improve their academic standing over the next 18 months and carefully plan their remaining courses.

In September 2012 the California Community Colleges Board of Governors approved a regulation to establish system-wide enrollment priorities designed to ensure classes are available for students seeking job training, degree attainment or transfer to a four-year university and to reward students who make progress toward their educational goals.

Under the statewide priority enrollment regulation, new students who have completed college orientation, assessment and developed education plans as well as continuing students in good academic standing will now have priority over students who do not meet these criteria. To be in good academic standing, a student cannot be on Academic Probation or Progress Probation for two consecutive terms. In addition, students who have accumulated 100 or more units – excluding most basic skills English and math and English as a Second Language classes - by fall 2014 will lose priority enrollment. Only 60 units are typically needed to earn an associate degree or to transfer to a four-year university.

“The priority enrollment change allows colleges to make sure there is room for students seeking job training, career advancement, transfer preparation and basic skills by helping more students to identify their educational goals and move forward to achieve them,” Michalowski said. “We know that students are more likely to be successful if they get off to a good start by receiving orientation to the college, assessment to get them into the right classes, and if they have an education plan. We want to make sure that students have good advice and support services from the beginning of their college experience. In turn, we want students to succeed in their classes and progress toward their goals.”

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Among the students who qualify for priority enrollment, active-duty military and recent veterans and current and former foster youth will continue to have first call on courses as is provided by California law, followed by students in Extended Opportunity Programs and Services and Disabled Students Programs and Services. Community college districts will have options on how they implement the rules as long as they meet the basic state requirements.

Recent budget cuts have shut nearly 500,000 students out of community colleges since the 2008-09 academic year, and course offerings have been slashed by 24 percent. The difficult budget climate forced the California Community Colleges system to reexamine its practices and the Student Success Task Force was created out of this need. The task force identified that rewarding students who accumulated credits, often more than needed for an associate degree or to transfer, with priority enrollment was creating a barrier to student success. These students take up seats in classrooms and crowd out newer students focused on job training, degree attainment or transfer.

The 72 districts that make up the California Community Colleges system do maintain discretion to adopt policies exempting certain categories of students from the 100-unit limit, such as those in high-unit majors or programs.

Districts will be required to adopt an appeals policy and process for students who lose priority due to circumstances beyond their control such as accidents or illness. Districts also will have discretion in dealing with students who have been declared academically ineligible or on probation if they have shown significant improvement.

“One of the best ways we can get this important information out to our 2.4 million students is through on-campus newspapers, which do a great job of informing students on policies that impact them directly,” Michalowski said. “Those students who face being put in the back of the line will now have plenty of time to make adjustments to their educational plan and experience a successful outcome in their academic pursuits.”

Armed with the information about the priority enrollment changes, students can carefully plan their remaining courses over the summer 2013, fall 2013 and spring 2014 terms.

The [California Community Colleges](#) is the largest system of higher education in the nation. It is composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.4 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills courses in English and math, and prepare students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities. The Chancellor’s Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges.

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EDITOR’S NOTE:

To hear the audio from the teleconference, go to :

http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/Portals/0/AudioGallery/03-27-13/StudentMediaBriefing_PriorityEnrollment.mp3