



NEWS

MesaStateCollege
Office of Development
1100 North Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501-3122
Phone: 970-248-1868
Fax: 970-248-1076
www.mesastate.edu

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Contact: Dana Nunn

970.248.1868

970.640.0421

Mesa State reduces spending for remainder of fiscal year

Grand Junction – As part of its mid-year budget analysis, Mesa State College officials have identified approximately \$750,000 in budget reductions. This reduction coincides with the Governor’s Office of State Planning and Budget calling on higher education institutions to initially cut planned spending for Fiscal Year 2008/2009.

“Our goal has always been to find operating efficiencies and savings while protecting the high quality learning experience we offer,” said Mesa State President Tim Foster. “These budget cuts are more difficult to make halfway through the year, exacerbating the already difficult choices we face, but regardless of tough times, the college will continue to focus on quality education and student success.”

Given the economic forecast, college officials are working to identify additional cuts to prepare for the likelihood of cuts in state funds to higher education for the 2009/2010 fiscal year, Foster said.

“We have the lowest administrative costs of any higher education institution in the state (see attachment). We are already lean, with 75 percent of our budget going to payroll but we know these are tough times for everyone,” Foster said.

“We’ll go as far as we can with budget cuts but at some point, we will also have to look at the revenue side of the equation. As always, when we consider tuition increases we will do so with an eye on ensuring that our students have access to and can afford college. This obviously entails doing all we can to ensure we continue to provide the financial aid that is much needed by our students,” he said.

Per normal protocol in the annual budget process, college administrators followed a set of guiding principles in identifying initial cost reductions. Those principles are:

- Budget conservatively;
- Protect life, health and safety of the campus community;
- Protect the quality learning experience that is offered;
- Encourage ways to be better and meet state and regional needs;
- Pursue effective productivity gains;
- Continue implementation of cost containment and operating efficiencies; and,
- Eliminate functions that do not add a corresponding value that exceeds their cost.

The college has identified about half of the spending reduction in non-personnel budget items that it will cut. Those reductions are found in such items as travel, supplies, printing, and copying.

The other half can be found through the consolidation and reorganization of academic services, student services and financial service. The reorganization will reduce some duplication of effort and more acutely focus on customer services essential to student success.

Mesa State received approximately \$24 million in state funding for FY 2008/09.

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