



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 26, 2008

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Budget Crisis a Major Factor for Cal Poly Fall 2008 Enrollment

SAN LUIS OBISPO – The downward spiral of California’s state budget crisis is a major factor in shaping this fall’s Cal Poly undergraduate class. A total of 4,150 undergraduate students are expected to enroll this fall, 1,131 less than the number of students enrolled in fall 2007.

In addition, 700-750 fewer new students will be enrolled during the off quarters of winter, spring and summer, bringing the total to 1,831-1,881 fewer new students admitted to Cal Poly than last year.

This comes as the number of applicants to Cal Poly increased according to James Maraviglia, assistant vice president of admissions, recruitment and financial aid. “Unlike many institutions, Cal Poly applicants compete with other students in their individual fields – resulting in some majors being more competitive than others,” Maraviglia said.

Engineering is one of the more competitive majors at Cal Poly. The number of College of Engineering applicants increased by 14.1 percent this year, for a total of 7,791. “We had 400 engineering applicants – each with a perfect 4.0 GPA – turned away for admission this fall,” Maraviglia said.

Along with College of Engineering, applications increased for all other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) related colleges at Cal Poly, which includes the College of Agriculture, Food and Environmental Sciences, College of Architecture and Environmental Design, and College of Science and Mathematics.

Between the four colleges, Cal Poly will turn away more than 13,500 STEM eligible students this year.

Budget cuts proposed by Governor Schwarzenegger for the 2008-09 fiscal year would fund \$386.1 million less than requested by the CSU, according to Larry Kelley, vice president for administration and finance. Of that number, \$312 million would be an outright budget cut. An additional \$73.2 million shortfall would occur without funds to offset the need for a student fee increase.

Under the proposed budget cuts, the 2008-09 revenue shortfall for Cal Poly would be \$9.9 million without a fee increase, or, \$7.3 million if a fee increase was implemented, he explained.

These proposed cuts would come on top of a \$522 million dollar cut to the entire CSU system earlier this decade; bringing the total system-wide cuts to nearly \$1 billion in the last eight years, Kelley added.

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