

**Modesto Junior College
Academic Senate
Resolution: SP11-C
Budget Cut Alternatives**

Proposed by: Senate Executive Board

Whereas: Modesto Junior College is anticipating a severe reduction in funding for the 2011-12 academic year, the potential extent of which only became clear during the current semester, and

Whereas: The MJC Academic Senate responded to the need for prompt action by entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the college president, in part to give the Senate Planning and Budget Committee and the full Senate an opportunity to vote on the president's plan for budget reduction since the president's plan was not conceived in collaboration with the Planning and Budget Committee, and

Whereas: In MJC Academic Senate Resolution SP11-B, the Senate clearly stated that a responsible plan for spending reduction should include prioritization of affected academic programs so that they could be retained or restored should funding become available, and

Whereas: The plan presented by the college president contains no such prioritization, and subsequent testimony before the Academic Senate and its Planning and Budget Committee showed that rationales stated for eliminating academic programs contained significant instances of faulty assumptions and inaccurate data, and

Whereas: The proposal incorrectly directs reassignment and increase of faculty workload, which is actually the purview of YFA and District contractual agreements, and

Whereas: Despite the proposal to eliminate viable academic programs and eliminate the positions of tenured instructors at MJC, the hiring of new full-time instructors for permanent positions at our college is still moving forward, and

Whereas: The proposal would substantially change the MJC curriculum in ways the Academic Senate believes would undermine achieving the college mission and create a severe and unjustifiable hardship for a significant number of students enrolled in those programs, and

Whereas: The Academic Senate is mindful of its responsibilities as primarily relied upon for decisions relating to curriculum and for mutual agreement on matters relating to institutional planning and budget development, and

Whereas: The Academic Senate has identified modifications of the budget proposal that would achieve overall budget reductions equal to those proposed, without the attendant damage to our college caused by eliminating viable academic programs and teaching positions, thus eliminating any "substantial fiscal hardship" caused by not adopting the current proposal, and

- Whereas:** The continued success of our college, including its financial health, may depend on maintaining the viability of the academic programs we offer,
- Therefore:** **Be it resolved**, that the MJC Academic Senate endorses the rejection of the MJC President's budget recommendation by the MJC Senate's Planning and Budget Committee; and
- Therefore:** **Be it further resolved**, that the MJC Academic Senate endorses and proposes the attached alternative budgetary solutions as a revision to the college president's proposal and an initial response to the present situation, to the extent that they are practical and capable of meeting the budget shortfall as well as District and YFA contractual agreements; and
- Therefore:** **Be it further resolved**, that the MJC Academic Senate insists that in the event that funding is restored by the state or other money becomes available through careful district-wide planning and budget review processes, restoration of any academic programs eliminated be given a very high priority in the use of that funding, and that the YCCD District and the Academic Senate of Modesto Junior College work collegially, under the provisions of YCCD Board Policy 4103, toward the continuation of academic excellence at Modesto Junior College.
- Therefore:** **Be it further resolved**, that the MJC Academic Senate insists that the MJC President work collaboratively with the Academic Senate in creating an alternative budget solution; and
- Therefore:** **Be it finally resolved**, that the MJC Academic Senate will develop a method of using program review information to automatically trigger the use of the Program Viability Process in cases where it is warranted.

First Reading:

Final Action:

Disposition:

The elimination and reduction of academic programs outlined in the President's proposal provides a total savings of about \$1,500,000. That amount of budget savings can be achieved without eliminating or reducing programs, by making use of some or all of the following suggestions:

1. **Begin the Program Viability Process for every single program identified in the President's recommendation.** Determining if a program should be discontinued or not is a very difficult question to answer in a short time period. While we agree in principle that some programs may appropriately need to be eliminated or reduced, we do not believe that it is possible to make that determination accurately without a significant investment of time. We will respond to the President's proposal by performing the detailed investigation necessary for us to agree or disagree with his recommendations. The Program Viability Process specifically sets a timeline for resolution "by the end of the next semester, so a full report will be available to the Board by the beginning of the Spring Semester, 2012. This will allow students already in these programs to finish their certificates and degrees.
2. **Do not open the new buildings under construction from Measure E.** In a time when the college is facing a dangerously tight budget, 'expanding' to fill new buildings is uncalled for. Not immediately occupying the new buildings will buy time for the Program Viability Process to be enacted as mentioned above. The buildings will be opened once enough time to assess program viability has been taken.
3. **Look at the PTOL budget for more reductions.** In the current proposal, PTOL is only being cut 10%, which is LESS than the overall percent of the college budget cut. It is vital that PTOL be reduced more significantly than this if we are considering elimination of tenured faculty and academic programs. If the Summer 2011 Session is not necessary to achieve growth funding, it should be cancelled.
4. **Even in the case that cuts must be made immediately, the Art, Industrial Technology, and Library positions do not meet the criteria.** A set of criteria for evaluating these cuts was developed at the February 4 Planning and Budget meeting. The proposed cuts of one faculty each in Art, Industrial Technology, and Library do not appear to meet those criteria, so they should not go forward. That savings of about \$300,000 should be found elsewhere, through the alternative suggestions being made here or otherwise.
5. **Cancel plans to hire new tenure track faculty positions.** If money is so tight that we must eliminate academic programs and positions, and break the honored and necessary bond of tenure, then money cannot be available to hire new faculty members. Not hiring the two faculty positions under consideration immediately saves the majority of the budget needed to protect the three positions where cuts seem least justified.
6. **Adjust more contracts to fit the compressed calendar.** Especially considering the proposal to reduce the classified support for the Senate to a 10-month contract, a much broader look at beyond-the-semester contracts should be undertaken. The Senate business of shared governance does NOT stop over the summer, so it does not appear reasonable to reduce in that area but not others that DO stop over the summer.