Enrollment grows; budget tightens

Beaufort County Community College is caught in a Catch-22, as Paul Dunn reported in a front page article in the Washington Daily News.

The good news is that the school just celebrated its largest-ever spring enrollment.

Classes began Jan. 7.

According to school officials, 1,747 students are enrolled this semester. That nips the previous spring record of 1,716 students in 2003. Spring 2008 enrollment peaked at 1,512 students.

The bad news is that the lousy economy has forced BCCC to try and educate more students without additional funding to help pay related costs.

Faced with its own budget shortfall, North Carolina whacked BCCC with two separate budget reversions in the current fiscal year — the first in September at 2 percent, the second an additional 1 percent in November.

Phillip Price, BCCC dean of administrative services, told the Daily News that the first reversion eliminated $186,218 from the school’s budget; the second, $93,109.

Despite the reversions, BCCC President David McLawhorn told Dunn that the school hasn’t eliminated any classes. “The classes would be the last things we would have to affect,” he said.

The cuts are being felt in other ways, though, Dunn reported.

Price cited restrictions on such expenditures as out-of-state travel, supplies and equipment.

The college also is prohibited from filling vacant employee positions unless directly related to classroom instruction, Price added. There are currently no open positions in that category.

Price doesn’t expect further reversions in the current fiscal year, though he won’t bet against one or more in 2009-10.

“I expect there will be a reversion next year,” said Price, who has experienced reversions in four of the five years he’s worked at the college.

The cuts, so far, are painful, but not insurmountable, McLawhorn said. Further

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Job Fair Workshop
Learn how to impress business recruiters at a workshop sponsored by the BCCC Career Center, noon, Tuesday, March 31, Student Lounge, Building 9.
For more information, contact Sandria McFadden at 940-6314 or SandyMcF@beaufortccc.edu.