



California Community Colleges

PRESS RELEASE

March 23, 2020

Contact: Christina Jimenez

Office: 916-322-4004

Office E-mail: cjimenez@CCCCO.edu

California Community Colleges Chancellor Takes Additional Actions to Help Students and Ensure Continuity of Instruction at 115 Colleges

SACRAMENTO, Calif. —California Community Colleges Chancellor Eloy Ortiz Oakley on Monday announced a series of actions, including through executive order, to help ensure that teaching and learning continues at all 115 community colleges and that students are not penalized academically or financially due to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Chancellor's Office has provided the ability for all colleges to convert in-person classes to online. Many colleges have suspended classes temporarily and are using scheduled or rescheduled spring breaks to make this transition.

"Make no mistake, the educational mission of the California Community Colleges is critical to our state, and teaching and learning continues," Oakley said. "Our colleges are converting in-person courses and labs to online to provide students with the instruction they need to improve their lives and the lives of their families. We continue to train first-responders needed to mobilize during this emergency."

Recognizing that some students may be forced to withdraw due to the emergency, Oakley signed an [executive order](#) that suspends state and local regulations to ensure students are not penalized academically and will more easily be able to receive refunds for enrollment fees.

Students who withdraw because of the current crisis will receive an excused withdrawal on their transcripts, which will not count against academic progress requirements. The order temporarily waives requirements for districts to obtain approval from the state Chancellor's Office to refund enrollment fees to these students.

The Chancellor's Office has also taken the following actions:

- Moved to purchase a virtual lab platform that supports a range of science-related disciplines. This will be the first purchase to support system-wide transition to virtual labs. All colleges will have access

to the platform services, including expanded support and technical assistance for faculty.

- Clarified for colleges how attendance reporting for purposes of funding will be calculated once in-person courses have been converted to online.
- Created a [COVID-19 section](#) of its website that includes answers to [frequently asked questions](#) for students. The Chancellor's Office is also providing weekly webinars for college leaders on COVID-19 response.
- Requested that the Board of Registered Nursing provide emergency exemptions reducing requirements of clinical hours for nursing students in direct patient care and allowing more simulated hours. This is needed because many health care facilities are excluding nursing students from clinical rotations because of safety concerns. More than 2,100 students in health and nursing have been affected at a time when professionals in these fields will be essential.
- Inventoried college residential hall facilities that could be converted if needed as part of the statewide COVID-19 medical surge response as well as tallied stocks of ventilators, masks and other Personal Protection Equipment in allied health programs.

“Our colleges are responding with compassion and innovation,” Oakley said. “Many are finding ways to put computers into the hands of students who previously lacked them and continuing to provide food to students in need. Our students continue to inspire us, with many serving as essential workers, volunteers and conscientious neighbors to help California meet this moment.”

Additionally, the Chancellor's Office will partner with the Foundation for California Community Colleges as it launches a statewide emergency response campaign for students and their families impacted by the pandemic. The campaign aims to engage philanthropic foundations, corporate partners, and individual donors to address urgent needs so students have access to housing, food, technology, and other critical resources during this crisis.

Philanthropic and corporate partners, as well as those looking to make a major gift or grant, are encouraged to contact the Foundation at relief@foundationccc.org. Individual donations are also being accepted through the Foundation and will be deployed to individual colleges supporting students impacted by lost wages, campus closures, and the transition to distance education caused by COVID-19. Check [here](#) for details on how to give now.

The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation, composed of 73 districts and 115 colleges serving 2.1 million students per year. California community colleges provide career education and workforce training; guaranteed transfer to four-year universities; degree and certificate pathways; and basic skills education in English and math. As the state's engine for social and economic mobility, the California Community Colleges supports the [Vision for Success](#), a strategic plan designed to improve student success outcomes, increase transfer rates and eliminate achievement gaps. For more information, please visit the [California Community Colleges website](#) or follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).