

August 10, 2009

As you no doubt know, the State of California is facing a very dire budget shortfall. The budget that was just recently passed by the legislature included very deep cuts in funding to the CSU system. These cuts follow the already dramatic cuts we received during the 2008-2009 school year.

To deal with the most recent cuts, the Psychology Department has been forced to cancel several classes in which students were enrolled. We understand the severe consequences that such cancellations will have on Psychology majors. But, these cancellations were unavoidable. Essentially, the Psychology Department does not have enough funding from the State of California to staff a sufficient number of classes needed to meet student demand. The situation remains up in the air. Unfortunately, further cancellations are possible as the budget situation gets clarified.

The Psychology Department deeply regrets the need to cancel these classes, especially the disruption that these cuts will cause to our majors' plans. Most classes in the department are full and are closed to further enrollment, so students who were enrolled in canceled classes may not be able to find a replacement class to fill their schedules. All Psychology faculty have been instructed not to over-enroll their classes.

Another way the budget crisis will affect Psychology students is that the State of California has imposed a mandatory furlough on employees. This means that all Psychology Department personnel are required to take two unpaid days off per month. One result of this will be that the staff will take a furlough day every other Friday; this will necessitate the closure of the Department Office (H-830M) on those Fridays.

In addition, faculty must take furlough days. In fact, they are required to sign a form promising that they will not work on their furlough days. It is not clear how faculty furlough days will be handled yet. However, it is likely that some of these days will fall on class days. This means that instructors would notify classes ahead of time that, on a particular date, class will not meet because it is a furlough day. Students should also expect that instructors will not be allowed to respond to e-mails on furlough days.

Despite the very troubling financial situation, Psychology Department faculty and staff members continue to be committed to providing the highest quality education to our students that we can. Everyone in the Psychology Department (faculty, staff and students) will be experiencing a lot of stress this semester. We ask for your cooperation as we all try to make the best of an undeniably bad situation.

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