

RIVERSIDE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Moreno Valley • Norco • Riverside

April 10, 2009

Chief Ronny Coleman (Ret.), Chairman
State Training and Education Advisory Committee
P.O. Box 944246
Sacramento, CA 94244-2460

Dear Chief Coleman and STEAC Members:

I am writing to ask your reconsideration of the student cap for the new Training Instructor Series. Before I get into the details of my request, I would like to commend the rewrite committee and STEAC for the long-awaited rewrite of the Instructor Series. I have taught Instructor 1A and 1B for a number of years, and applaud the changes and their appropriateness to the content of the Fire Officer and Instructor Series. I had the pleasure of attending the upgrade class at Heartland Fire Training Facility in February, where the new changes were unveiled. It is obvious that a great deal of thought and effort went into the changes, and for this, I thank the rewrite committee and members of STEAC for making the curriculum useful and relevant to today's needs.

With regard to my request for the committee to reconsider the student cap for the Training Instructor Series, this request is largely based upon the fiscal impact to the community colleges. Since the recent collapse of the economy and significant unemployment in California, community college districts have been inundated with student enrollments. At my campus, our enrollments are up nearly twenty percent. As educators, we normally regard increased enrollment as a "good thing", but the downside in this situation is that we are now tasked with educating additional students without receiving additional apportionment moneys from the state. The money is simply not there. Over the past year, we have been asked by our administration to run our classes full or over cap to accommodate as many students as possible. My District is presently accommodating additional students for this academic year by dipping into its reserve fund. For next year, we are expected to cap and over enroll courses, and to be prepared to cut sections if necessary. Please understand that I am fortunate. Many of my colleagues have already been forced to cut numerous sections from their schedules to accommodate these very difficult financial times.

When the new Instructor Series came out, the new standards mandated that enrollments over 16 students require a second lab instructor. There have been numerous discussions about why the cap issue wasn't brought up before it became a regulation. I do not have a



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good answer or excuse, except to say it got by me and many others. This correspondence is not intended to address this issue, it is to highlight the fiscal impact of what this means to an institution. I have put together a cost comparison to show the committee what it costs to run and Instructor 1A class per the old standard, and what it will cost to run the new Training Instructor 1A with two instructors. I have used the lecture and lab rates that are paid by Riverside Community College District (RCCD) and classroom fees that are associated with classes at the Ben Clark Public Safety Training Center where our fire courses are taught:

Cost for Instructor 1A (prior to July 1, 2009):

Course Hours: 40 hours lecture/2 units

Instructor Salary: \$71.85/hour

Total Salary: \$2874.00

Room Cost: 5 days

Room Rate: 226.51/day

Total Room fees: \$1132.55

Total Cost: \$4,006.55

Cost for Training Instructor 1A (after July 1, 2009)

Course Hours: 24 Lecture and 16 hours lab/ 1.25 units

Instructor Salaries:

\$71.85/lecture (71.85 x 24 hours)= 1,724.40

\$57.36/lab (57.36 x 16 hours x 2 instructors)= 1,835.52

Total Salary: \$ 3,559.92

Room Rate: 226.51

Room Cost: 7 days (5 regular days, plus 2 lab days) \$1,585.57

Total Cost: \$5,145.49

As you can see from this analysis that the cost for running the new instructor course is \$1138.94 more than it cost previously. In addition, RCCD offered Instructor 1A eight times this academic year. If we were to offer the same number of sections for next academic year, it would cost us an additional \$9,111.52 to do so. The analysis for Instructor 1B would be similar. Additionally, the new series will involve Training Instructor 1C, for which we will have to absorb the cost of instructor salaries and room rental for this new course. I would like to make it abundantly clear that we, me and my other Fire Instructor colleagues here at RCCD, are delighted with the curricular changes, but as a program Director in charge of a budget, I do not have enough fiscal resources to accommodate all of the additional costs.

I am requesting that STEAC reevaluate its position of capping the classes at 25 and consider expanding the enrollment to 32 students for the lecture portion, and 16 students for the lab portions of the class. After attending the upgrade training, examining the curricular changes, and discussing with my other Fire Instructor colleagues, I am convinced that the curriculum can be delivered to the standard that is required of State

Fire Training courses. Furthermore, with the second instructor, much of the grading and other work that was tasked to one instructor can now be shared between two instructors.

I offer this last cost analysis to perhaps help the committee understand the impact for both my District and State Fire Training revenues. Last year, as I mentioned, we offered eight sections of Fire Instructor 1A for a cost of \$32,052.40 (8 sections x 4006.55). With the new cost per course at \$5,145.49, we will only be able to offer this course six times for the next academic year and accommodate 150 students. If the courses are allowed to increase to 32 students, we could hold six sections and accommodate 192 students at a cost of \$30,875.64. This would allow us to stay close to our present budget with a little left over (\$1,176.76) to apply toward the cost of hosting Training Instructor 1C.

In closing, I would like to once again commend all involved with the Fire Instructor upgrade project, and offer my sincere apology for not catching and vocalizing my input during the open comment phase of the project. But, I would also like for STEAC to more thoroughly weigh and give thought the fiscal impacts for colleges and other institutions that are partners in the delivery of such courses. I have offered a comprehensive cost analysis for the instructor series, and would be happy to do so for any courses in the future to assist STEAC with understanding what the impacts are, or could be, when significant curricular changes are involved. I would be happy to address this personally at the next STEAC meeting if appropriate to do so.

Respectfully,



Natalie C. Hannum
Director, Fire Technology
Riverside Community College District

Cc: Mike Richwine