

NEWS RELEASE

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COM credit enrollment is up for the first time in three years

KENTFIELD, Calif., September 4, 2006—Fall semester enrollment is up about one percent this year, following three consecutive years of decline averaging about seven percent per year. Enrollment at Indian Valley Campus is up about 21% compared to fall 2005.

College of Marin Superintendent President, Dr. Frances White is encouraged by the news. “It is kind of a prelude of better times to come,” White said.

While the increase is a modest one, it is a great improvement over previous consecutive years of losing about 400 students per year. The net effect of years of decline has hurt the college.

For the past decade, fall semester credit enrollments have significantly declined, except for fall 2002 when there was a slight increase from fall 2001. Enrollment in credit classes has decreased about 25% over the past 10 years, with the largest drop occurring in 2004 following two consecutive fee increases imposed by the state legislature. While enrollment has grown in many nearby community college districts, COM has faced several enrollment challenges, including changing demographics, low unemployment, and an aging local population.

The College of Marin is working to reverse the trend of enrollment decline that has been evident for a number of years. The current increase in enrollment may be attributed to new efforts in several areas, including adding new course sections for waitlisted classes; streamlining the admissions process by eliminating holds on registration; and an expanded marketing and outreach campaign.

Enrollment is also up significantly from last year in COM’s noncredit English as a Second Language classes. Sections were added to waitlisted ESL classes, allowing more students to enroll. Also, a variety of health and wellness classes were moved from fee supported community education to noncredit. Over 1,000 students enrolled in the new noncredit classes. These noncredit students count in state apportionment formulas and studies show that noncredit students frequently enroll in credit classes.

About College of Marin

College of Marin has been providing exceptional educational opportunities for students of all ages since 1926. College of Marin is fully accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.