



# MOHLONE COLLEGE MONITOR

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## New budget crisis: Layoffs back on table

By **KATHRYN DIXON**  
Staff writer

After classes were cut, workers were furloughed and early retirements were taken to save \$700,000 last semester, Ohlone workers might have thought the threat of layoffs would go away for the rest of the year.

But they would have been wrong. Layoffs are back on the table.

Several knowledgeable sources said at least five preliminary layoff notices will be sent to untenured teachers by March 15, and that layoffs are in the works for Student

Services, including counseling and DSPS.

Ohlone's new budget crisis (\$1.6 million this time) and the proposals to deal with it, including layoffs, will be discussed at the Budget Forum scheduled Monday at 2 p.m. in the Jackson Theater.

Because of state law, teachers to be laid off in the fall must be notified by March 15, so those receiving the notices might not lose their jobs if other budget solutions are found by fall.

As Ohlone begins preparing the 2010-'11 budget, it must include an expected net loss of \$1.6 million in

the college's final 2009-'10 budget, which is carried forward.

President Gari Browning presented this figure to the Board of Trustees on Feb. 10. The faculty is already feeling the impact of the budget deficit, even though this budget is far from finalized.

According to Dr. Alan M. Kirshner, president of the United Faculty of Ohlone (UFO), said "What we can glean is that there will be a minimal of at least five March 15 letters sent to non-tenured faculty. Please understand that these letters are not necessarily layoff notices. The state requires that if any faculty

will not be hired back in September they must be notified by March 15. Sacramento does not know what the budget will be for the next year, so we do not. The administration is only preparing for a worst case scenario that might mean layoffs or even the closing of departments."

Fortunately, the college expects additional savings from SERP, the early retirement plan, to provide about \$1 million in additional savings in 2010-'11. If everything would remain the same, Ohlone could face only a \$600,000 deficit at the start of the new 2010-'11 budget year.

However, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's proposed state budget dictates that Ohlone's deficit will expand to the point that worst scenarios must be faced.

The college is now scrambling to prepare its 2010-'11 budget in face of the governor's draconian cuts. He may revise his budget in May. The legislature votes on it in June.

In January, the governor proposed state budget did offer two ways of hope, one of which seems to be flickering away. His budget provided \$126 million to community

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## 'Conflict and Hope in the Congo' focus of World Forum

By **DENISE ANN BURGAN**  
Staff writer

The Smith Center will host a World Forum presentation entitled "Conflict and Hope in the Congo" on Tuesday starting at noon in the Jackson Theater.

The guest speaker, Bridget Nolan is an international expert on displaced populations and the former director of global strategies for HIV prevention Tuesday at noon.

Influential nations in the world benefit from the vast resources coming from Africa's Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC).

It is a country that is still suffering with the effects of a series of armed conflicts and the breakdown of an effective government.

Formerly known as Zaire, conflict in the DRC has resulted in an estimated 5.4 million deaths since

the outbreak of fighting began in 1998. Deaths are mostly attributed to malaria, diarrhea, pneumonia, and malnutrition.

Indigenous natural resources in the DRC are diamonds, tin, copper, as well as the highly sought after mineral Columbite-tantalite (coltan), which is pertinent to the production of computers and mobile phones.

A report by a United Nations panel and the U.N Security council described the trade in coltan as having "social effects akin to slavery," citing the exploitation of labor, expropriated riches and the denial of rights, all of which have contributed to the conflict in the Congo.

The Ohlone College World Forum series has invited the college community to engage in dialogue about important global issues since 2005.

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## Casino Royale for Club Days



Photo by Joseph Florez

**Campus Activities went for a Casino theme for this semester's Club Days, held Tuesday and Wednesday. Approximately 15 clubs had tables in the Cafeteria. See story, more photos on Page 6.**

## College Council focuses on financial situation

By **TINA KARIMI**  
Staff writer

Currently, the college does not have a set budget or a projection, due in large part to the lack of information from the state. The brunt of the funding for community colleges has always come from the state level.

The evolving state of Ohlone's budget and the Educational Master Plan were major points of discussion during the Feb. 22 College Council meeting.

Due to California's shaky financial footing, Ohlone had a \$700,000

budget shortfall for 2009 and that is not including the steep cuts to the funding of Ohlone's Deaf services program.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger is currently petitioning for \$7 billion of stimulus money from the federal government.

Until the state revise in May, administrators will not have the full picture of the college's status.

As "winds begin to blow from the state," in the words of Council member Mike Calegari, the College Council will not be able to accurately update the budget scenario until it presents a final number to

the Board of Trustees in June.

Even though all the information about Ohlone's funding is not available at this time, there are certain decisions that cannot be delayed until June.

For this reason, there is going to be a Budget Forum on Monday-March 1. This is meant to include both faculty and administration, in which budget questions will be taken and there will be an opportunity for the college community to provide input.

The possibility of layoffs will also be discussed. The deadline to give notice to faculty and advisers

is March 15, though administrators will do their best to avoid acting on these possible layoffs.

College President Dr. Gari Browning summed up, "We are all trying to avoid layoffs as much as we can, working with a constricted budget."

Dr. Browning has also drafted a letter to the California Community College Chancellor's Office regarding the strain that has been put on Ohlone due to the 49 percent cut in funding to services that are required by law to be provided to Deaf and hard of hearing students.

College Council also endorsed

the Educational Master Plan on Monday. The Educational Master Plan is a meant to, "(provide) a comprehensive and strategic framework for planning, implementing and evaluating the learning programs and services at the college, in accordance with the college mission, values, goals and institutional planning processes," according to the January draft of the document.

One aspect of the plan is to expand Ohlone's environmental science offerings, as well as possibly building a new environmental learning laboratory.

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