

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Palm Beach Community College prepares for huge enrollment increase

Students are encouraged to consider “Afternoon College” to avoid parking crunch and allow PBCC to better utilize classroom space

(Lake Worth, Fla. - July 13, 2009) With another double digit enrollment increase expected this fall, Palm Beach Community College is boosting the number of afternoon courses and encouraging students to consider the 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. time slots to avoid a parking crunch and improve their chances of getting core classes they need.

As of July 6, applications to PBCC for the fall term were up 15 percent over last year, leading College officials to brace for another surge in enrollment even while battling budget cuts. Last fall, PBCC saw a credit and prep enrollment increase of 10.6 percent.

“We anticipate a huge increase in enrollment, so we’re doing everything we can to help our students get the classes they need and to be more efficient with our classroom space. We want to make every seat available that we can,” said Dr. Maria Vallejo, provost of PBCC’s Lake Worth campus.

An analysis of sections and classroom usage on all campuses revealed that the largest gap was between 12:30 p.m. and 5 p.m. This also is the timeframe with the least parking congestion on campus, Vallejo said. College leaders decided to launch “Afternoon College.”

“It just makes sense to add new sections and shift a few of the morning and evening sections to the afternoon. We’re an open-door college so we cannot close our doors. This is a viable option for addressing the enrollment increases that we’re experiencing,” Vallejo said.

Dr. Roger Ramsammy, dean of academic affairs in Lake Worth, said to make “Afternoon College” more attractive to students, College leaders have worked diligently to package core courses so that students do not have to spend all day on campus to complete their course requirements. For example, a student can take biology from 2 p.m. to 3:15 p.m. and the biology lab from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

“In the past, the focus wasn’t on creating packages,” he said. “That’s a major difference.”

PBCC has created a special Web site to promote Afternoon College, which includes more than 800 class sections.

For more information on the courses offered during Afternoon College, visit www.pbcc.edu/AfternoonCollege.xml.

About Palm Beach Community College: Serving more than 46,000 students annually, Palm Beach Community College is the largest institution of higher education in Palm Beach County, providing the bachelor’s degree, associate degrees, professional certificates, career training and lifelong learning. Florida’s first public community college, PBCC offers more than 100 programs of study at locations in Lake Worth, Boca Raton, Palm Beach Gardens and Belle Glade.

Media contact:

Tabatha B. McDonald
College Relations and Marketing Specialist
(561) 868-3127