



**PRESS RELEASE**

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Contact: Paige Marlatt Dorr

Office: 916.327.5356

Cell: 916.601.8005

Office email: [pdorr@cccoco.edu](mailto:pdorr@cccoco.edu)

**Final three California community colleges to offer bachelor's degrees selected**

*SACRAMENTO, Calif.* – The California Community Colleges Board of Governors today selected the last three community colleges that will participate in a landmark pilot program allowing them to offer bachelor's degrees in vocational fields. The three colleges join 12 others that received [final approval](#) from the board in March.

The colleges selected today are:

- Rio Hondo College (automotive technology)
- Santa Monica College (interaction design)
- Solano Community College (biotechnology)

“With today’s action by the Board of Governors, 15 California community colleges have been selected to participate in this historic program,” said California Community Colleges Board President Geoffrey L. Baum. “Our system is forging ahead to educate workers in applied fields that have strong labor market demand, providing a win for students and our economy.”

“The community colleges are uniquely positioned to deal with the flexible and changing world,” said Gov. Jerry Brown, who attended today’s board meeting and signed the legislation establishing the baccalaureate degree program. “I think we have to get a very broad sense of what higher education is— and higher education now, is breaking free of the more traditional parameters, constraints and images.”

The college districts selected for the pilot program were chosen from several applications. A team comprised of Chancellor’s Office staff, a member of the business and workforce community, and community college administrators, faculty and staff from districts that did not apply to host a program reviewed the applications.

The board’s actions are in response to legislation sponsored by Sen. Marty Block (D-San Diego) and allows up to 15 college districts to establish a pilot baccalaureate degree program at one of their colleges in a field of study not offered by the California State University or University of California. Lower-division coursework would cost \$46 per unit and upper-division coursework would cost an additional \$84 per unit under the new program, with an estimated total cost of about \$10,000 to obtain a bachelor’s degree.

Under the law the four-year degree programs must be up and running by at least the 2017-18 academic year, however, districts may start their programs by the fall 2015 semester. Districts must also seek approval from

the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges to start a program.

The legislation sunsets after the 2022-23 school year, after which the Legislature and governor may renew it pending two Legislative Analyst's Office reviews of the pilot program- one in 2018 and another in 2022.

The law was enacted to assist the state in meeting the need for individuals in high demand technical disciplines which are increasingly requiring baccalaureate degrees and to increase college participation rates and improve workforce training opportunities for local residents who are unable to relocate because of family or work commitments.

The Board of Governors had previously approved baccalaureate programs at:

- Antelope Valley College (airframe manufacturing technology)
- Bakersfield College (industrial automation)
- Cypress College (mortuary science)
- Feather River College (equine industry)
- Foothill College (dental hygiene)
- Mesa College (health information management)
- MiraCosta College (biomanufacturing)
- Modesto Junior College (respiratory care)
- Santa Ana College (occupational studies)
- Shasta College (health information management)
- Skyline College (respiratory care)
- West Los Angeles College (dental hygiene)

*The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.1 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills education and prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. The Chancellor's Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. For more information about the community colleges, please visit <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu/>, <https://www.facebook.com/CACommColleges>, or <https://twitter.com/CalCommColleges>.*

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