Request for budget increase
Forensics/Speech 48

In this time of increased belt tightening and budget checking and rechecking, asking for a budget increase is a risk. However, I feel over the last 3 years, the Forensics program has been a vital service to students, the Chabot Community, and the Hayward community at large. At its peak, Chabot College had a budget of over 25,000 dollars. We now have roughly half that amount, yet we are more successful than we have been in the last ten years. In October, the team won First place in the Junior College Division for one of the largest tournaments on the West Coast (UOP), and this year at State, we’ve won more medals than any Chabot team has this Millennium. But, as noted later in this paper, our success is only one part of this program.

Need:

1. Our budget has been cut repeatedly: At the peak of its budget, the Chabot program had nearly $25,000 dollars. Our current budget puts us near the bottom middle of forensics teams in the Bay Area. The department believes this is our premier program and should be funded as the powerhouse it is becoming. Being critical thinkers, however, we are pragmatic and reasonable. We are only asking for roughly $5,000 increase, putting our budget to $17,000. This will enable us to travel to one more National Tournaments, as well as send one more deserving student to Nationals. With the National Parliamentary Debate Association National Tournament on the West Coast next year, we would like to attend, yet it would have been impossible under this years funding.

Benefits for the students:

1. **Basic Skills**: The speech and debate team (Forensics) is unlike any other class on campus. Not only does this class teach better speaking skills, it also enhances critical thinking, listening, teamwork, maturity, as well as civic involvement. A number of studies show that Forensics students have higher GPA’s, are more involved in campus activities, more involved in the community at large, and more likely to find employment (and do it faster) once they leave college. Forensics students are also more likely to transfer. Last year’s team saw students transfer to Arizona State, Berkeley, Point Loma Nazarene University, and CSU, EB. This year, students leaving the team plan on transferring to SFSU, SDSU, Long Beach State, and again, UC Berkeley.

2. **Assists students in other classes**: The rationale for why they will do better in other classes is fairly obvious, I believe: simply, they communicate better, making their presentations clearer, well organized, and well delivered. Also, Forensics fundamentally teaches argument and the creation of, allowing any argument they make in the remainder of their college career better.
3. **Peer to Peer Learning:** Students meet, greet, and compete against other colleges in the area, both 2 and 4 year schools. This enables them to make new, diverse friends, but more importantly to hear different viewpoints and to enjoy the college experience. Students also make critical arguments, hear defenses of basic social structures, and investigate current events through a discussion of ideas amongst themselves. Much of this knowledge is taken from round to round, and then reapplied in their words. This makes their learning more thorough, inquisitive, and in depth than most Community College Students. Also, Forensics is fun. This makes them more likely to continue matriculating towards their degree, retaining them at the college.

**Benefits to the Chabot Community:**

1. **Creates attention for the College:** The team held the first tournament of the year in Northern California. Due to construction, the tournament was held at Ohlone College, yet retained the “Gladiator” moniker. In the upcoming years, we will invite high schools to attend the tournament, possibly increasing enrollment.

2. **Outreach:** With the Bay Area Urban Debate League no longer assisting students at high risk schools, the speech department will invest efforts into creating a high school outreach program. Discussions have already begun with the incoming Director at James Logan for an outreach program. We have also judged a number of high school tournaments this year to spread the word of Chabot College’s programs, as well as performing a civic duty. This will increase enrollment and recruitment at Chabot.

3. **Work with other Campus programs:** The Forensics team has repeatedly worked with the ESL, English, and Political Science departments, demonstrating speeches, debates, and performances. We have also worked with the Black Student Union in creating “The ‘N’ word forum”, as well as working with the Students for Social Justice. Forensics students often travel to Speech classes on campus to give demonstrations. Our “Speech Night” consistently provides Speech 1, Speech 30, Speech 2, Speech 5, and Speech 46 students an opportunity to see Chabot’s best and brightest speakers. Our Intramural tournament gives these same students an opportunity to participate in a competition, further honing and refining their speaking skills, while boosting enrollment in Speech 48 to astronomical fill levels.

**Benefits to the Community at Large:**

1. Chabot College is developing an outreach program to high schools around the area. These efforts will attempt to use Chabot students to create a speech and debate program at these high schools. It is envisioned these high schools will become feeder schools for Chabot, and their forensics team.
2. Chabot Coaches have served as guest judges at the Rotarians of Hayward speech contest for high school students.