


# Memorandum

**To:** Oscar Rivera, Classified Senate President

**From:** Dr. Luca E. Lewis, Interim President 

**CC:** Dr. Marnie Melendez, Acting Vice President of Student Affairs  
James Zavas, Vice President of Business and Administrative Services  
Dr. Steve Hall, Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs

**Date:** Wednesday, March 25, 2026

**Subject:** Classified Professional Prioritization 2025-2026

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As we continue our annual planning and resource allocation process, I want to provide an update to the campus community regarding classified professional hiring for the upcoming academic year and the broader budget context informing these decisions.

I want to express my sincere appreciation to the Classified Senate for the time, care, and thoughtfulness invested in developing the 2025 classified hiring prioritization. Your work reflects a deep commitment to student success, program vitality, and equity—particularly in areas where staffing is limited. This focus on equitable allocation of resources is both meaningful and aligned with our shared commitment to serving students sustainably and intentionally.

## **Factors Guiding Staffing Resource Allocation Requests**

The Executive Team has carefully reviewed the Senate's recommendations within the framework of our annual Program Review process. Resource allocation decisions are guided by multiple factors, including alignment with the Educational Master Plan, equity impact, enrollment trends, fiscal sustainability, accreditation and legal requirements, and long-term institutional stability.

As we look ahead to 2026–2027, Ventura College, like many institutions statewide, is navigating fiscal constraints and uncertainty. Ongoing state budget challenges, shifting enrollment patterns, and broader demographic trends require a disciplined approach to new ongoing expenditures. While we remain committed to strategic investment in our programs and people, we must also ensure that decisions do not create structural deficits in future years.

After careful consideration, the Executive Team has determined that the college will not be funding any new classified professional positions at this time. We reviewed the Classified Prioritization list developed by the Senate, anticipated retirements, potential reductions in state funding, and enrollment

trends. Given the uncertainty regarding state budget impacts—expected to be clarified in May/June—we recommend postponing new hires until more information is available.

It is important to emphasize that positions not funded in this cycle remain essential. The needs identified through the prioritization process are valid, and we will continue to monitor enrollment trends, program growth, and budget conditions closely. As circumstances evolve, we may revisit these positions through future planning cycles or appropriate out-of-cycle requests.

### **Future Considerations**

We recognize that these decisions carry meaningful implications for the entire campus community. Our commitment remains steadfast: to act with transparency, prioritize student success, and advance equity and institutional resilience. While these fiscal realities present challenges, they also create opportunities for innovation, strategic alignment, and thoughtful investment—ensuring that resources are used effectively to benefit students, programs, and the broader community.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to continuous engagement with the Classified Senate, classified professionals, and leadership teams fostering collaborative solutions that anticipate future needs and emerging opportunities. Your expertise and partnership are critical as we navigate this evolving landscape and shape a sustainable, high-impact path forward. Thank you again to all who participated in this process. Please share this information as appropriate, and do not hesitate to reach out with questions or ideas as we continue this work together.