Carolina Moreno is the president of the Associated Student Government at San Diego City College. As she was preparing her speech for graduation on Friday, she was also registering for her summer classes. This is the first year since 2009 that summer classes were offered at area community colleges. Mandatory photo credit: Peggy Peattie/UT San Diego/ZUMA Press; Copyright U-T — Peggy Peattie

Carolina Moreno has been going to City College since 2009, taking classes between work and other time commitments.

But she never took them over the summer.

For much of that time, they weren’t available, except in limited cases such as special year-round programs.
But this summer, Moreno and thousands of students like her will get the chance to take those classes — for $46 per unit — as an improved budget picture in the state brings more funding to community colleges.

The San Diego Community College District is restoring its summer college credit courses for the first time since 2009. More than 1,000 classes will be offered at City, Mesa and Miramar colleges. San Diego Continuing Education will offer more than 2,000 free noncredit classes at its seven campuses.

College officials say they are happy to turn a page on the years of budget belt-tightening that caused them to slash back their summer classes.

Southwestern College will be offering 438 sections this summer, up from 410 last year. The Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District also is beefing up its offerings.

In 2012, only 50 classes at Cuyamaca and 24 at Grossmont were offered. This summer, Cuyamaca is offering 100 and Grossmont is up to 209.

Grossmont and Cuyamaca students can register until June 6 for the courses, which are offered in six-week and eight-week sessions.

At MiraCosta College, nearly 300 sections in dozens of subjects are being offered for summer. The sessions start June 2 and June 16.

Students say they welcome the chance to continue their education over the summer months. Some weren’t able to complete degrees as quickly as they’d like because the classes weren’t available.

Now that they’re back, demand for the summer courses is high, said San Diego Community College District spokesman Jack Beresford. Open enrollment for the district’s summer sessions starts Tuesday, although students with priority enrollment already have been signing up.

Moreno said she plans to apply to City College’s nursing program after she finishes her associate’s degree next spring.

She said she became active in student government after getting upset over all the budget cuts occurring on campus as the state’s economy faltered.

“Fees were going up, the classes were being cut short and then the summer courses got completely removed,” she said. “It was really hard, a tough time.”
She said students worked to get Proposition 30 passed and have benefited from the state’s new source of revenue. The temporary tax measure, approved by voters in 2012, increased sales taxes for four years and income taxes on annual earnings over $250,000 for seven years.

“We got together and we really pushed for this proposition to pull through with the efforts of not just the faculty and the administrators,” she said. “That was really exciting.”

Mesa College student Claudria Seefeldt, 20, is also excited summer classes are back. She plans to take three classes.

“I think I would be here a lot longer, probably an entire year longer” if the classes weren’t offered, she said. “I think it is really beneficial to have summer school. We can take advantage of making up classes or just finishing early.”