

September 20, 2008

Potential budget cuts fall orientation

Dear Members of our College Community,

With the many stories swirling in the media over this last week regarding special legislative sessions, Wall Street woes, government bailouts, etc., I wanted to keep you posted as to how we are responding to the concerns and requests. As we have talked about in various forums and communications, the college is approaching the current financial situations through on-going planning and continual review of areas of the college that have been financially draining while affecting the least amount of constituents. This has placed us in a strong position going into the current and anticipated “belt-tightening” we are now being asked to do.

On Thursday we were directed to provide the Governor’s office and the legislative analyst proposed ways of dealing with a potential 2-5% reduction/rescission of our current operating and one-time budgets. We have provided the following prioritized areas that will be used if needed to address this. They are:

1. Position vacancy savings.
2. Increase the level of review of underperforming programs.
3. Begin a process for developing criteria to identify those programs which could be consolidated, reduced in scope, or eliminated after appropriate notification.
4. Consider enrollment caps.
5. Delay purchasing large equipment items.
6. Consider increasing employee share of healthcare costs such as higher co-pays, higher deductibles, and/or higher co-insurance payments.

Understand that these are only potential areas at this point. The special legislative session of next week will provide further direction, of which I will keep you informed. I have every confidence in our ability as a college to weather the anticipated rocky road ahead. I also believe that in times of financial strains we have the ability to pull together and help each other remember we are all in this together. This is what I am asking of you at this point.

As we approach the heart of our Fall semester, our orientation office has been communicating regularly with new students via email and the “StartSmart” program, providing useful information about different resources on campus. They have also been asking these new students - what is the best thing you have learned about SLCC so far? I wanted to share with you some of the wonderful answers our students have shared:

- “One of the best things that I’ve learned at SLCC is that our teachers are willing to help you during their office hours.....and by going you’re not only able to learn/review new things but you get to know the teacher better....”
- “The best thing I’ve learned about SLCC is that it’s way better organized than any college I’ve been to (Westminster and UVSC). I love all the reminder emails and helpful employees....”
- “The best thing I have learned so far is that there are really people in the world who truly still care. I have been treading rough waters for a very long time in my life...It doesn’t matter which building (at SLCC) I enter or who I am speaking with, they are always willing to help and always very, very friendly and courteous!!!! I feel 10 feet tall when I walk through the doors and my self esteem is so enhanced just by being here....”

Thank you to all who are making our students “feel 10 feet tall by being here”! You are remarkable people and educators, one and all!

Most Sincerely,

President Bioteau