



To: Advisory Council

Cc: Revenue and Resources Council
Equity and Education Council
Community and Communication Council
Administrative Council

Fr: Thuy Thi Nguyen, President *TTN*

Date: April 29, 2020

Re: Hiring Holds-For-Now & Development of Budget Reduction Decision-making Process

Earlier today during her weekly briefing, Chancellor Miner spoke about Chancellor's Cabinet review of all recruitment positions and the position-holds district-wide.

The world public health and economic crisis has grown to unimaginable proportions and each day, the news from Sacramento looks less positive, with a clear message that community colleges in California should prepare for a much smaller state budget. This likely budget reduction is in addition to our college's loss in international enrollment and other local budgetary considerations.

For many of you, the depressing economic forecast is not news, especially with many colleges and universities already undergoing layoffs, furloughs, and hiring freezes.

Normally, our college district would be able to anticipate a May-Revise budget from the state and by mid-June, we would have a clear sense of the next budget. However, with the extension of the tax-filing deadline, the college district does not anticipate being able to know its budget until mid-August / September. This makes it very difficult to plan.

We just completed a very challenging three-year budget reduction process that constituted nearly 9% of (or \$6.16 million in cuts to) the college budget. I am grateful to the college for being able to do so without any program elimination and 0.5 classified lay-offs. Thank you to the Advisory Council for its vote/recommendation and the administrative team for working hard and taking a more strategic approach to the reductions.

Now, a year later, we need to anticipate further reductions due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I have been working with Chancellor Miner, the vice chancellors, and the President of De Anza to identify possible positions to hold for now. Five positions were initially identified by Chancellor's Cabinet (which I am a member of), and I was able to make the case that one of the



positions (a faculty position) should continue with the hiring process. The other four positions are two classified positions and two administrator positions. (See attachment of list of positions.) De Anza and Central Services positions were also identified to be put on hold.

“Hiring holds” are not “hiring freezes,” as “hiring freezes” would mean that all positions cannot be filled. In consultation with President’s Cabinet, I agree with Chancellor’s Cabinet that the four positions (minimally) should be on hold for now, in order to give the college budgetary flexibility. Although it is very disappointing that we need to implement any hiring holds until we get clarity on our budget situation, I appreciate and agree with the holds as they would minimize any potential layoffs and program elimination – a major priority for me as evidenced by past budget reductions.

Please note also that even though a position is placed on hold, it does not mean a program with which the position is associated is slated for program elimination. As was the case in the last three-year budget reduction, I do not have a list of programs for elimination. During the last budget crisis, we worked hard not to eliminate programs.

You may recall at our last Advisory Council meeting, I mentioned exploring a waiver of the two-year rule that prohibits managers from serving in an interim role for more than two years. The State Chancellor exercised his emergency powers this week to publish a resolution that waives this two-year rule. Again, this provides as much flexibility as possible for the college with regards to several acting/interim positions.

The Dean of LRC position (a new administrator position) had not been posted, and the hold would preclude the position from being advertised for now. Some colleagues have inquired whether we should consider placing a hold on additional positions in order to give the college maximum flexibility. Since the district is not instituting a “hiring freeze” at this time, I did not feel that was necessary. I have informed the administrative team that they should continue moving forward with the hiring process for all faculty positions.

I approached the Advisory Council last Friday to inform you about the hiring holds and the budget challenges ahead, and a request for you to develop a decision-making process to help guide us through the anticipated budget reductions. The Academic Senate has critiqued the past decision-making process on the budget and requested that issues be presented as early as possible. Although holding on hiring positions is a management responsibility and the budget situation will not be clear until fall quarter, I seek your recommendations:

1. Do you believe additional positions should be placed on hold for now? Please let me know by end of May in anticipation of the June 8th board meeting.
2. What is the process you would like to use when the college begins budget reduction deliberations? Please let me know your recommendation by the end of the school year.



3. If you believe the four positions that are placed on hold at this time should be filled, then please consider them within the context of budget reduction deliberations in the fall.

I know this is early to discuss budget reductions since we do not have a clear picture of the budget at this time. Nevertheless, in my discussion with Academic Senate in January, Senate requested earlier engagement and Senate also wanted to develop a program-elimination process; thus, I am seeking your recommendation at this time in light of Academic Senate's wishes.

These are challenging times, and no process would change the reality of looming budget reductions. It is important to me that the governance process informs the decisions taken so that all campus stakeholders have a say in Advisory Council's recommendations to me.

There will be very difficult decisions for me to make as your college president as I am ultimately responsible and accountable to the chancellor and board. I seek your advice as thought-partners in this endeavor. If there are strong beliefs in lessons learned from the last reduction process, then please offer solutions so we can benefit from those lessons. I defer to your good judgement and look forward to working closely with you. I await your recommendations.