

All Staff Email Sent March 03, 2009

Colleagues,

It looks like the Legislature is going to move forward with a budget re-balance for the current year that includes no further reductions for community colleges. The re-balance has passed out of Ways and Means and is on its way to the House and Senate this week.

Unfortunately, next biennium does not show any signs of improvement. The latest state revenue forecast shows a state shortfall of about \$3 billion for 2009-11. This is an additional \$1.8 billion below the Governor's proposed budget. You will recall that the governor had community colleges slated for \$485 million, a 3% decrease from the current biennium. At that level we at Lane were about \$1 million short in our **base** budget (basically this year's budget rolled over, not taking into account additional revenue or expenses) As a result of the latest forecast, we have prepared projections based on \$460 and \$440 million in state funding. As you can imagine, the numbers do not look good. At those levels, Lane's shortfall ranges from \$2 to almost \$4 million in our base budget.

We will know more when the co-chairs of Ways and Means publish their budget later this month. In the meantime, the Budget Development Sub-Committee of College Council has been meeting. We will begin to review proposals to balance the budget in mid-March and plan to have recommendations developed by mid-April. I will send a separate e-mail regarding the details of the process.

I realize that this is a very anxious time. All of us are being impacted in one way or another by the economic condition of our community. I know that there are rumors flying around about lay-offs and how each of us will be affected. I want to reiterate the brief remarks I made at the bond all staff meeting last week. It will be very difficult to balance the budget without affecting faculty and staff since we make up 82% of the budget. However, it is my goal to keep as many people working as possible. Moving anyone out into the current economy has negative impacts for the individual and for the college as we then have fewer people to serve students. I cannot guarantee that there will not be lay-offs but if we work together we can minimize them. It will take sacrifice from all of us to come up with a workable plan. I am confident that we can develop a budget plan that includes some revenue increases as well as expense reductions that will allow us to remain viable and a beacon of hope for the many students who are looking to the college for a way out.

I simply trust that we will focus on working together to come up with the best possible plan in these very difficult and uncertain times.

Thanks. Mary.