

## FW: CSM Budget Update: Next Steps

Demsetz, Laura

**Sent:** Thursday, April 01, 2010 12:49 PM

**To:** Demsetz, Laura

---

**From:** Claire, Michael E.

**Sent:** Tuesday, January 26, 2010 12:15 PM

**To:** CSM Employees

**Subject:** CSM Budget Update: Next Steps

Dear CSM Community,

I discussed the need for a campus-wide dialog concerning the future direction of CSM in my January 18 “welcome back” email. I am writing you to provide additional details regarding this very important effort. While the college has a proud history and has weathered many storms, never in our history have we had to respond to so many issues at once. Most of the individual issues and challenges have centered on what many of us are calling the “ABCs”: accreditation, budget, and construction. Each of these challenges has brought some amount of anxiety and pain to the institution. At the same time, each challenge has allowed us to grow and I believe that these challenges will make us a stronger college in the long-term.

Without a doubt, the most painful challenge of all has been the degradation of our budget. Budgets are focused on numbers but it is the impact on people that worries me the most. Like all community colleges, we are turning away students in high-demand areas; we have reduced adjunct faculty, classified staff, and administrators; and we have eliminated all but the most essential operating expenses. Those of us that remain are working harder than ever. It is a sickening feeling with no light at the end of the tunnel.

Let me be clear that nothing good comes from a massive budget cut. At the same time, our budget challenges will force us to examine carefully our identity—what we want this college to be, and what is most important among the many important roles and priorities of the institution. We will need to assess and prioritize our many efforts using several contexts: the Board’s Reaffirmation of Board Core Values, our role and our strengths relative to the roles and strengths of our sister colleges and neighboring community colleges, and finally, our community’s most pressing current and future educational needs. While I would prefer not have this conversation under the weight of a budget that we must balance, it is a necessary conversation and frankly, a conversation that is long overdue.

As a first step we need to come to an agreement on what criteria we will use to evaluate the roles and priorities of the institution. We must have a frank, broad-based, and robust discussion about what these criteria will be. This step is crucial because we will use these criteria to make decisions about the college both in times of reductions and in times of growth. In short, these criteria will reflect our educational priorities and help guide the specific decisions that must be made as our budget changes. The Institutional Planning Committee (IPC), which is the overarching planning committee for the college, has recommended the creation of a Ad Hoc Steering Committee to guide the institution in the development of these criteria. Specifically, the charge of the Ad Hoc Steering Committee is to:

*Coordinate a campus-wide dialog that leads to broadly accepted criteria to prioritize college educational efforts. The Steering Committee’s work and the campus dialog should be informed by existing planning documents; the resulting criteria will in turn be incorporated into these planning documents. The Steering Committee will report*

*to IPC, but its recommendations will be reviewed by the Academic Senate, College Council, and other committees as specified by the planning documents. The criteria should be in place by the end of Spring 2010 and will be relied upon for making recommendations to be implemented by the 2011-2012 academic year. The campus community is asked to provide support to the Steering Committee by contributing ideas and feedback, by providing time in the agenda of standing meetings, and by participating in additional meetings as needed. The Office of Planning, Research, and Institutional Effectiveness (PRIE) is asked to support the data needs of this effort*

The Ad Hoc Steering Committee is a shared governance committee that reports to the IPC. The Ad Hoc Steering Committee will be chaired by Huy Tran, Vice President of the Academic Senate and Laura Demsetz, Chair of the Committee on Instruction. This is important work and will guide us as we grapple with some very difficult decisions in the near term. This work will also provide direction when our financial picture improves. I do hope that you will participate in this very important effort.

Michael Claire  
President  
College of San Mateo  
650-574-6222  
<http://www.collegeofsanmateo.edu>