

Monday's Message – February 7, 2011

Hello everyone...

Last week I shared with you that the Governor's budget proposal for 2011-12 would cut the CSU budget by \$500 million. Cal Poly Pomona's share of that is approximately five percent. We also know that the increase in tuition fees for next year, as well as savings from other financial sources, will reduce that number accordingly. The Chancellor asked all the CSU Presidents to begin a process on how they will individually manage the cuts as well as share ideas that might serve other campuses.

I have now asked each of our vice presidents, as I will do in my office, to bring their division budget committees and leadership teams together and prepare a series of recommendations that address their budgetary strategies.

Those recommendations will be forwarded to our campus-wide budget committees. The outcome of that review and consultation will then go to the President's Cabinet and ultimately to me for final approval.

Remember that our budget is based on funding we receive from two primary sources: the general fund allocation for each full-time equivalent student and the tuition fee revenue. Every year around this time, the Chancellor's Office provides each campus with an FTE target for the following year. That's the budget.

Meeting our enrollment target is extremely important. And based on the legacy of excellence that each of you has built at Cal Poly Pomona, demand for admission is at an all-time high.

We have received 34,000 admission applications for next fall from prospective freshmen and transfers. The academic quality of these applicants is exceptionally high. We also expect to receive up to 3,000 applications for our graduate and credential programs for the fall quarter. Before the end of this month, we will have an initial target as to how many full-time students we should expect to enroll next year.

Now I want to say something that is incredibly important for everyone to understand. Our budget and enrollment planning process for next year is working with numbers that are frequently changing. Some might be confused by the process or quote different numbers. But the fact is we are in a state of flux. Can anyone accurately predict what our final budget will be, considering the ambiguity of the approval of the tax extensions? Of course not. But we have to work with what we know now. My commitment to being transparent means that each of you should know where we are today, while also being aware of what might lie ahead. That's why I am on your computer monitors – every week.

By all accounts, responses to last week's video message exceeded my expectations. I shared with you then that we would inform all of our alumni and friends in the community about the potential impact of the proposed budget cuts. All told, almost 55,000 people received my e-mail and a link to the video.

I received replies from across the country, with many people reflecting on the value of their education at Cal Poly Pomona. The video message also got the attention of one of our local newspapers. The story appeared on the front page of Wednesday's Inland Valley Daily Bulletin, giving its local and online readers a chance to better understand our challenges.

Decisions in Sacramento and Washington always have a local impact. We need the best and brightest minds to cross political lines, come together, and make appropriate decisions for the future of California. While that certainly requires sacrifices, logic would argue that we must focus on those programs that can elevate the state's intellectual capital and nurture a dynamic and sustainable workforce.

That's the power of higher education. When this state was funding our system at an appropriate level, California's public colleges and universities were unparalleled. As such, the California economy became one of the largest and most powerful in the world. We were the hub of progressive and innovative ideas.

Unfortunately, we are in a different place today but it's not because we don't have capable students and faculty. History CAN repeat itself, but it will take an investment in education.



Thanks for watching and I'll see you next week.