



Dear CSUSM Faculty and Staff,

I hope this message finds you doing well and staying safe and healthy. I promised in the video message that was emailed earlier today that I would share with you a series of updates this week – the first of which is an update on the California budget.

First, please allow me a moment to recap where we have recently been in the state budget process:

- In January, before the coronavirus made its appearance widely known, the State of California was projected to have a \$5.6 billion surplus. Given this positive outlook, Gov. Newsom had proposed a \$199 million recurring operating budget increase for the California State University (CSU) system as a whole, which was wonderful news at the time.
- However, by mid-May, when Gov. Newsom shared his “May Revision” budget proposal, the coronavirus had quickly taken its toll. Due to COVID-19’s economic impact, the State of California announced an expected \$54.3 billion budget shortfall and the governor suggested deep cuts, including a proposed a \$398 million reduction to the CSU operating budget – the equivalent of a 10% cut compared to 2019-2020 levels.
- Last week, the Assembly and Senate voted on a “place holder” budget in order to meet their June 15 constitutional deadline. This budget still required agreement from Gov. Newsom, and negotiations have continued since that time.

Just yesterday, we learned that the governor and legislature have reached a budget deal.

This agreement now includes a projected \$299 million permanent reduction in base funding for the CSU system as a whole. However, this budget agreement could still change, as there are still two key pieces of information that are outstanding: 1) how much revenue the state will bring in (the tax deadline was pushed back to July 15), and 2) how much aid, if any, the federal government will provide.

If federal funds materialize, some temporary funds could be restored to the CSU. I will continue to work with our Office of Government Relations and the CSU to advocate for additional state and federal resources. At this point, information on CSU state appropriations will likely continue to evolve through October.

To prepare for these cuts, we’ve taken proactive steps to protect our fiscal resources by restricting all non-essential travel and implementing the CSU-wide hiring pause. As part of the hiring pause, some departments have also had to make the difficult decision to allow a limited number of temporary contracts to expire without renewal due to COVID-19 operational needs and budget.

Additionally, many of you are reviewing your departmental/unit budgets to project how we might navigate 5, 7 or 10% reduction scenarios if needed. This process will allow us to be nimble once external budget forces are more clearly known.

Thank you for all the prudent, budget-conserving actions you are making now – every dollar we save now will help us move forward in the future.

Many of you have shared with me some very innovative and thoughtful budget-saving ideas. Please continue to email me your thoughts and suggestions at pres@csusm.edu. Your ingenuity and resourcefulness will be key to our long-term success.

I know this is quite a stressful time. It doesn’t help that this information is ever evolving and changing in a time when there is already so much other worry and anxiety. While I may not be able to take away or solve all these concerns, I do want you to know that your well-being is very much on my mind. In my next message, I will be sharing more information on how we are moving forward with reallocating resources to care for our faculty and staff at this time.

In the meantime, I want to express my thanks once more. I don’t think I can say it enough times: Thank you for all that you do. This past year, I’ve learned that CSUSM is an incredibly resilient community and I’m proud to be a part of it.

I will continue to keep you updated on news related to our university budget in the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,

Ellen Neufeldt
President

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