1) The list of proposed budget reductions has mainly classified positions on it. Why doesn’t the list include more full-time faculty members and administrators?
By the time the College learned of the magnitude of this year’s budget reductions (in the Governor’s January budget message, followed by the “February Surprise”, in which additional budget reductions were targeted toward community colleges) it was too late to properly follow the prescribed processes for reductions in force affecting employees with statutory or contractual notification deadlines. These include all full-time, contract faculty and many academic administrators. Consequently, the majority of the current reductions needed to come from positions with legal and contractual notification dates that could still be met within the prescribed time frame. Should an additional round of budget reductions become necessary (as appears likely), decisions will be made within a timeframe that will permit consideration of all faculty and management positions.

2) Why was the decision made to limit summer offerings primarily to English, math and speech classes? Was consideration given to closing the entire college for the summer?

The magnitude of the budget crisis makes it necessary to dramatically reduce summer offerings. This is occurring across the state and many colleges are, in fact, considering the elimination of summer offerings altogether. The decision to limit summer offerings in the manner that has been decided is based on the need for students to continue to bolster their English and math skills in order to better prepare for other college-level courses they will be taking during the fall and spring semesters. Oral communication skills are also essential to successful completion of subsequent college-level courses. Prolonged absence from these foundational courses could lead to skill erosion, thereby impeding matriculation and success. This is also the thinking behind the decision not to eliminate summer offerings altogether.

3) Why are “across-the-board” solutions, such as pay cuts, furloughs and salary freezes not included in this round of budget reductions?

These approaches have been among the primary strategies employed over the past three years of budget reduction and are generally regarded as sound tactics for addressing cyclical budgetary shortfalls. Increasingly, however, it has become clear that our budget circumstances are structural, rather than cyclical in nature. In other words, we are facing permanent reductions in the amount of money we have to operate the college. This necessitates the consideration and implementation of permanent reductions in programs, services and activities. Over the past four years (assuming failure of the November 2012 tax -initiative) LBCC’s state apportionment revenues will have shrunk from $ 101 to $ 88 million and there is no sign of significant relief in the
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foreseeable future. Consequently, we need to shift our thinking from cyclical solutions to structural ones.

4) **Why are we primarily cutting full- and part-time classified positions as opposed to making reductions to operating expenses, such as instructional and non-instructional supplies and equipment, travel, professional development and the like?**

Operational costs have been significantly reduced over the past three years in an effort to minimize the effects of previous budget reductions on personnel. As a result, salaries and benefits now comprise roughly 87% of the college’s total general fund budget. While it is essential that we continue to keep our operational expenditures in check, at a certain point it becomes infeasible to achieve significant budgetary savings by reducing operating costs without curtailing our ability to function effectively as an educational institution.

5) **Given the current budget situation and the recent emphasis that has been placed on the Promise Pathways initiative, is LBCC moving away from being a comprehensive community college toward more of a remedial institution?**

No. Promise Pathways is being designed and implemented to be fully integrated with the college's overall academic and career/technical course and program offerings. If successful, this initiative will strengthen the institution’s ability to offer quality transfer and CTE courses and programs by getting students the foundational skills they need to be successful in college at an earlier stage of their college careers and by strengthening the support mechanisms that students need in order to be successful. In terms of resource allocation, while the Promise Pathways Initiative will undoubtedly cost money, many of these resources will come from non-general fund sources and most will come from refocusing the efforts of existing faculty and staff on executing the initiative and ensuring its smooth integration into the college's existing course, program and service offerings.

6) **Why are decisions of this magnitude being made without more input from faculty and staff? What has happened to shared governance?**

Under AB 1725, faculty participation is required for processes pertaining to resource allocation. In this instance, the College Planning Committee, at the recommendation of the Budget Advisory Committee appointed a work group charged with developing budget reduction criteria and processes. These were then approved by the College Planning Committee. The criteria and process that were approved were followed by the vice presidents in making recommendations for budget reductions. Ultimately, responsibility for budget reduction decisions resides with the Board of Trustees, based on recommendations from the Superintendent-President, who ensures that the agreed
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upon process is followed and provides that a rationale for his recommendations based upon the approved criteria. While every effort has been made to facilitate the participation of faculty and staff in the decision-making process, there is, unfortunately, no perfect or even optimal way of incorporating this input into the decision-making process, particularly under circumstances in which the time available for constructive dialogue is extremely limited. These are extremely difficult decisions with enormous consequences for people who have served the institution with dedication, in most cases for many years. They have been made after a careful deliberative procedure on the basis of criteria that have emerged through our participatory strategic planning and prioritization processes.

7) In the event that the college receives good news that lessens the estimated impact of the budget cuts, will funding and positions be restored to the programs and activities in which the reductions are being made?

Although this remains a possibility, restoration of the positions that are being reduced or eliminated in this round of budget reductions is unlikely, even in the event that some of the estimates upon which the proposed cuts are based do not fully come to pass. The reason for this is that for the past several years the college has been functioning with ongoing budgeted operating deficits in the range of $7 million. Thus, even if the proposed cuts are approved by the Board of Trustees the college’s projected budget deficit will remain in excess of $2-3 million. Any savings associated with favorable news forthcoming on the state budget situation must first be applied to this remaining budget deficit.

8) The proposed budget reductions are only enough to address the current budget shortfall. What about the additional $4.5+ million that will need to be reduced in the event that the November tax initiative fails?

Unlike the current round of budget reductions in which reductions to full-time faculty and some academic administrators are precluded due to statutory and contract notification dates, if additional reductions must be made following the November election all options will be “on the table”. Moreover, should the tax measure fail the college will already be midway through the budget year in which cuts will have to be made. For this reason it is essential that we begin planning for these possible reductions now. Since any such additional reductions will likely entail the suspension or elimination of instructional programs and support services it will be essential to consult the Academic Senate with regard to the process by which these recommendations and decisions will be made. The Vice President, Academic Affairs has initiated the process of
consulting with the College Planning Committee in anticipation of these possible future budget reductions.

9) In formulating the list of proposed reductions, was consideration given to distributing the reductions proportionately among Academic Affairs, Student Support Services, Administrative Services, Human Resources and Economic and Resource Development in accordance with their respective percentages of the college’s current budget?

Proportionality was not among the criteria that were approved by the College Planning Committee in its role of providing guidance to the vice presidents. While mindful of the possibility that members of the college community would view and perhaps judge the list of recommended cuts in this context, the vice presidents considered it essential to use the criteria provided by CPC as the primary determinant of their recommendations.