BUDGET MAKERS'/APPROVERS' PERCEPTIONS OF HOW TO

REPRIORITIZE BUDGET IN CALIFORNIA

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Doctoral Dissertation Research

Submitted to the
Faculty of Argosy University, Orange County Campus
College of Education

In Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

by

Linda Elizabeth Bender

August 16, 2014

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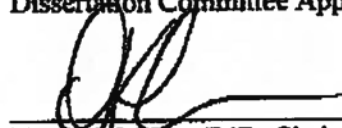the Requirements for the Degree of

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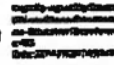
August 16, 2014

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate how an unstable budget situation affected the

perceptions of the budget makers and approvers of the California Community Colleges as

far as how to reprioritize spending. Mixed-methods and grounded theory research

focused on a social justice interpretive framework and analysis of public domain

budgetary documents were used to identify current trends in actions taken to address

budget instability. Respondents completed questionnaires allowing the researcher to

evaluate the budget choices of the makers and approvers. The study indicated that in 24

of 25 key institutional areas of funding, only one, professional development, had a

significant difference, at the .05 level, between budget makers' and budget approvers'

perceptions of priorities. It also indicated that there were mixed opinions on how the

institutions were affected during the budget instability. Finally, it asked about the newly

implemented student registration reprioritization and the mixed feelings on nobility

versus functionality.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

In the time of budget instability, the budget makers and approvers of California

Community Colleges faced several tough challenges. This included making limited

funds cover what was required for a quality education while not putting an enrollment

cap on the burgeoning student body in search of classes that had been cut back due to

lack of funds. There was no possibility of enrollment caps, as this would go against the

1960 Master Plan for Higher Education (Master Plan), which mandated that the state of

California had to ensure the possibility of higher education to its entire citizen population.

However, this did not ensure that there were classes available to this population, just that

they could enroll in the colleges. This research paper was designed to help illuminate

these issues and the philosophies that drove the decisions made by the budget makers and

approvers of Southern California community college schools and districts.

Problem Background

For the past 5 years the California Community Colleges faced tighter budgets than

they had since the last budget crisis of the early 1990s. In the early 1990s there too was a

budget deficit at the state level, high unemployment rates, and maximum cuts (California

Community Colleges Student Success Task Force [SSTF], 2012). This led to a reduction

of classes offered and raised tuition. The community college students were being

underserved. The California Community Colleges (CCC) Chancellor's Office is

responsible for allocating state funding to the 112 colleges, organized in 72 districts and

serving 2.6 million students for basic skills education, workforce training, and courses to

prepare students to transfer to 4-year universities. Colleges also provide opportunities for

personal enrichment and lifelong learning (SSTF, 2012). The open enrollment policy

does not guarantee that the enrolled students can get any classes, let alone the ones they want and/or need. The classes for personal enrichment and lifelong learning were all but eliminated and put to a community service format, which charged more to cover all the costs of the class, and now the lifelong learners are losing registration priority after 100 units earned with the potential to soon be paying the full cost of the class, up to almost $200 a unit (Olson, 2013).

The mission statement of the CCC Chancellor's Office (2011d) is, "The mission of the California Community Colleges Board of Governors and the Chancellor's Office is to empower the community colleges through leadership, advocacy and support" (para. 1). The CCC Chancellor's Office is doing that through the Student Success Achievement Act (SSAA) of 2012 and through a slight increase of the money for a budget (Baron, 2013). The vision statement states California Community Colleges Board of Governors and the chancellor's guidance provides access to lifelong learning for all Californians and creates a skilled, progressive workforce to advance the state's interests. (CCC Chancellor's Office, 2011d)

This put a bigger burden on an already financially burdened community college system, especially considering the unemployment rate and the need to retrain an employment force. With the past budget, the mission and vision of the system were jeopardized. McCurdy (1994) emphasized this impact with the fact that in the last budget crisis serious impacts were already being made. McCurdy stated the Higher Education 1960 California Master Plan made the state's four-year community colleges and universities among the most selective in the nation, restricting first-time freshmen entry at the University of California to the top twelve and one-half percent of high school

graduates (reduced from the prior Master Plan level of fifteen percent) and at the

California State University level to the top third (formerly fifty percent). These policies

"diverted" students by the thousands to the community colleges for their first two years.

(p. 7)

With the budget crisis of the early 1990s, the University of California (UC) and

California State University (CSU) systems restricted their student body to a lower

percentage of freshmen (McCurdy, 1994). This past budget crisis saw even further

restrictions, leading even more freshmen to attend the community college level. With the

restrictions on the CSU and UC enrollment of lower level students, this forced them to

attend community college if they wanted to go on to a 4-year school.

The reality soon became apparent; the budget was increased slightly but with new

priorities of transfer and certification achievement with lifelong learners and enrichment

students being given low priority, in effect restricting enrollment. With the state's

decision for tuition increases to be stopped, financial support was given to student

support and success of achievement through transfer and certification as per the

recommendations of the SSAA.

Statement of the Problem

In the 2013-2014 academic year, the California Community Colleges faced the

challenge of implementing the SSAA recommendations while navigating an unstable

budget situation. The budget cuts of the past several years created a situation that

sparked, at most schools, a chain reaction of reduction in number of classes offered,

hiring freezes, and state-issued tuition increases. At a community college, these, and

many others, were tough decisions that a maker or approver of the budget faced when the

budget was unstable. The budget instability was a reality in those hard economic times, along with the implementation of the SSAA. At the same time, student enrollment had increased, but prioritization changed with a focus on students' success in transfer and certification. Meeting the needs of additional students and the campus that served them was now critical.

Some other tough decisions came in the form of whether or not to touch the reserves the schools had. This was often done with hesitation when the financial outlook for several years down the road looked unstable. Also under the issue of using reserves were the expectations that workers wanted at least a cost-of-living allowance (COLA) increase, which was slightly accounted for in the state's 2013 budget. They wanted the reserves to be used, not a reduction in force or hours, or a hiring freeze. There were also maintenance costs that, because most maintenance had been put off, could increase beyond a future budget. These were some of the concerns, and realities, facing the makers or approvers of the California Community Colleges' budgets while managing the implementation of the SSAA. These issues were what the researcher investigated.

Research Topic and Purpose of the Study

The recent situation of budget instability created a climate in which the makers and approvers of the California Community Colleges' budget faced tough challenges in determining how to handle the issue of less money serving more students than ever and reprioritization of students served. These decisions were made with thought, and the purpose of the study was to understand the thoughts and philosophies that drove the makers and approvers of the budget and administrators of the California Community Colleges when implementing the SSAA.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how an unstable budget situation affected the perceptions of the budget makers and approvers of the California Community Colleges as far as how to reprioritize spending.

Background

Budget instability was a reality for the 2013-2014 school year and will likely continue for the next several years to come. The community colleges in California had to cut classes and services to students and implement decisions like hiring freezes, which went counter to the SSAA. With the implementation of the SSAA recommendations with only slightly increased funding, 2013-2014 budgets were still tricky to balance the needs, wants, and requirements of the students, staff, and the SSAA within a time of budget instability.

With an unemployment rate of 11.9% in October 2011 in the State of California (Employment Development Department, 2011), the unemployed were turning to the community colleges to get retraining and to advance their education in the hopes of a better job when the economy turned around. This created a situation where these displaced workers were trying to enter college for retraining only to find fewer, or no, classes, which was an issue addressed by the SSAA reprioritization.

The California Community Colleges held a Southern California town hall meeting at the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce on October 27, 2011, on Student Success Task Force (SSTF) draft recommendations. In a press release announcing the meeting, the CCC Chancellor's Office (2011b) explained the reason for the meeting: "California's economy depends on increasing the number of community college students who obtain

job training certificates, degrees and transfer to four-year universities" so as to have a better trained workforce when the economy turns around and to have a better chance at present and future employment (p. 1).

A Bold Plan for Refocusing on Student Success, a CCC Chancellor's Office (2011a) report, stated that college education is important as Californians holding an associate or bachelor's degree will probably earn $1 million more in their careers than those holding only a high school diploma. To ensure that the students were being best served during this time of budget cuts and instability, the CCC Chancellor's Office set out to form a task force. The office sought to best prioritize how to serve the various student populations.

Regarding meeting the intention of the Master Plan, the SSTF (2012) report stated, "The community colleges were designated to have an open admission policy and bear the most extensive responsibility for lower-division, undergraduate instruction" (p. 6). The vision of the SSTF is to create a better life for the 2.6 million students in the California Community College system. No matter what skills they had upon entering all students should be given the tools and guidance needed to complete their educational goals (SSTF 2012), and the challenge was that after years of severe budget cuts the funding had been reduced to roughly half of prerecession levels. Student support services had also been cut in half.

Moore and Shulock (2010) found that only 23% of degree seekers they studied over 6 years transferred to a university. They also found that the majority of students did not follow the Master Plan's intent, as 43% transferred but did not receive the transfer curriculum, with a large percentage going to for-profit schools. Moore and Shulock also

found that passing math or English within 2 years more than doubled the students'

success rate. The SSTF (2012) general recommendations to meet these and other lacking

areas were as follows:

- Give students the tools they need to succeed.
- Prioritize student enrollment.
- Increase transparency and close the achievement gap.
- Improve basic skills education.
- Use technology to help students and create greater efficiency. (pp. i-ii)

According to the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (2010),

that on January 17, 2006, the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges

adopted the final draft of the SSTF recommendations. A policy statement of the SSTF

(2012) report was that Community Colleges will work with the State Board of Education,

the California Department of Education, and other statewide efforts to define and address

college and career readiness.

While drastic cuts were being made to community college courses, the employees

of these institutions wanted a COLA equivalent to cost-of-living increase, but the budget

was tighter than ever. With the strong unions, this led to problems (McCurdy, 1994).

But where would the money come from? The funds only went so far, and with instability

and increased requirements of the SSAA recommendations, that was definitely not far

enough.

Research Questions

1. Should the budget priorities have been on cost-of-living allowance (COLA), student

    services, maintenance, new construction, professional development, basic skills,

    increase in classes offered, or other?

    a. What was the perception of the budget makers of one college and two districts on where to spend the unstable budget monies for the 2013-2014 school year?

    b. What was the perception of the budget approvers of one college and two districts on where to spend the unstable budget monies for the 2013-2014 school year?

2. How had cuts impacted the institutions, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?

3. Should there have been a reprioritization of student registration procedures, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?

Research Hypotheses

1. There are different perceptions on where to prioritize spending from the different subgroups (budget approvers and budget makers).

2. The perception of how the cuts affected the institutions does not differ by role.

3. There are mixed perceptions on the reprioritization of student registration.

Limitations

Focusing on California Community Colleges' budget makers and approvers limited the study's ability to be generalized to a larger population. As with any study, the results of this study provide only a picture of a select group at a moment in time. There are many more considerations to budget instability. So many, but not all, were covered; the key points were addressed, but the list was not exhaustive.

Delimitations

This study covered the key, selected areas of budget instability considerations and how this was dealt with in California Community Colleges. This allowed this study to be generalizable to the state community college budgets as a whole.

Definitions of Terms

In the process of evaluating the usefulness of budget cuts, past research was reviewed in several areas. Some of the key terms used are as follows:

Budget approvers are the positions that have to approve the budget, which consist of college president, district chancellor, and board of trustees.

President is the approver of the budget of a single school. Sometimes a single school district president has both the roles of president and chancellor.

Chancellor is the approver of the budget and the chief executive officer of a community college district.

Board of trustees is the group of elected representatives of a college district that has the ultimate power over what occurs in the district, especially the financial decisions.

Budget makers are the positions that are the key representatives involved in making college or district budgets and consist of district vice chancellor(s), college vice president(s), faculty senate president, and student body president.

Vice chancellor(s) is the maker of the budget of the district and submits the district budget for approval next by the district chancellor.

Vice president(s) is the maker of the budget for the college's president to approve.

Faculty senate president is the position that has a key role in helping the vice president(s) make a college budget, representing the instructional position.

Student body president is the position that has a key role in helping the vice president(s) make a college budget, representing the student population position.

Community college district is the school, or schools, under the discretion of a single board of trustees.

California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office is in charge of all of California's community colleges and deals with, among other things, budgets for the districts and schools, drafting the next year's budget, and ensuring schools comply with the mission and vision statement of the office.

Master Plan of Higher Education was enacted in 1960 so that all Californians were guaranteed access to higher education, even though it may not be at the school of their choice.

Student Success Task Force was formed in 2011 and met monthly in 2012 to research the problems associated with the consecutive years of budget cuts and to come up with recommendations to improve these areas.

Student Success Achievement Act of 2012 was approved by Governor Jerry Brown and the California State Legislature with nine recommendations.

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Importance of the Study

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Over the last several years, and probably for several years to come, there was a reduction in the amount of funds available to the community colleges in California to meet their basic needs. The budget makers and approvers had to take into consideration the immediate and long-term results of the decisions they made regarding meeting these

needs. This study broke down some of the key issues related to these reductions and the

reasoning behind these decisions. This study, while taking a basically holistic approach,

focused on a few key areas. These areas dealt with reserve funds, what to do to deal with

areas of increase when there is less money available, and the overall issues of budget

cuts. A budget cut is a reduction of revenues for the budget of the district. Reserves are

the required, and often extra, revenues of the district that can be used at the district's

discretion to meet unplanned or long-term planned activities.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how an unstable budget situation affected the perceptions of the budget makers and approvers of the California Community Colleges as far as how to reprioritize spending.

Legislative Funding

Federal-Level Budget Arguments

Priorities at the federal level force the consideration of the capability and responsibilities of the community colleges and whether or not these are conflicting. Moore and Shulock (2010) stated the Obama Administration set a goal for the nation to lead the world again in degree attainment, bringing more attention to the importance of community colleges in achieving that goal. Yet, there have been many counterproductive measures passed on funding and accountability of funds. Getting the workforce back into retrained employment is important, but slashing funds for the low-income students would reduce the trained employment of incoming students. Nearly one fourth of the nation's community college students are enrolled in California (Moore & Shulock, 2010).

In an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Hebel (2004) stated that then-President Bush, in the State of the Union address, pledged to give $250 million in federal funds to community colleges to help train 100,000 workers each year. But in reality, in 2005 Bush proposed $300 million in cuts to the Carl D. Perkins Program, which funds low-income students to get job training, and $64 million in cuts to the Workforce Investment Act, which finances training for workers who are displaced (Hebel, 2004).

When funds are tight, accountability to the voters becomes even more important. Tuition fees that have increased more than inflation are of great concern to several contingency groups, which are asking for accountability. The idea of raising taxes and tuition creates concern on the part of the community, and finding out the college has reserves creates a sense of financially tapping a community that is already struggling in these floundering economic times ("Should Congress Demand More," 2008).

A statement released by Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro (2011), ranking member of the Labor, Education, Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee, stated that higher education opens doors and that America is richer when Americans can get an education to pursue their dreams. She added that college should be more affordable to all but that the House of Representatives was looking for cuts and was looking toward the Pell Grant for that (DeLauro, 2011).

Del Puerto (2011) wrote of the struggles of a community to extend taxes and tuition with a reserve already in place. This led to increased scrutiny of spending. The politicians were more than willing to get the accountability passed, despite concerns from the state level.

The issue of funding education has led to many concerns. Where historically financial partnerships between families, higher education institutions, states, and federal government led to getting more qualified candidates into and graduated from college, less public investment leaves the burden more on families and government ("Should Congress Demand More," 2008).

State-Level Budget Arguments

State-level budget cuts are starting to affect most community colleges' abilities to meet their mission statements. These mission statements always revolve around being able to service all the students of the college. Enabling efficient statewide leadership and increasing coordination among colleges was one of the key recommendations of the California Community Colleges (CCC) Student Success Task Force (SSTF, 2012), and the report set a policy statement that a new goal-setting framework should be implemented so that California's diverse community colleges can function more cohesively as a system. This would mean that the CCC Chancellor's Office would play a stronger role.

The colleges can only play a small role in meeting budgets after so many years of budget cuts. In 2011 Rio Hondo College (2011) used reserves to avoid cutting classes or salary increases in a time when most other colleges were cutting both. During these times of limited funds, all stakeholders were interested in where the money was being spent to ensure funds were being properly used. According to Moore and Shulock (2010), this can be done by looking at the erosion of completion rates due to transfer to for-profit institutions no longer ensuring sufficient capacity at University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) institutions for transfer students.

One of the ideas that Governor Brown was trying to pass was that students who had completed over 90 units would have to pay the full cost of their class, changing a $46 class into one of up to $200, and many agreed that this should be legislated (Taylor, 2011). Brown did not put this in the 2013-2014 budget but did include categorical

funding to address the needs of basic skills students, which many saw as a needed step

(Center for Student Success [CSS], 2007; Moore & Shulock, 2010).

CCC Chancellor's Office's need to develop and get a message out. During

tough financial times, the colleges need to develop and get their message out to the

public, students, workers, and community serviced. According to the American

Association of Community Colleges (2001), this translates to the role of training and

retraining workers, especially during an economic downturn. This core message of need

during an economic downturn is that cuts are counterproductive, lessening the chances of

attracting new business dependent on skilled employees and that community colleges

serve these special populations (American Association of Community Colleges, 2001).

The audiences of the messages are (a) the governor and his/her staff, (b) state

legislators, (c) the employer community, (d) students and faculty, and (e) parents of

students. These messages should be delivered within a timeline that takes into account

the next year's budget development timeline, and the earlier it can be done in this process

the better (American Association of Community Colleges, 2001).

Chronic low-level funding. What was true of the budget cuts of the early 1990s

was also true of the recent budget cuts: a major problem facing the community colleges

was making up for what had already been lost in funding.

Aggressive marketing and recruiting. There have been negative aspects of

marketing, but there is nothing wrong with marketing traditional academic and vocational

programs (McCurdy, 1994). During these times of accountability, there is a closer look

at what many consider "extras." As in the early 1990s, as steadily rising enrollments

drove up costs, elected officials started to think again at spending tax dollars on "personal

interest" or avocational classes in art, crafts and recreation, thinking this seemed to be far from the college's primary mission (McCurdy, 1994).

The top priority called for in the Master Plan for Higher Education (Master Plan) is transfer and occupational training programs. But this is now becoming secondary to the needs of students who find themselves in remedial, basic skills, and English as a second language (ESL) classes (McCurdy, 1994). While the community colleges have done well compared to UC and CSU institutions, they have received insufficient funds to carry out their role under the Master Plan (McCurdy, 1994).

Basic skills. The Center for Student Success (CSS, 2007) found that more than one in every three students in the California Community Colleges enroll in a basic skills class (which includes ESL). Because so many students are taking these classes, the CSS suggested better success may come if basic skills were more actively termed foundational skills. This coincides with the use of *developmental* instead of *remedial*, which implies students' skills need to be corrected when the truth may be that they never learned any skills in that area (CSS, 2007). While the labels might be disputed, it is obvious that there is a great need for these services.

Studies show that 70% to 90% of first-time students who are academically assessed require remediation in English, math, or both (SSTF, 2012). The SSTF (2012) report stated that a majority of the students are first-generation college students, low income, and/or are from underrepresented groups. Recommendation 3.4 of the SSTF report was for community colleges to require students to begin working on basic skills in their first year. There is a need to improve the education of basic skills students. The task force found that 60% of all entering college students taking assessment tests assess

as needing basic skills remediation (SSTF, 2012). There is also a need to scale practices that work.

The CSS (2007) defined basic skills as foundation skills in math, reading, writing, and ESL, as well as learning skills and study skills, which are necessary for students to succeed in college-level work. The reality is that students are entering college unprepared or underprepared (Bailey, Jeong, & Cho, 2010; Conley, 2007).

As cited by Edgecombe (2011), the Community College Research Center conducted a study called *Achieving the Dream*, and the data revealed that only 31% of students referred to developmental math and 44% of students referred to reading completed the recommended sequence of courses within 3 years (Bailey et al., 2010; Edgecombe, 2011). The report concluded, "Many students never enroll in the courses to which they are initially referred, while others drop out between courses in the sequence" (Edgecombe, 2011, p. 1). Any modifications to policy need to be made via institutional policy (CSS, 2007).

Funding basic skills and ESL classes. One of the main issues facing the California Community Colleges in the face of increased student enrollment of a more diverse student makeup is basic skills and ESL classes. This leads to specific problems that take money to fund.

The ICAS (2006) ESL Task Force report (as cited in CSS, 2007) suggested that support services for ESL learners should include "orientation and advising, counseling, tutoring, outreach, assistance to disabled ESL learners, job placement, and career services" (p. 69). The report also stated that self-identification is the primary tool of assessment used and that most of these students do not want to self-identify (CSS, 2007).

Professional development. The Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE, 2010) report encouraged learning communities, student support services, and professional development. The CCCSE encouraged the expanse of professional development to focus on engaging students. The CSS (2007) report found yet another effective practice, which is that staff development opportunities vary and responsive to developmental needs of the faculty, diverse student populations, and services. These services include peer mentoring, instructional consultation, reflective consultation, and reflective teaching (CSS, 2007).

The SSTF (2012) report found that professional development is key and that central to the building of a standing framework for the teaching of basic skills is the use of professional development. The SSTF report found there is a need to revitalize and re-envision professional development and formulated a policy of developing and supporting focused professional development for all faculty and staff. This could be achieved through increasing the flex days for professional development to 15 days, where currently the average is 5.3 days.

Jeopardy of quality. According to Evelyn (2002), in California, the state's Master Plan for Higher-Education does not allow community colleges to cap enrollment, but the Legislature still limits the number of students they will reimburse the colleges for when dollars in the budgets are restricted. As a result, the schools lose out on hundreds of millions of dollars in unfunded students. This leads the schools to limiting the classes offered since an enrollment cap is out of the question. This also leads some districts to limiting service-learning and community-outreach programs, and dual-enrollment students—high-school students taking college courses through the district—because . . .

such courses are expensive. Even these are still expensive with the cutbacks (Evelyn, 2002).

One of the purposes of a community college is to create a place for the workforce to be state-trained at a low cost. This is being jeopardized (Moore & Shulock, 2010). What is more, Mark Drummond, chancellor of the largest district in California, Los Angeles, said his district cannot proceed much longer before quality is affected (Evelyn, 2002, 2002). Evelyn (2002) added that extensive cuts can lead to a jeopardy of quality of education. This is the same issue McCurdy (1994) found in his study of the cuts of the 1990s. The cost benefit of using a dramatically increased amount of part-time faculty during budget reductions is offset by what the CCCSE (2010) study showed: Part-time faculty have less interaction with and support of students versus full-time faculty.

Incentivizing successful student behavior. On incentivizing successful student behaviors, the SSTF's (2012) policy statement was, "Community colleges will provide incentives to those student activities that are associated with their success. The report explained that the California Community Colleges are rationing access to education. This was based on the concept that not all students who are admitted are able to enroll in needed courses to meet educational goals. Recommendation 3.3 of the SSTF report was, "Community colleges will provide students the opportunity to consider the benefits of full-time enrollment" (p. 38).

The lost students: Who are they? If students who drop out of college are enrolled for personal interest, then much less importance is attached to the decline. This cannot be known with certainty because data are not available on this. In a 1992 survey by the CCC Chancellor's Office, most students did report long waiting lists for basic

classes, and this resulted in withdrawals (McCurdy, 1994). This same survey found 30% of the college population was made up of students preparing for a transfer to a 4-year institution. Another 50% were in college for a 2-year, job-related degree or basic skills improvement. Only 20% were there for other objectives, including personal interests (McCurdy, 1994).

In the same year, the Community College League of California's survey said the colleges were preparing for leaner budgets by cutting classes for transfer students and job retraining. The Legislative Analyst's Office said the budget instability affected minorities most because they were the least aggressive or sophisticated and the least likely to compete successfully for available course openings (McCurdy, 1994).

The "core of access." A 1993 report of the California Postsecondary Education Commission (CPEC) noted that the Master Plan did not intend that all eligible freshmen would be admitted to the higher education system and campuses of their choice (McCurdy, 1994). Drafters of the plan realized that the state could not afford this access at the undergraduate level. The policy intended for the community colleges to pick up the difference, but now with the fiscal problems, even the community colleges cannot fulfill this promise as seen with the shortage of classes offered to the large number of students wanting to take them. The report concluded that access to the colleges is open, but not access to the programs and courses needed to achieve the students' objectives (McCurdy, 1994). So the community colleges are open to all, but that does not mean all students will get the classes they need or even get any classes at all (Taylor, 2011). The CPEC report pointed out that governors and legislators can claim to be following the Master Plan when allowing all students to enroll (McCurdy, 1994).

Now the legislators and CCC Chancellor's Office are following in line with the plan in setting priorities of transfer and certificate students receiving priority registration, with over half a million first-time freshmen being locked out of any transfer classes. The SSTF (2012) decided to make a commitment to equality that stated college success rates should not come at the expense of access. The SSTF report stated that there is a need to adopt policies for enrolling students and that the current ways are ineffective enrollment priority policies. This recommendation was echoed by Taylor (2011), who recommended (a) statewide registration priorities that follow the intent of the Master Plan, (b) limits on the number of taxpayer-paid credits, and (c) restrictions on the number of times a student may repeat classes.

Priority registration is largely currently based on college-defined criteria, and low priority is given to high school students who are also trying to enroll at a California community college, so as not to displace other students (Taylor, 2011). Taylor (2011) stated that virtually all colleges granted priority registration to military (current or former), students with disabilities, and participants in service programs like Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS). Taylor added, "Most first-time CCC students don't receive priority registration; instead, they wait until open registration, and matriculated first-time students should be high on the priority list. It was recommended that priority registration be given to continuing students who have been fully matriculated and filed an academic plan, with the next highest going to new students who have completed matriculation and an academic plan. Nonmatriculated students and those who attend classes for enrichment should come last (Taylor, 2011). Taylor concluded that during financially unstable times, the Master Plan's main intent of transfer should be the

focus, and the California Community Colleges should use the budget to meet this and prioritize this over lifelong learners and students with high-unit limits on funded classes.

On course repetition, Taylor (2011) found that regulations allow multiple repeats of certain classes, and he recommended the elimination of state support for repeats (with certain exceptions). According to Moore and Shulock (2010), "On average, students seeking degrees completed 63% of attempted credits, or a third dropped out or failed.

Matriculation. The SSTF (2012) report stated, "In the 2009-10 State Budget, a 52 percent budget cut in matriculation program funding turned a bad situation into a crisis" (p. 21). The SSTF report stated that in 1986, the Seymour-Cambell Matriculation Act assigned the Board of Governors with ensuring that every community college student was provided support to define and attain his or her educational goals. The Board adopted Title 5 regulations requiring that districts provide admissions, orientation, assessment, counseling, and follow-up services to all non-exempted students for which funding was provided for those services. (p. 21)

The report added that without matriculation, students find themselves making uninformed decisions, leading to classes unrelated to their objectives or that they are not prepared to take, causing dropouts. Colleges also lose targeting ability for limited seats, and faculty are faced with students who are unprepared to take the courses (SSTF, 2012). The SSTF found a need to address this through a low-cost common assessment, requiring guidance on academic processes, especially course selection, done through an academic plan. This should all be done through the improved use of technology. These steps would also require more counselors. The CSS (2007) report stated that an effective

practice would be "orientation, assessment, and placement are mandatory for all new students" (p. 23).

Recommendation 2.5 of the SSTF (2012) report was the encouragement of declaring a program of study upon admittance, and intervention if this is not done by the second semester to maintain priority enrollment.

Milestones. Under the heading "Critical milestone is missed," Moore and Shulock (2010) stated in its 6-year study only 40% of degree-seeking students earned at least 30 college-level credits at the CCC the minimum needed to show a significant economic benefit. The authors recommended using data to better track students during milestones and achievements. Moore and Shulock found that students were more likely to succeed if they passed college-level math and English in the first 2 years, took college success courses, were full-time students, passed 20 units in the first year, and took summer courses.

Moore and Shulock (2010) found the milestones to be as follows:

- 2nd term retention
- 2nd year retention
- 12+ college credits
- 30+ college credits
- Transfer curriculum (60 transferable credits, including English and math)
- Certificate
- Associate degree
- Transfer—with transfer curriculum
- Transfer—without transfer curriculum (p. 12)

The study also found that successful enrollment patterns were as follows:

- Attend full-time in first term
- Take college success course
- Enroll continuously
- Pass college-level math within 2 years
- Pass college-level English within 2 years
- Complete 20+ credits in first year

- Earn summer credits
- % course withdrawals
- % course late registration (Moore & Shulock, 2010, p. 12)

Pennington and Millron (2010) pointed out,

- College entry. Orientation, placement, and advising are key to getting students into the right course of study and giving them confidence to succeed.
- Academic catch-up. This includes developmental education and successful completion of gatekeeper courses such as college algebra and freshman composition. Fewer than 30 percent of academically underprepared students get beyond this stage.
- Program of study. Students who do not maintain a solid rate of progress once they get into their core academic programs are still at high risk of not completing their degrees. (p. 4)

The CCCSE (2010) found that nationally less than half (45%) of students earn a degree or certificate in 6 years of enrollment, and only slightly more than half (52%) of full-time college students return for a second year. The CSS (2007) found that early assessment and completion of developmental coursework improves the achievement gap otherwise seen. To accomplish this, program evaluation is needed (CSS 2007). The CCRC report by Bailey et al. (2010) found that gatekeeper courses of freshman-level math, English, or other courses prerequisite for students' academic progress need to be accomplished early in students' academic program for them to succeed in achieving a transfer-level degree. If gatekeeper courses are not accomplished early (within 2 years), the success rate is half or below.

Opinions on How Funds Should Be Allocated

The SSTF (2012) suggested there is a need to "align course offerings to meet student needs," and this would be done through offering "courses that align with student education plans," using "a balanced approach," and funding "courses that support student educational plans" (pp. 41-42). Recommendation 4.1 of the SSTF report was that the

highest priority for course offerings will be given to credit and noncredit courses for the advancement of students' academic progress in the areas of basic skills, ESL, CTE, degree and certificate attainment, and transfer, for the purpose of labor market and economic development needs of the community.

There are several different theories on how to cut budgets. One of them is salary freezes; another is enrollment cuts (CCC Chancellor's Office, 2011c; Keller, 2009a).

<div align="center">**Reserve Funds**</div>

Excess Reserves

McCurdy (1994) noted, "In many instances, colleges have tended to cut smaller classes, which especially hurt the many vocational education offerings that have fewer students because of the equipment limitations" (p. 26). The buildup of reserves is because of uncertainties over state funding. The CCC Chancellor's Office (2011c) suggested 3% to 5%, but many colleges have increased that by 2% because of uncertainties over the drop in property taxes. Many think the cuts in classes offered to increase the reserves may not have been necessary. McCallum, of the faculty association, he thinks the colleges overreacted. (McCurdy, 19).

There is always the debate over the staff and faculty salary raises when the reserves exist (McCurdy, 1994). Many districts have been putting aside reserves for rising health costs. The reserves are "reserved" specifically for this. These increases of reserves have proven especially necessary in times of instability (McCurdy, 1994).

With these cuts, there is a tradeoff of temporary neglect of maintenance to problems of long-term maintenance deferrals. There is the same issue with technology, and the need of students and staff to have up-to-date technology in these rapidly changing

times is critical. The libraries are also hit hard and become inadequate in servicing the

students. Also put off is the update in technology for vocational classes. When cuts are

made, these are the areas that budget writers often cut. But at the same time, the

construction of new buildings is funded under bond issues while the buildings already in

use start to fall apart. A throwback to this was that some believed not enough reserves

were being used while jobs were being cut. This affected the morale of the workers, as

seen in the UC system (Keller, 2009b). Yet several California community colleges found

ways to make no cuts by using reserves, ensuring operational unities (Rio Hondo

College, 2011).

Where Cuts Have Been Made

As in the budget cuts of the early 1990s, the recent cuts were made to keep

essentials such as salaries and to cover rises in health costs, medical insurance, utilities,

and supplies. Instead, the instability was seen in funding for noninstructional

expenditures such as administration, maintenance, campus operations, equipment

replacement, and support services such as counseling before instructional cuts. Also

considered was cutting programs like nursing, electronics technology, and other job-

related classes that have high equipment costs. Community colleges are already

relatively efficient, with little room to cut spending further (McCurdy, 1994).

Cutting Unfunded Enrollment

McCurdy (1994) noted, "The colleges also reduced enrollment for another reason.

The enrollment cap which limits funding of enrollment growth has produced a widening

gap between funded and unfunded enrollment" (p. 24). It does not make sense to enroll

students when the state refuses to fund them. This leads colleges to cut courses to reduce

the unfunded enrollment. To otherwise enroll these students, reserves must be used

(McCurdy, 1994).

How to Service Students on Fewer Funds

There is an established Master Plan to service the students in the state and a

mission statement to service the students of a particular college. It allows for higher

education to all Californians at a very low cost. But with budget cuts the state was faced

with too many students and not enough seats offered for classes.

There is a map to go by in servicing students that has been lost due to budget instability.

This same master plan allows for anyone with a diploma or at least 18 years old, to be

able to attend the community college system (Cage 1991).

The California Community Colleges' Master Plan does not allow for enrollment

caps, so some colleges cut back on course offerings and took other steps that, in effect,

would limit the influx of students. That had some officials fretting that the slothful

economy would undermine their mission. George R. Boggs, president of the American

Association of Community Colleges, stated turning away students is like doctors not

saving lives. His level of concern for the open-access mission was getting stronger by the

day (Evelyn, 2002). There was also a concern that ESL and adult education would limit

enrollment (Evelyn, 2002).

The CSS (2007) report listed one effective practice where a system of support

services exists, characterized by a high integration among academic and student support

services. The report stated that support systems have been illustrated as existing on four

"levels," representing increasing potential for positive program outcomes (Kiemig, 1983)

(CSS, 2007). The first level was courses existing in isolation, the second offered some

additional learning assistance, the third level was where trained professionals are assisting with additional learning, and the fourth was where a comprehensive learning system is used to provide monitoring, advising, and instructional support (CSS, 2007).

Something that already exists but could use boosting is departments such as Extended Opportunity Programs and Services (EOPS) and Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) which model the integration of various student support services with academic instruction (CSS, 2007). The CSS (2007) report highlighted the fact that, often 'at-risk' students require childcare, financial aid, and transportation, as well as personal services, in order to succeed. Also in the report was that successful student services programs use reinforcement and reward in order to promote the students' motivation (CSS, 2007).

The SSTF (2012) report listed several examples of the types of online services community colleges can provide such as a common application to college, electronic transcripts and online BOG Fee Waiver and education planning. A policy statement of the SSTF report was stronger student support will be met through the use of technology and on campus staff.

There are some creative solutions to budget issues for community colleges. The president of Central Piedmont Community College in North Carolina heard about the state's budget situation and went directly to the community's businesses to get a class "sponsored," where the company would pay the $1,650 cost to recover one of the 220 courses cancelled. This succeeded to get 30 of the classes back when enrollment went up at the same time funding went down (Evelyn, 2002).

Learning Communities

In Edgecombe's (2011) report, it was suggested to use team teaching or learning communities to accomplish the task of helping students in developmental education achieve academically. The CCCSE (2010) report encouraged learning communities, student support services, and professional development. The CCCSE illustrated that more than half of the students at a California community college, Cabrillo College, require developmental education and that the college's learning communities "improve the outcome of these students" (p. 11).

Prioritizing

The California Community Colleges held a Southern California town hall meeting at the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce on October 27, 2011, on SSTF draft recommendations. In a press release announcing the meeting, the CCC Chancellor's Office (2011b) explained the reason for the meeting as being on how to continue to meet the demands of the increasing student body with the resources to the colleges diminishing on a state and federal level. This requires reprioritization of the classes offered focusing on graduating and transferring students.

Taylor (2011) found that with limited resources targeting funds is more important than ever. Taylor also stated that the current campus policies do not reflect the Master Plan's highest priorities of what students are being served and what classes toward their goals are being offered. This alignment of resources is in line with the student success recommendations caused the SSTF (2012) report. This could be done through registration reprioritization, centralized assessment, modifying the Board of Governors

fee waiver program, and identifying best practices that can be accomplished through local resources (SSTF, 2012).

A top priority is to meet the needs of transfer students. In a study done by Moore and Shulock (2010), the researchers found that 40% of the students earned one year (30 units) the minimum research has found to correlate with significant increase in earnings. Only 15% completed the transfer curriculum, less than the 23% that transferred. In addition, only a very small portion of students earned a certificate, and 11% were awarded an associate's degree within 6 years of study (Moore & Shulock, 2010). The authors found that many students transfer without completing a transfer curriculum or earning an associate's degree. Moore and Shulock found this trend worth watching given the following: (a) state-funded Cal Grants (which can go to the private sector); (b) concerns over recruiting practices, low graduation rates, and educational quality in the private sector; (c) excessive loans and defaults; and (d) diminishing capacity at the CSU and UC colleges to receive transfer students.

Learning From the Early 1990s Budget Cuts

In the early 1990s there were also severe, repetitive budget cuts. Evelyn (2002) explained that the cuts coincided with a growing college-age population and sluggish job market, leading to students seeking retraining. According to Blumenstyk, Sander, Schmidt, and Wasley (2008), most institutions did not feel capable of keeping up with this without sacrificing the quality of education.

Troubling Fee Increases

Many of the jobs lost during economic downturns will never reappear, causing a need for job retraining for other careers, which can be taught at the community colleges.

The cutback of the classes offered for these careers due to the high cost of equipment and high enrollment costs means the colleges have been unable to help the state through the recession with the retraining of the workforce when their numbers usually grow and this could impede California's economic recovery (McCurdy, 1994, p. 2). McCurdy (1994) added that the higher fees hurt the low-income population the most.

Financial Aid

For many students, the only thing that allows them to attend school is the financial aid available. Once the issue of the students knowing about financial aid is addressed, then the issue becomes the funds available. Senate Bill 87 only provides $0.91 per unit reimbursement for BOG Waiver Fee (California Senate 2011).

One of the problems with getting students into school is the issue of funding. Financial aid is available, but most students do not know how to take advantage of these funds, still restricting the students. In Senate Bill 87, the state set up an allocation of $50,000 per campus out of $34.2 million for this and the remainder of the funds to be based on fulltime equivalent students and BOG fee waiver program. It is up to the campus to help the students navigate the paperwork necessary (California Senate 2011)

Financial aid is available if a student meets the requirements of the state or federal agency based generally on financial need, but this aid has not kept up with the rise in fees and other costs. The adjustments that have been made have little or no effect on community college students because they do not avail themselves of these options. Often they do not even know these options exist. There are Board of Governors grants for fee waivers, and the low-income students do not even know these grants exist because the low-income and minority students are not only unaware of them but are unfamiliar with

the process, and some see a stigma attached and will not apply based on that (McCurdy, 1994).

Financial aid in the form of Board of Governors fee waivers is changing under current legislation, with more changes planned for the future. The CSS (2007) report found that an effective practice is for financial aid to disseminate and facilitate developmental students to apply for and acquire financial aid, meaning full integration of "Student Services". Moore and Shulock (2010) explained that system policies should change to help this facilitation. The system needs to use the BOG Fee Waiver to incentivize student succeeding and that it should be consistent with enrollment policies (SSTF 2012). Recommendation 3.2 of the SSTF (2012) report addressed this, and the task force decided the role of the CCC Chancellor's Office is to make sure the students getting BOG Fee Waivers have an academic plan, make satisfactory progress, and have less than 110 units.

Need to Gather Data

It is recommended to start sharing data and identifying common policy barriers (Moore and Shulock 2010; Blumenstyk et al. 2008).

As cited in the Harris and Bensimon (2007) report, there is a need for intentional monitoring of minority students' educational outcomes, and this is made clear by the African Americans and Hispanics constantly falling behind their White and Asian counterparts in grade point average, progression rate, and retention rate.

The University of Southern California's Center for Urban Education created the Equity Scorecard, which is being implemented in two- and four-year public and

independent colleges throughout California (Harris & Bensimon, 2007, p. 78). This scorecard creates evidence-based knowledge that can then be acted upon.

The Equity Scorecard is stressed for two reasons: first, students are racially diverse in colleges, and second, when the race-based disparities are found, practitioners are more likely to externalize the results to the students being internally lacking (Harris & Bensimon, 2007). According to Harris and Bensimon (2007), this is needed to meet the special needs of these special populations.

The CSS (2007) stressed that these systematic evaluations are of three levels; primary is descriptive data, secondary is data on short-term outcomes, and tertiary is data on long-term outcomes. This data gathering and analyzing should follow an "industry standard," which the report listed as follows:

- completion rates for developmental courses;
- grades in developmental courses;
- grades obtained in post-developmental education curriculum courses in the same subject area;
- retention rates for developmental students;
- grades in courses for which developmental students are tutored;
- student satisfaction with courses and services;
- faculty satisfaction with the skills of students who participate in developmental courses and services; and
- graduation rates for developmental students. (CSS, 2007, pp. 26-27)

Recommendation 7.2 of the SSTF (2012) report was addressed this specifically. Additionally, Recommendation 7.3 of the SSTF report was to implement a student success scorecard for the colleges, districts, and statewide system. The SSTF further came up with Recommendation 7.4, which was to develop a longitudinal student record system which would follow the student from elementary school through postsecondary and into the workplace.

Personal Interest Students

Most colleges have cut personal interest classes and switched them to "community services" programs, which charge fees that are supposed to pay for virtually all of the operational costs. The other issue is that students may check *personal interest* when filling out their enrollment form, but their desire may be to upgrade skills (McCurdy, 1994).

Improve Institutional Practices

There is a great need to improve institutional practices not only to repair the cracks in the system but to do so more efficiently and effectively, especially during these years of budget instability. Moore and Shulock (2010) offered recommendations to improve institutional practices where there is a flow of information through all sources and back into them. Some of the practices that might be able to fix some of these institutional problems were found by Moore and Shulock to be the following:

- College success course
- Better financial aid counseling to [pay for school]
- On-line summer courses
- Early alert systems [for potential trouble] . . .
- Limits on course drops and repeats . . .
- Orientation and advising to [take core (math and English)] early
- Learning communities for basic skills students
- Transfer advising [for] effective course-taking
- Support programs [not only for] "first year experience" but for [all] years (p. 12)

Other research on improving institutional practices was Pennington and Millron's (2010) *Completion by Design*, which included the need for

- time, leadership, courage, and resources to make difficult changes
- infrastructure to transfer and disseminate new approaches, practices, and systems

- teamwork that crosses barriers among departments, organizational units, faculty and administrators—all committed to the success of the same student body
- collaboration among community colleges and campuses that can otherwise be isolated, in part because of their community-based identities and in part because of a culture of self-reliance
- institutional and state policies, funding formulas, and tuition and aid structures that provide incentives and accountability for student success. (p. 4)

Pennington and Millron found there were several considerations to implementing proven and promising practices at the loss and momentum points:

- "Loss point #1: college entry": Colleges lose 10%-15% of their potential students at this point. Needed is mandatory orientation (including financial aid counseling and other assistance programs). Technology can be used to meet this.

- "Loss point #2: academic catch-up and gatekeeper courses": "Students are most likely to drop out" while in these catch-up programs. Study skills should be taught, and team teaching (learning communities) can be utilized to keep students moving toward completion of a degree while still making up needed skills and knowledge.

- "Loss point #3: program of study": After passing the gatekeeper courses, academic momentum needs to be monitored to ensure it is being maintained and not lost (pp. 7-8).

The CCCSE (2010) state the Initiative on Student Success focus groups indicate that both faculty and students benefit from institutional policies that go beyond encouraging students to participate. Faculty want policies requiring the students to engage in activities that improve student success. As cited in the CSS (2007) report Roueche and Roueche (1999) positive student outcomes in the developmental programs more frequently occur when institutional leaders have high standards for success, expect

everyone involved to work toward achieving program goals, and create supporting frameworks for program success.

And an institutional focus and acceptance of changes as a mainstream activity of the college are told via public declaration of administrative support as well as through adequate allocation of resources (CSS, 2007). The report listed one effective practice where policies facilitate student completion of required developmental coursework as soon as possible in the educational sequence (CSS, 2007).

Summary

In conclusion, in the *Broken Promises* study of the early 1990s budget crisis, McCurdy (1994) found that the community colleges were being underfunded. The impact on quality was that class size was up, faculty's workload was the same, faculty workforce was down, instructional equipment was underfunded, and student transfers were down (McCurdy, 1994). Once again, during the recent budget instability, there were the same issues to be faced.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Chapter Three is divided into the following 10 sections that explain the method of study utilized in this research: (a) purpose of study, (b) research questions, (c) research hypotheses, (d) research design, (e) population and sampling, (f) instrumentation, (g) data collection procedures, (h) coding and analysis of data, (i) composite scores and factors, and (j) limitations. Chapter Three describes in detail how the survey approach was used to collect data from a number of makers and approvers of the California Community Colleges' budget, with boards of trustees, chancellors, and vice chancellors at two of the 72 California community college districts, and college presidents, vice presidents, faculty senate presidents, and student body presidents from two of the 112 California community colleges. The population and sampling segment reveals how campus and district budget makers and approvers were selected. The questionnaire that was utilized for data collection is discussed in the instrumentation section; the questions are discussed in terms of validity, reliability, and relationship to the research questions. The procedure section explains in detail how the participants were instructed to complete the questionnaire, how the questionnaires were collected, and how the contributors were debriefed. The selection of the research design is justified in the design section. The coding and analysis section describes the appropriateness of the contingency table analysis utilized in the next chapter to show the results of the survey. The composite scores and factors segment discusses the three factors that were produced to test the hypotheses designed to establish whether budget makers and approvers differed on their overall perceptions of how to deal with budget instability. Finally, the threats to validity and how they were addressed are discussed in the limitations section.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how an unstable budget situation affected the perceptions of the budget makers and approvers of the California Community Colleges as far as how to reprioritize spending.

Research Questions

1. Should the budget priorities have been on cost-of-living allowance (COLA), student services, maintenance, new construction, professional development, basic skills, increase in classes offered, or other?

    a. What was the perception of the budget makers of one college and two districts on where to spend the unstable budget monies for the 2013-2014 school year?

    b. What was the perception of the budget approvers of one college and two districts on where to spend the unstable budget monies for the 2013-2014 school year?

2. How had cuts impacted the institutions, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?

3. Should there have been a reprioritization of student registration procedures, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?

Research Hypotheses

1. There are different perceptions on where to prioritize spending from the different subgroups (budget approvers and budget makers).

2. The perception of how the cuts affected the institutions does not differ by role.

3. There are mixed perceptions on the reprioritization of student registration.

Research Design

The research was conducted using qualitative methods. Grounded theory research using a social justice interpretive framework and analysis of public domain budgetary documents were used to identify current trends in actions taken to address budget instability. The aim of social justice is to end with "distinct steps to reform and an incitement to action" (Creswell, 2012, Chapter 1, "The Practice of Using Social Justice," para. 4). Creswell (2012) stated, "The procedure of qualitative research, or its methodology, are characterized as inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher's experience in collecting and analyzing the data" (Chapter 2, "Four Philosophical Assumptions," para. 5). Grounded theory research allowed the investigator to develop the theories during the process of research and to find a unified theoretical explanation of common experiences of a sample population "grounded" in the data from the participants of the research. The research was done in the practice of using a social justice interpretive framework, in which Creswell identified a common component is "the problems and the research questions explored aim to allow the researcher an understanding of specific issues or topics" (Chapter 1, "The Practice of Using Social Justice," para. 2) and where this method results in distinct steps of reform and an incitement to action. The investigator used this framework, and grounded theory research allowed the investigator to use the scientific method to describe the problem, the hypotheses, the data collection, the results, and the discussion (Creswell, 2012).

An explanatory design was used, and it involved collecting quantitative data from a closed set of questions and qualitative data from open-ended questions. The principal investigator employed a qualitative questionnaire instrument (see Appendix A) that was

examined for reliability and validity by inspecting all procedures, administering the questionnaire, finishing procedures consistently, having a professional aid the researcher, and using triangulation. The questionnaire was administered online on the researcher's website using a web-based application with an introductory cover page, instructions, and a link to complete and submit the questionnaire, which was entered into a database; at the conclusion, a debriefing page appeared (see Appendix B). The principal investigator examined a sample representative of the budget makers and approvers of the colleges selected. The California Community Colleges (CCC) Chancellor's Office (2014) stated there are 72 districts, each with a chancellor, vice chancellor(s), and a board of trustees, and the districts comprise 112 colleges, with each college having a president, vice president(s), faculty senate president, and student body president. Permission to use the sites to gather participants was only secured at two of the 72 districts and one of the 112 colleges.

Out of the population of 16 budget approvers (13 board of trustee members, two chancellors, and one president), four responded, or 25.0%. Out of the population of nine budget makers (three vice chancellors, four vice presidents, one faculty senate leader, and one student body president), four responded, or 44.4%. Follow-up e-mails were sent to each maker or approver of the budget who did not participate in a timely fashion. The principal investigator adhered to a strict timeline. Once data were collected, the principal investigator used an online database to conduct a matrix analysis.

The study involved the methodical examination and illustration of perceptions and concerns from questionnaire participants. The results aligned the perceptions of the reprioritization of the budget responses from budget makers and approvers of the

California Community Colleges. The current study was a qualitative study of the

California Community Colleges' budget decision makers and approvers who completed

the questionnaire sent out by the principal investigator.

Population and Sampling

Creswell and Plano Clark (2010) defined sampling as a way of selecting

individuals for a study that would represent the whole population of the sample. The

sample contains individuals, events, or items chosen from a larger collection, known as a

population. The focus of this research was to find out how the California Community

Colleges' budget decision makers and approvers dealt with the budget instability and the

reprioritization of expenditures affecting their college or district. The sample was chosen

from the list on the CCC Chancellor's Office website, and permission to recruit

participants was asked of 112 colleges and 62 districts.

All California Community Colleges' budget makers and approvers were contacted

and asked to complete a questionnaire (see Appendix C). For that reason, the most

important criterion in finding an appropriate population was that participants were listed

by the CCC Chancellor's Office. As noted, potential respondents were identified based

on the CCC Chancellor's Office's database of colleges and districts, but only the

potential respondents of the secured sites of one college and two districts were recruited.

Eight of the 25 potential respondents followed a forwarded link to actually take the

survey and participate in the study, which was a 32% response rate. The electronically

submitted questionnaires provided the emerging data from this study.

The study consisted of received questionnaires from 32% of the California

Community Colleges' budget makers and approvers at the sites of two districts and one

college of the state's 62 districts and 112 colleges. The budget makers and approvers were surveyed with a questionnaire to determine if, during a time of budget instability, perceptions of reprioritizations revealed any pattern between the colleges and districts, and to note the differences.

Instrumentation

The data collection instrument that was utilized in this study was a questionnaire with nine questions for the budget makers and approvers, including six closed-ended questions and three open-ended questions. Table 1 shows the connection between each of the questionnaire items and the research question it was designed to answer.

Table 1

Connection Between Questionnaire Items and the Research Questions

Research question & variable	Questionnaire items	Content validity rationale
1. Should the budget priorities have been on cost-of-living allowance (COLA), student services, maintenance, new construction, professional development, basic skills, increase in classes offered, or other?	Survey 6a–y	The different types of budget makers and approvers have different priorities.
Variable: Independent, so called because they are independent of the outcome itself; instead, they are presumed to influence the outcome.		
2. How had cuts impacted the institutions, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?	Survey Question 7	The impressions of the cuts will differ slightly because where the cuts were made might be different.
Variable: Independent, so called because they are independent of the outcome itself; instead, they are presumed to influence the outcome.		
3. Should there have been a reprioritization of student registration procedures, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?	Survey Question 8	Most of the respondents will have similar perceptions on the reprioritization of student registration.
Variable: Independent, so called because they are independent of the outcome itself; instead, they are presumed to influence the outcome.		

A panel of experts, consisting of the dissertation chair, a statistician, committee members, and the Argosy University Institutional Review Board, validated the questionnaire instrument. All procedures were acknowledged and documented with comprehensive descriptions on how the information was collected. The results, based on the study questions, were compared after organizing the information to ensure uniformity between them. Furthermore, consistency and reliability in administration of the instrument was regulated, maintained, and documented. Validation of the questionnaire instrument was guaranteed by using the same questions.

In order to confirm that the budget makers and approvers understood the questionnaire, a draft questionnaire was delivered to the committee members and the methods advisor. The principal investigator assumed that all the California Community Colleges' budget makers and approvers who received the questionnaire could read and write as well as had knowledge of how to navigate through an online questionnaire. The eight educational professionals who acted as budget makers and approvers who completed the questionnaires returned the questionnaires in a timely fashion.

Data Collection Procedures

The principal investigator developed a questionnaire to answer the research questions of the study. Creswell (2009) explained that descriptive studies frequently search for data that have not been available before and that the development of an instrument suitable for this is needed. Creswell (2012) explained that in today's computer-literate society, and due to cost and efficiency, the online survey process is the most commonly used technique in research studies. The questionnaire used in this study

allowed the principal investigator to gather information on the techniques and strategies used by the California Community Colleges' budget makers and approvers.

The questionnaire was prepared for online distribution to the appropriate budget makers and approvers. The questionnaire was made available on March 9, 2014. The potential respondents were forwarded an e-mail written by the researcher through their site's contact person to ensure anonymity. The questionnaire was accessible only after participants acknowledged informed consent (see Appendix D) before the survey began. The informed consent form was addressed to the budget makers and approvers and explained the purpose of the study. Furthermore, the informed consent addressed the data collection process and time requirements. Research has shown that the researcher should state the reason for the research up front and explain how the data will be evaluated and that the study should not be wordy or ambiguous (Creswell, 2012; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010; Newton & Rudestam, 2001; Stringer, 2008). The assurance of strict anonymity was given to all the participants of the study. The informed consent form supplied the participants with directions on how to complete the questionnaire, the proper steps to submit the completed survey through the researcher's website (www.lindabender.com), and the time required to complete the whole process (10-20 minutes). All the questionnaires were coded via the website, and encoded answers were entered into a database to identify different characteristics of the respondents, but anonymity was guaranteed.

The responses of all participants were monitored, and a debriefing occurred following completion of the questions. A follow-up e-mail (see Appendix E) was sent on March 9, 2014, to all the approved sites' budget makers and approvers to ask those who

had not yet participated to respond by April 1, 2014; the e-mail informed those who had

not participated of the importance of completion, and it thanked those who had already

participated. By April 8, 2014, eight out of 25 budget makers and approvers had

completed the questionnaire; this represented a 32% response rate.

When all the data were collected from each of the budget makers and approvers,

the questionnaires were tabulated. A matrix was developed and utilized to address the

patterns that materialized from the participants' responses.

Coding and Analysis of Data

The entire questionnaire instrument was utilized to answer the research questions.

The questionnaires were collected over a 1-month period, from March 9, 2014, to April 8,

2014. All the forced-choice responses were coded and organized for ingress into the

SPSS program. The descriptive-content responses to open-ended questions were input in

preparation for qualitative analysis.

Creswell (2012) stated that there may be less structure to the qualitative data

analysis because it is based on developing a theory by piecing together implicit meanings

about a category. Also, Creswell stated that a rigorous approach to data collection, data

analysis, and reporting must be performed. Rigor must also be followed in the validation

procedure using such methods as member checking, triangulating sources of data, or

using a peer review.

The data-concentrated effort was the next step. Frequency distributions were

formulated as a result of the responses received. As a result, the principal investigator

was able to identify any errors observed as incorrect entries. Any errors that were

detected by the principal investigator were corrected by a resubmission of the incorrect

data on the original questionnaire. The entire set of variables were on a nominal or ranked scale. The study was conducted utilizing a contingency table analysis. Association between variables was calculated utilizing a *t* test.

Composite Scores and Factors

Two factors were created to test the hypotheses, designed to resolve how budget makers and approvers differed on addressing a budget crisis in the area of how budget instability affected perceptions of priorities in the community colleges. These factors were amalgamated scores that signified dimensions of the ideas in the study. These dimensions were based on the conjectural suppositions in the writings of Creswell (2009) and Stringer (2008).

Table 2 identifies the questions that were incorporated into the factors of the study. All questions were coded, or recorded, so that they ranged from low to high, where high was most positive.

Table 2

Amalgamated Scores for Factors Used in Hypotheses 1 and 2

Factor (composite score)	Questions included in factors
1. Perceptions on prioritizing spending based on position as budget maker versus budget approver	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9
2. Perceptions of how the recent and current budget situation has impacted participants' institutions	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9
3. Perceptions of reprioritization of student registration	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

A *t* test was conducted to test the variance among the scores of the budget makers and approvers for each of the factors identified in Table 2. Each hypothesis was

confirmed in the form of a null hypothesis where no variation was expected among the

colleges and districts. The conclusion of each test is available in Chapter Five.

Limitations

The following limitations are based on presented data and single surveys:

1. Only educated position-holding persons were selected.

2. Only budget makers and approvers from the California Community Colleges' districts

    (two out of 62) and colleges (one out of 112) were selected because their permission

    to recruit from the site was granted.

3. Only some of the potential respondents actually participated.

4. The method of data collection resulted in a moderate number of unanswered

    questions and incomplete responses.

Summary

This chapter included a review of the purpose statement and the research

questions before relating the research design selected for the collection of data. The

research design was explained, the reasoning for the design was expressed, and the

population for the study was defined. The instrument section discussed the questionnaire,

the research questions it was designed to answer, type of variable, and content validity

rationale that was used to collect the data. Chapter Three explained the process that was

utilized for collecting data. Finally, the limitations for the study were identified and

described; the process that was utilized to code and analyze the data was also explained.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Chapter Four provides a presentation of the study findings and an analysis of the information collected. Chapter Four includes an evaluation of the purpose of the study, the three research questions, and the three hypotheses, as well as a report of the population and sampling, coding and analysis of the data, data analysis for research questions, and a summary of findings.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how an unstable budget situation affected the perceptions of the budget makers and approvers of the California Community Colleges as far as how to reprioritize spending.

Research Questions

1. Should the budget priorities have been on cost-of-living allowance (COLA), student services, maintenance, new construction, professional development, basic skills, increase in classes offered, or other?

    a. What was the perception of the budget makers of one college and two districts on where to spend the unstable budget monies for the 2013-2014 school year?

    b. What was the perception of the budget approvers of one college and two districts on where to spend the unstable budget monies for the 2013-2014 school year?

2. How had cuts impacted the institutions, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?

3. Should there have been a reprioritization of student registration procedures, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?

Research Hypotheses

1. There are different perceptions on where to prioritize spending from the different

   subgroups (budget approvers and budget makers).

2. The perception of how the cuts affected the institutions does not differ by role.

3. There are mixed perceptions on the reprioritization of student registration.

Report of Population and Sampling

Sampling is a method of selecting a quantity of individuals for a study in such a

way that they signify the larger group from which they were selected. A sample

comprises the individuals, items, or events selected from a larger group referred to as a

population. The sample selected for this research consisted of budgetary decision makers

and approvers from one California community college and two California community

college districts. This is helpful in noting the sample size and identifying the purposeful

sampling strategy to enroll participants in the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010).

Participants were selected from the one community college that chose to participate in the

study out of the 112 California community colleges, and two of the possible 62 California

community college districts. The selected population of budgetary decision makers and

approvers at the participating school and districts was contacted and asked to complete an

online questionnaire, with the choice to self-select for a follow-up in-depth interview.

Stringer (2008) explained that questionnaires are the most widely used tools for research

in educational settings. To have a cautious, understandable statement of the problem

underlying the questionnaire is a necessity. Ambiguity and misinterpretation nullify the

research findings.

The most important factor in the selection of the budgetary decision makers and approvers was that these were high-ranking individuals given the position to speak for large segments of the campus and local population to speak and decide on the budget. All 112 California community colleges making up 62 districts have their own process for making these budgetary decisions, and the one college and two districts that participated were no exception. All 112 colleges and 62 districts were given the opportunity to participate, but only one college and two districts decided to participate for various reasons; many that opted out did so because they were under institutional review for their accreditation. From the one college and two districts, at which there were 25 key people who fit the criteria, there were only eight respondents to the questionnaire. The returned questionnaires provided the descriptive data for the study.

The respondents were presented with an online questionnaire, the intent of which was to collect data that explained their perspectives on the budgetary priorities of the 2013-2014 school year. The data were analyzed as a whole and in relationship to the respondents' positions at the college and districts. The areas of priorities were not exhausted but were selected by choosing the largest areas concerned, and these were limited to 25 for purposes of keeping the time needed to respond to the questionnaire as low as possible while still gathering meaningful data. The questionnaire allowed open-ended questions to substantiate and further illuminate the respondents' perceptions of how cuts had impacted the respondents' institutions and the extent to which additional factors contributed to the prioritization and reprioritization of the student registration. Creswell (2009) discussed that open-ended questions require developed respondent thought, which was useful on the given study's final two questions.

Coding and Analysis of the Data

The questions utilized in the questionnaire instrument answered the research

questions. The questionnaires were collected over a 1-month period on the researcher's

website, www.lindabender.com. The responses to the forced-choice questions were

coded and prepared for entry into the SPSS program. The descriptive text responses were

input into an SPSS standard spreadsheet in preparation for qualitative analysis.

Data cleaning was the next step. The forced qualitative data received from

forced-choice responses were utilized to create frequency distributions. All variables

were calculated on a nominal or ordinal scale. The study was conducted utilizing a

contingency table analysis. The principal measure was a two-tailed *t* test.

Data Analysis for Research Questions

Research Question 1

Should the budget priorities have been on cost-of-living allowance (COLA),

student services, maintenance, new construction, professional development, basic skills,

increase in classes offered, or other?

To address Research Question 1, a questionnaire was designed, and

approximately 25 respondents were given the opportunity to respond from one

community college and two community college districts. There were eight respondents

who completed the nine-question electronic survey. Every respondent answered all the

closed-ended questions they were asked in the questionnaire, and all but one answered

the open-ended questions.

Survey Question 6a: Priority of access to basic skills. In Survey Question 6a,

participants were asked to rank the priority of access to basic skills from budgetary

funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most

importance. Table 3 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into

responses per role to compare the difference. Table 4 shows the results of the two-tailed

t-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making

the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four of

the nine responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two

districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score

of budget makers was 5.00, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the

average score of all respondents was 4.87. There were no significant differences found,

t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -1.000, $p = 0.356$.

Table 3

Responses to Survey Question 6a—Priority of Access to Basic Skills

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	0	0.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	4	100.0	3	75.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Survey Question 6b: Priority of access to career technical education (CTE).

In Survey Question 6b, participants were asked to rank the priority of access to CTE from

budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most

Table 4

Relationship Between Priority of Access to Basic Skills to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to basic skills							
Equal variances assumed	-1.00	6.000	0.356	-0.250	0.250	-0.862	0.362
Equal variances not assumed	-1.00	3.000	0.391	-0.250	0.250	-1.046	0.546

importance. Table 5 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 6 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four of the nine responded. There were 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college who were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 4.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.25, and the average score of all respondents was 4.50. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -1.441, $p = 0.207$.

Table 5

Responses to Survey Question 6b—Priority of Access to CTE

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	1	25.0	3	75.0
5. Most importance	3	75.0	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 6

Relationship Between Priority of Access to CTE to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to CTE							
Equal variances assumed	-1.414	6.000	0.207	-0.500	0.354	-1.365	0.365
Equal variances not assumed	-1.414	6.000	0.207	-0.500	0.354	-1.365	0.365

Survey Question 6c: Priority of access to elective classes. In Survey Question 6c, participants were asked to rank the priority of access to elective classes from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 7 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 8 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four of the nine responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 2.50, the average score of budget approvers was 3.50, and the average score of all respondents was 3.00. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = 1.414, *p* = 0.207.

Survey Question 6d: Priority of access to English as a second language (ESL)/English language learner (ELL) classes. In Survey Question 6d, participants were asked to rank the priority of access to ESL/ELL classes from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 9

Table 7

Responses to Survey Question 6c—Priority of Access to Elective Classes

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	1	25.0	0	0.0
2	1	25.0	0	0.0
3	1	25.0	2	50.0
4	1	25.0	2	50.0
5. Most importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 8

Relationship Between Priority of Access to Elective Classes to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	t	df	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to elective classes							
Equal variances assumed	1.414	6.000	0.207	1.000	0.707	-0.730	2.730
Equal variances not assumed	1.414	4.154	0.228	1.000	0.707	-0.935	2.935

summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 10 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four of the nine responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all

respondents was 4.25. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) =

0.333, $p = 0.190$.

Table 9

Responses to Survey Question 6d—Priority of Access to ESL/ELL Classes

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	1	25.0	0	0.0
3	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	2	50.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	3	75.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 10

Relationship Between Priority of Access to ESL/ELL Classes to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to ESL/ELL classes							
Equal variances assumed	1.477	6.000	0.190	1.000	0.677	-0.657	2.657
Equal variances not assumed	1.477	3.924	0.215	1.000	0.677	-0.894	2.894

Survey Question 6e: Priority of access to GED classes. In Survey Question 6e,

participants were asked to rank the priority of access to GED classes from budgetary

funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most

importance. Table 11 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into

responses per role to compare the difference. Table 12 shows the results of the two-tailed

t-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n =$ 8) = 0.333, $p = 0.750$.

Table 11

Responses to Survey Question 6e—Priority of Access to GED Classes

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	1	25.0	0	0.0
3	0	0.0	1	25.0
4	2	50.0	2	50.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 12

Relationship Between Priority of Access to GED Classes to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to GED classes							
Equal variances assumed	0.333	6.000	0.750	0.250	0.750	-1.585	2.085
Equal variances not assumed	0.333	5.146	0.752	0.250	0.750	-1.662	2.162

Survey Question 6f: Priority of access to or advances in technology. In Survey

Question 6f, participants were asked to rank the priority of access to or advances in

technology from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and

5 being of most importance. Table 13 summarizes the results from all the respondents,

broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 14 shows the

results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine

individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and

they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving

the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four

responded. The average score of budget makers was 4.25, the average score of budget

approvers was 4.50, and the average score of all respondents was 4.37. There were no

significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) $= 0.447$, $p = 0.670$.

Table 13

Responses to Survey Question 6f—Priority of Access to or Advances in Technology

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	0	0.0	3	25.0
4	3	75.0	0	0.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	3	75.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 14

Relationship Between Priority of Access to or Advances in Technology to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to or advances in technology							
Equal variances assumed	0.447	6.000	0.670	0.250	0.559	-1.118	1.618
Equal variances not assumed	0.447	4.412	0.676	0.250	0.559	-1.247	1.747

Survey Question 6g: Priority of access to transfer classes. In Survey Question 6g, participants were asked to rank the priority of access to transfer classes from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 15 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 16 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 5.00, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents was 4.87. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = -1.000, *p* = 0.356.

Survey Question 6h: Priority of access to campus culture. In Survey Question 6h, participants were asked to rank the priority of access to campus culture from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most

Table 15

Responses to Survey Question 6g—Priority of Access to Transfer Classes

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	0	0.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	4	100.0	3	75.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 16

Relationship Between Priority of Access to Transfer Classes to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to transfer classes							
Equal variances assumed	-1.000	6.000	0.356	-0.250	0.250	-0.862	0.362
Equal variances not assumed	-1.000	3.000	0.391	-0.250	0.250	-1.046	0.546

importance. Table 17 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 18 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 4.50, the average score of budget approvers was 4.25, and the average score

of all respondents was 4.37. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* =

8) = -0.447, *p* = 0.670.

Table 17

Responses to Survey Question 6h—Priority of Access to Campus Culture

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	0	0.0	1	25.0
4	2	50.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	2	50.0	2	50.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 18

Relationship Between Priority of Access to Campus Culture to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to campus culture							
Equal variances assumed	-0.447	6.000	0.670	-0.250	0.559	-1.618	1.118
Equal variances not assumed	-0.447	4.927	0.674	-0.250	0.559	-1.693	1.193

Survey Question 6i: Priority of access to child care. In Survey Question 6i,

participants were asked to rank the priority of access to child care from budgetary

funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most

importance. Table 19 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into

responses per role to compare the difference. Table 20 shows the results of the two-tailed

t-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 2.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.37. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 1.987, $p = 0.094$.

Table 19

Responses to Survey Question 6i—Priority of Access to Child Care

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	2	50.0	0	0.0
3	1	25.0	1	25.0
4	1	25.0	2	50.0
5. Most importance	0	0.0	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 20

Relationship Between Priority of Access to Child Care to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to child care							
Equal variances assumed	1.987	6.000	0.094	1.250	0.629	-0.289	2.789
Equal variances not assumed	1.987	5.854	0.095	1.250	0.629	-0.299	2.799

Survey Question 6j: Priority of COLA. In Survey Question 6j, participants

were asked to rank the priority of COLA from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with

1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 21 summarizes the

results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the

difference. Table 22 shows the results of the two-tailed t-test calculations to find

significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two

districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16

individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were

asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.50, the

average score of budget approvers was 3.25, and the average score of all respondents was

3.37. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -0.311, $p = 0.766$.

Table 21

Responses to Survey Question 6j—Priority of COLA

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	1	25.0
3	3	75.0	2	50.0
4	0	0.0	0	0.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Survey Question 6k: Priority of employment opportunities for full-time

faculty. In Survey Question 6k, participants were asked to rank the priority of

employment opportunities for full-time faculty from budgetary funding on a 5-point

Table 22

Relationship Between Priority of COLA to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	95% CI Lower	Upper
Priority of COLA							
Equal variances assumed	-0.311	6.000	0.766	-0.250	0.804	-2.216	1.716
Equal variances not assumed	-0.311	5.709	0.767	-0.250	0.804	-2.241	1.741

scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 23

summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to

compare the difference. Table 24 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to

find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the

two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16

individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were

asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the

average score of budget approvers was 3.50, and the average score of all respondents was

3.62. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = -0.311, *p* = 0.766.

Table 23

Responses to Survey Question 6k—Priority of Employment Opportunities for Full-Time Faculty

Valid	Budget makers Frequency	Valid percentage	Budget approvers Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	1	25.0
3	2	50.0	1	25.0
4	1	25.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 24

Relationship Between Priority of Employment Opportunities for Full-Time Faculty to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
Priority of employment opportunities for full-time faculty							
Equal variances assumed	-0.311	6.000	0.766	-0.250	0.804	-2.216	1.716
Equal variances not assumed	-0.311	5.534	0.767	-0.250	0.804	-2.257	1.757

Survey Question 6l: Priority of employment opportunities for part-time faculty. In Survey Question 6l, participants were asked to rank the priority of employment opportunities for part-time faculty from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 25 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 26 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.00, the average score of budget approvers was 3.75, and the average score of all respondents was 3.37. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = 1.000, *p* = 0.356.

Survey Question 6m: Priority of facilities repair/improvement. In Survey Question 6m, participants were asked to rank the priority of facilities repair/improvement from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of

Table 25

Responses to Survey Question 6l—Priority of Employment Opportunities for Part-Time Faculty

Valid	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	1	25.0	1	25.0
3	2	50.0	0	0.0
4	1	25.0	2	50.0
5. Most importance	0	0.0	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 26

Relationship Between Priority of Employment Opportunities for Part-Time Faculty to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
Priority of employment opportunities for part-time faculty							
Equal variances assumed	1.000	6.000	0.356	0.750	0.750	-1.085	2.585
Equal variances not assumed	1.000	5.146	0.362	0.750	0.750	-1.162	2.662

most importance. Table 27 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 28 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and

the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences

found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = 0.333, *p* = 0.750.

Table 27

Responses to Survey Question 6m—Priority of Facilities Repair/Improvement

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	2	50.0	2	50.0
4	1	25.0	0	0.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	2	50.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 28

Relationship Between Priority of Facilities Repair/Improvement to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of facilities repair/ improvement							
Equal variances assumed	0.333	6.000	0.750	0.250	0.750	-1.585	2.085
Equal variances not assumed	0.333	5.801	0.751	0.250	0.750	-1.601	2.101

Survey Question 6n: Priority of access to financial aid. In Survey Question 6n,

participants were asked to rank the priority of access to financial aid from budgetary

funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most

importance. Table 29 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into

responses per role to compare the difference. Table 30 shows the results of the two-tailed

t-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making

the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four

responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts

and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget

makers was 4.50, the average score of budget approvers was 4.50, and the average score

of all respondents was 4.50. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n =$

8) $= 0$, $p = 1.000$.

Table 29

Responses to Survey Question 6n—Priority of Access to Financial Aid

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	0	0.0	1	25.0
4	2	50.0	0	0.0
5. Most importance	2	50.0	3	75.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 30

Relationship Between Priority of Access to Financial Aid to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to financial aid							
Equal variances assumed	0.000	6.000	1.000	0	0.577	-1.413	1.413
Equal variances not assumed	0.000	4.800	1.000	0	0.577	-1.503	1.503

Survey Question 6o: Priority of first-year programs. In Survey Question 6o,

participants were asked to rank the priority of first-year programs from budgetary funding

on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table

31 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role

to compare the difference. Table 32 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations

to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from

the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also,

16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college

were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was

3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all

respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6, n = 8$) =

$0.397, p = 0.705$.

Table 31

Responses to Survey Question 6o—Priority of First-Year Programs

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	1	25.0	2	50.0
4	3	75.0	0	0.0
5. Most importance	0	0.0	2	50.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 32

Relationship Between Priority of First-Year Programs to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of first-year programs							
Equal variances assumed	0.397	6.000	0.705	0.250	0.629	-1.289	1.789
Equal variances not assumed	0.397	4.087	0.711	0.250	0.629	-1.482	1.982

Survey Question 6p: Priority of access to grants. In Survey Question 6p, participants were asked to rank the priority of access to grants from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 33 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 34 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = 0.397, *p* = 0.705.

Survey Question 6q: Priority of international student programs. In Survey Question 6q, participants were asked to rank the priority of international student programs from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 35 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 36 shows the

Table 33

Responses to Survey Question 6p—Priority of Access to Grants

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	1	25.0	2	50.0
4	3	75.0	0	0.0
5. Most importance	0	0.0	2	50.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 34

Relationship Between Priority of Access to Grants to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of access to grants							
Equal variances assumed	0.397	6.000	0.705	0.250	0.629	-1.289	1.789
Equal variances not assumed	0.397	4.087	0.711	0.250	0.629	-1.482	1.982

results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine

individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and

they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving

the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four

responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.25, the average score of budget

approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.62. There were no

significant differences found, t $(df = 6, n = 8) = 0.878, p = 0.414$.

Table 35

Responses to Survey Question 6q—Priority of International Student Programs

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	1	25.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	1	25.0	0	0.0
4	1	25.0	4	100.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	0	0.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 36

Relationship Between Priority of International Student Programs to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of international student programs							
Equal variances assumed	0.878	6.000	0.414	0.750	0.854	-1.339	2.839
Equal variances not assumed	0.878	3.000	0.444	0.750	0.854	-1.968	3.468

Survey Question 6r: Priority of learning communities. In Survey Question 6r, participants were asked to rank the priority of learning communities from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 37 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 38 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts

and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget

makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score

of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n =$

8) = 0.397, $p = 0.705$.

Table 37

Responses to Survey Question 6r—Priority of Learning Communities

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	2	50.0	1	25.0
4	1	25.0	2	50.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 38

Relationship Between Priority of Learning Communities to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of learning communities							
Equal variances assumed	0.397	6.000	0.705	0.250	0.629	-1.289	1.789
Equal variances not assumed	0.397	5.854	0.705	0.250	0.629	-1.299	1.799

Survey Question 6s: Priority of multicultural (events, organizations,

committees). In Survey Question 6s, participants were asked to rank the priority of

multicultural events, organizations, and committees from budgetary funding on a 5-point

scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 39

summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to

compare the difference. Table 40 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to

find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the

two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16

individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were

asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 4.00, the

average score of budget approvers was 3.50, and the average score of all respondents was

3.75. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -0.655, $p = 0.537$.

Table 39

Responses to Survey Question 6s—Priority of Multicultural (Events, Organizations, Committees)

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	1	25.0
3	1	25.0	1	25.0
4	2	50.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Survey Question 6t: Priority of partnerships (K-12, local businesses,

community). In Survey Question 6t, participants were asked to rank the priority of

partnerships (K-12, local businesses, community) from budgetary funding on a 5-point

scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 41

Table 40

Relationship Between Priority of Multicultural (Events, Organizations, Committees) to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of multicultural (events, organization, committees)							
Equal variances assumed	-0.655	6.000	0.537	-0.500	0.764	-2.369	1.369
Equal variances not assumed	-0.655	5.069	0.541	-0.500	0.764	-2.455	1.455

Table 41

Responses to Survey Question 6t—Priority of Partnerships (K-12, Local Businesses, Community)

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	1	25.0	0	0.0
4	1	25.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	2	50.0	3	75.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 42 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 4.25, the

average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents was

4.50. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = 0.926, *p* = 0.390.

Table 42

Relationship Between Priority of Partnerships (K-12, Local Businesses, Community) to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of partnerships (K-12, local businesses, and community)							
Equal variances assumed	0.926	6.000	0.390	0.500	0.540	-0.821	1.821
Equal variances not assumed	0.926	4.523	0.401	0.500	0.540	-0.933	1.933

Survey Question 6u: Priority of professional development. In Survey Question

6u, participants were asked to rank the priority of professional development from

budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most

importance. Table 43 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into

responses per role to compare the difference. Table 44 shows the results of the two-tailed

t-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making

the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four

responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts

and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget

makers was 3.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.50, and the average score

of all respondents was 3.87. There were significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) =

3.273, *p* = 0.017.

Table 43

Responses to Survey Question 6u—Priority of Professional Development

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	3	75.0	0	0.0
4	1	25.0	2	50.0
5. Most importance	0	0.0	2	50.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 44

Relationship Between Priority of Professional Development to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of professional development							
Equal variances assumed	3.273	6.000	0.017	1.250	0.382	0.316	2.184
Equal variances not assumed	3.273	5.880	0.017	1.250	0.382	0.311	2.189

Survey Question 6v: Priority of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). In Survey Question 6v, participants were asked to rank the priority of STEM from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 45 summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 46 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the

two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average

score of budget makers was 4.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and

the average score of all respondents was 4.50. There were no significant differences

found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = 1.414, *p* = 0.207.

Table 45

Responses to Survey Question 6v—Priority of STEM

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	0	0.0	0	0.0
4	3	75.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	3	75.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 46

Relationship Between Priority of STEM to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of STEM							
Equal variances assumed	1.414	6.000	0.207	0.500	0.354	-0.365	1.365
Equal variances not assumed	1.414	6.000	0.207	0.500	0.354	-0.365	1.365

Survey Question 6w: Priority of student services (Extended Opportunity

Programs and Services [EOPS], counseling, etc.). In Survey Question 6w, participants

were asked to rank the priority of student services from budgetary funding on a 5-point

scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 47

summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the difference. Table 48 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 4.00, the average score of budget approvers was 4.25, and the average score of all respondents was 4.12. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.397, $p = 0.705$.

Table 47

Responses to Survey Question 6w—Priority of Student Services (EOPS, Counseling, etc.)

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	1	25.0	1	25.0
4	2	50.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	2	50.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 48

Relationship Between Priority of Student Services (EOPS, Counseling, etc.) to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Priority of student services (EOPS, counseling, etc.)							
Equal variances assumed	0.397	6.000	0.705	0.250	0.629	-1.289	1.789
Equal variances not assumed	0.397	5.854	0.705	0.250	0.629	-1.299	1.799

Survey Question 6x: Priority of summer school. In Survey Question 6x,

participants were asked to rank the priority of summer school from budgetary funding on

a 5-point scale, with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 49

summarizes the results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to

compare the difference. Table 50 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to

find significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the

two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16

individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were

asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.25, the

average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was

3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.522, $p = 0.620$.

Table 49

Responses to Survey Question 6x—Priority of Summer School

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	1	25.0	1	25.0
4	3	75.0	2	50.0
5. Most importance	0	0.0	1	25.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 50

*Relationship Between Priority of Summer School to Budget Makers and Budget
Approvers*

Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	95% CI Lower	Upper
Priority of summer school							
Equal variances assumed	0.522	6.000	0.620	0.250	0.479	-0.921	1.421
Equal variances not assumed	0.522	4.973	0.624	0.250	0.479	-0.983	1.483

Survey Question 6y: Priority of tutoring. In Survey Question 6y, participants

were asked to rank the priority of tutoring from budgetary funding on a 5-point scale,

with 1 being of no importance and 5 being of most importance. Table 51 summarizes the

results from all the respondents, broken down into responses per role to compare the

difference. Table 52 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test calculations to find

significance. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two

districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four responded. Also, 16

individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college were

asked to respond, and four responded. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the

average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was

4.00. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.739, $p = 0.488$.

Research Question 2

How had cuts impacted the institutions, as perceived by individuals in the various

roles?

Section A: Budget makers. There were nine individuals in charge of making the

budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four of the

Table 51

Responses to Survey Question 6y—Priority of Tutoring

Valid	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
1. No importance	0	0.0	0	0.0
2	0	0.0	0	0.0
3	2	50.0	1	25.0
4	1	25.0	1	25.0
5. Most importance	1	25.0	2	50.0
Total	4	100.0	4	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 52

Relationship Between Priority of Tutoring to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

Factor 1	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	95% CI	
						Lower	Upper
Priority of tutoring							
Equal variances assumed	0.739	6.000	0.488	0.500	0.677	-1.157	2.157
Equal variances not assumed	0.739	6.000	0.488	0.500	0.677	-1.157	2.157

nine responded. Those responses ranged from mixed responses by two participants (50%) to completely negative by the other two (50%).

The mixed responses (50%) were focused on how, in the 2013-2014 budget year, some of the funds had begun to be refunded and some of the reductions were being turned around in this situation, with comments of, "Services were substantially reduced during the recession, but have begun to be incrementally restored. Class sections are growing, we have a new integrated Learning Center, and a bond measure is upgrading campus facilities and infrastructure," and in the same vein, "Current budget situation

provides growth and COLA for all community colleges. Also, student success funds are increasing." But there were still areas of concern, such as "the matching component for student success (3 to 1), scheduled maintenance (1 to 1), instructional equipment (1/3 to 1). Funds are not readily available from the general fund to match the categorical funding the State is budgeting."

Two of the four respondents (50%) had a more negative outlook. One was matter of fact: "Doing the best we can with minimal funding from Sacramento." The other went into more detail about how the budget cuts had negatively affected the budget maker's institution(s), listing several areas that were "severely" affected: "Particularly for students, accessibility to counselors, financial aid, and other valuable resources have been cut off because the campus can neither afford to hire new staff or contribute financially to resources."

Section B: Budget approvers. There were 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college who were asked to respond, and three responded. Those responses ranged from highly positive by one participant to completely negative by the other two. The budget approver who was so positive stated,

> We were prepared for the budget cuts two years before they took place. While they did impact our institutions, I believe they helped focus the entire system toward a core mission of vocational training and obtaining degrees. It will help the system become more effective and relevant, and force students to set a goal and accomplish it.

The responses from the two participants who were more negative were to the point. One stated, "Classes have been reduced. Students are on waiting lists. Costs are rising." The other stated that the budget cuts "reduced the number of classes and the

amount of student services, including number of staff and amount of hours provided.

Example is a reduction in library hours."

Research Question 3

Should there have been a reprioritization of student registration procedures, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?

Section A: Budget makers. There were nine individuals in charge of making the budget from the two districts and one college, and they were asked to respond; four of the nine responded. Those responses ranged from complete support by one participant (25%) to little support as written by the other three (75%).

The three participants who indicated little support in their written responses had criticisms such as, "State needs to provide more flexibility in funding community colleges." Another stated,

> I feel as though not everyone who should be getting a fair share of priority registration is getting the chance to acquire the classes they need. There are several students that need access to critical classes that do not include the general requirements to graduate but are unable to do so because other students are given priority. Regardless of GPA and involvement these students struggle to access their classes because other groups, who sometimes do not even stay in the class and drop out, take the opportunity away and waste it. There should be more variety and a cut-off point to whom may have priority registration.

The third participant felt that with "so many special advanced priority registration programs that the 'regular' students are left with no available needed classes." The comment that suggested complete support was, "Believe our reprioritization of student registration is on target."

Section B: Budget approvers. There were 16 individuals in charge of approving the budget from the two districts and one college who were asked to respond, and three responded on the topic. One participant supported the issue and stated, "It has been

assessed. It is a very important issue." Another participant indicated little support: "The

intent is laudable but we are taking a wait and see attitude in terms of enrollment. Of

more concern are the looming changes in financial aid. We have a large percentage of

AB540 students." The other participant stated, "It will help the system become more

effective and relevant, and force students to set a goal and accomplish it."

<div align="center">**Findings for Research Hypotheses**</div>

Hypothesis 1

There are different perceptions on where to prioritize spending from the different

subgroups (budget approvers and budget makers).

As shown in Table 53, there were no missing values and there was no significant

relationship between how the budget makers and budget approvers perceived the priority

of funding the following areas:

a. *Priority of access to basic skills*. The average score of budget makers was 5.00, the

average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents

was 4.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -1.000, $p =$

0.356.

b. *Priority of access to CTE*. The average score of budget makers was 4.75, the average

score of budget approvers was 4.25, and the average score of all respondents was

4.50. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -1.441, $p =$

0.207.

c. *Priority of access to elective classes*. The average score of budget makers was 2.50,

the average score of budget approvers was 3.50, and the average score of all

respondents was 3.00. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 1.414, $p = 0.207$.

d. *Priority of access to ESL/ELL classes.* The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents was 4.25. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.333, $p = 0.190$.

e. *Priority of access to GED classes.* The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.333, $p = 0.750$.

f. *Priority of access to or advances in technology.* The average score of budget makers was 4.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.50, and the average score of all respondents was 4.37. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.447, $p = 0.670$.

g. *Priority of access to transfer classes.* The average score of budget makers was 5.00, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents was 4.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -1.000, $p = 0.356$.

h. *Priority of access to campus culture.* The average score of budget makers was 4.50, the average score of budget approvers was 4.25, and the average score of all respondents was 4.37. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -0.447, $p = 0.670$.

i. *Priority of access to child care.* The average score of budget makers was 2.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.37. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 1.987, $p =$ 0.094.

j. *Priority of COLA.* The average score of budget makers was 3.50, the average score of budget approvers was 3.25, and the average score of all respondents was 3.37. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -0.311, $p = 0.766$.

k. *Priority of employment opportunities for full-time faculty.* The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 3.50, and the average score of all respondents was 3.62. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -0.311, $p = 0.766$.

l. *Priority of employment opportunities for part-time faculty.* The average score of budget makers was 3.00, the average score of budget approvers was 3.75, and the average score of all respondents was 3.37. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 1.000, $p = 0.356$.

m. *Priority of facilities repair/improvement.* The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.333, $p = 0.750$.

n. *Priority of access to financial aid.* The average score of budget makers was 4.50, the average score of budget approvers was 4.50, and the average score of all respondents was 4.50. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0, $p =$ 1.000.

o. *Priority of first-year programs.* The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.397, p = 0.705.

p. *Priority of access to grants.* The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.397, p = 0.705.

q. *Priority of international student programs.* The average score of budget makers was 3.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.62. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.878, $p = 0.414$.

r. *Priority of learning communities.* The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.397, p = 0.705.

s. *Priority of multicultural (events, organizations, committees).* The average score of budget makers was 4.00, the average score of budget approvers was 3.50, and the average score of all respondents was 3.75. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -0.655, $p = 0.537$.

t. *Priority of partnerships (K-12, local businesses, community).* The average score of budget makers was 4.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the

average score of all respondents was 4.50. There were no significant differences

found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) $= 0.926$, $p = 0.390$.

v. *Priority of STEM*. The average score of budget makers was 4.25, the average score of

budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents was 4.50. There

were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) $= 1.414$, $p = 0.207$.

w. *Priority of student services (EOPS, counseling, etc.).* The average score of budget

makers was 4.00, the average score of budget approvers was 4.25, and the average

score of all respondents was 4.12. There were no significant differences found, t ($df =$

6, $n = 8$) $= 0.397$, $p = 0.705$.

x. *Priority of summer school*. The average score of budget makers was 3.25, the

average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents

was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) $= 0.522$, $p =$

0.620.

y. *Priority of tutoring*. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score

of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 4.00.

There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) $= 0.739$, $p = 0.488$.

Therefore, the null hypothesis in these areas was not rejected at the .05 level. But

in the area of *priority of professional development* (Survey Question 6u), where the

average score of budget makers was 3.25, the average score of budget approvers was

4.50, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87, there were significant differences

found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) $= 3.273$, $p = 0.017$; therefore, the null hypothesis in this area was

rejected at the .05 level.

Table 53

Missing Responses to Survey Questions

Survey question	Missing
6a. Priority of access to basic skills	0
6b. Priority of access to CTE	0
6c. Priority of access to elective classes	0
6d. Priority of access to ESL/ELL classes	0
6e. Priority of access to GED classes	0
6f. Priority of access to or advances in technology	0
6g. Priority of access to transfer classes	0
6h. Priority of access to campus culture	0
6i. Priority of access to child care	0
6j. Priority of COLA	0
6k. Priority of employment opportunities of full-time faculty	0
6l. Priority of employment opportunities of part-time faculty	0
6m. Priority of facilities repair/improvement	0
6n. Priority of access to financial aid	0
6o. Priority of first-year programs	0
6p. Priority of access to grants	0
6q. Priority of international student programs	0
6r. Priority of learning communities	0
6s. Priority of multicultural (events, organizations, committees)	0
6t. Priority of partnerships (K-12, local businesses, community)	0
6u. Priority of professional development	0
6v. Priority of STEM	0
6w. Priority of student services (EOPS, counseling, etc.)	0
6x. Priority of summer school	0
6y. Priority of tutoring	0
7. Impressions of recent and current budget cuts and how they impacted services at their institution	1
8. Opinions of reprioritization of student registration in institution	1

Hypothesis 2

The perception of how the cuts affected the institutions does not differ by role.

There was one missing value in the role of budget approver, and there was no significant relationship between the budget makers' and budget approvers' impressions of recent and current budget cuts and how those cuts impacted services at the respondents' institutions. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected at a significance of .05. Table 54 shows the frequency and valid percentage of responses from budget makers and budget approvers. Table 55 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test computed to find significance.

Table 54

Responses to Survey Question 7—Impressions of Recent and Current Budget Cuts and How They Impacted Services at Respondents' Institutions

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
Positive	0	0.0	1	33.3
Mixed	2	50.0	0	0.0
Negative	2	50.0	2	66.7
Total	4	100.0	3	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 55

Relationship Between Impressions of Recent and Current Budget Cuts and How They Impacted Services at Respondents' Institutions According to Budget Makers and Budget Approvers

						95% CI	
Factor 2	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Impressions of recent and current budget cuts and how they impacted services at respondents' institutions							
Equal variances assumed	0.132	5.000	0.900	0.083	0.631	-1.540	1.706
Equal variances not assumed	0.117	2.568	0.915	0.083	0.712	-2.414	2.581

Hypothesis 3

There are mixed perceptions on the reprioritization of student registration.

There was one missing value in the role of budget approver, and there was no significant relationship between the budget makers' and budget approvers' opinions of reprioritization of student registration in their institutions. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected at a significance of .05. Table 56 shows the frequency and valid percentage of responses from budget makers and budget approvers. Table 57 shows the results of the two-tailed *t*-test computed to find significance.

Table 56

Responses to Survey Question 8—Respondents' Opinions of Reprioritization of Student Registration in Their Institutions

	Budget makers		Budget approvers	
Valid	Frequency	Valid percentage	Frequency	Valid percentage
Complete support	2	50.0	2	66.7
Conditional support	0	0.0	0	0.0
Little support	3	75.0	1	33.3
Total	4	100.0	2	100.0

Note. See Appendix A for a list of complete questions utilized to compute each index score.

Table 57

Relationship Between Budget Makers' and Budget Approvers' Opinions of Reprioritization of Student Registration in Their Institutions

						95% CI	
Factor 3	*t*	*df*	Sig.	*MD*	*SE*	Lower	Upper
Opinions of reprioritization of student registration in respondents' institutions							
Equal variances assumed	-1.274	5.000	0.259	-0.833	0.654	-2.515	0.848
Equal variances not assumed	-1.387	4.829	0.226	-0.833	0.601	-2.395	0.726

Summary

The findings revealed that other than professional development, there were no areas of campus funding that showed a significant difference, at the .05 level, between the perceptions of priority of the budget makers and budget approvers from two community college districts and one community college. There were mixed perceptions of how the 2013-2014 budget situation affected the institutions of the budget makers and budget approvers, but again, no significant difference between the two was found at a .05 significance level. There were also mixed perceptions on the reprioritization of student registration, but again, there was no significant difference, at the .05 level, between the budget makers and budget approvers.

Chapter Five contains the conclusions and recommendations based on findings from the research questions reported in Chapter Four. Additionally, Chapter Five includes findings related to the literature, implications, recommendations for further research, and closing remarks.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter Five begins with a restatement of the purpose of the study, research

questions, hypotheses, and methodology. Chapter Five presents a comprehensive

discussion of the results of the theoretical expectations offered in the introduction and in

the literature review. Implications of these findings for the suppositions stated in the

literature are discussed with respect to every question and hypothesis. Research

frequently raises more questions that it does answers; recommendations for future

research were developed everywhere pertinent questions were not answered by the

information analyzed in this study.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how an unstable budget situation

affected the perceptions of the budget makers and approvers of the California Community

Colleges as far as how to reprioritize spending.

Research Questions

1. Should the budget priorities have been on cost-of-living allowance (COLA), student

   services, maintenance, new construction, professional development, basic skills,

   increase in classes offered, or other?

   a. What was the perception of the budget makers of one college and two districts

      on where to spend the unstable budget monies for the 2013-2014 school year?

   b. What was the perception of the budget approvers of one college and two

      districts on where to spend the unstable budget monies for the 2013-2014

      school year?

2. How had cuts impacted the institutions, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?

3. Should there have been a reprioritization of student registration procedures, as perceived by individuals in the various roles?

Research Hypotheses

1. There are different perceptions on where to prioritize spending from the different subgroups (budget approvers and budget makers).

2. The perception of how the cuts affected the institutions does not differ by role.

3. There are mixed perceptions on the reprioritization of student registration.

Methodology

Descriptive research using a post-test-only one-group design was used to identify the characteristics and opinions of the persons with input on the budget in two districts and one college in the California Community College system. In order to acquire data from respondents who had the required experience when no control group was used, the post-test-only one-group design was selected. According to Jackson (2008), "The post-test-only one-group approach is the most simplified quasi-experimental design" (p. 124). The participants who worked as part of the budget process were asked to provide self-reported data of their unique experience on the questionnaire. No data were collected before they had this experience, so only a posttest was utilized. The limitation of the post-test-only one-group design presented threats that were discussed in the Limitations section (see Chapter Three).

The descriptive research method was selected based on the study. Nelson, Silverman, and Thomas (2011) explained that descriptive research "is a means of

describing systematically, factually, and accurately the distinctiveness of an existing study" (p. 360). Furthermore, the descriptive research methodology was selected to study frequencies, averages, and other statistical calculations in order to describe the data and characteristics of the budget priorities (Creswell, 2009). Creswell (2009) stated that descriptive research must involve gathering data for events. Then the data can be organized and described via tabulation, depiction, as well as the description of the data collection process.

The research strategy, engaged questionnaire design methodology, was described by Dillman in 2007 stating that questionnaire design online is a useful and practical method for data collection; however the risk is the questions might be vague to get full participation. This might lead to issues of being over simplified or superficial.

The research study in relation to the characteristics of budget priority, recent and current impacts, and student registration reprioritization in two districts and one college in the California Community College system fit the research design. The questionnaire was derived from perceived priorities in past budgets and the research done on the topic. Dillman (2007) contended that questionnaires aid educational studies more than any other research tools. One method of data gathering illustrated the nature and degree of a specified set of information ranging from physical calculations and frequencies to approaches and views.

The principal investigator employed a qualitative questionnaire instrument that was examined for reliability and validity by inspecting all procedures, field-testing the instrument, administering the questionnaire, finishing procedures consistently, and having a professional aid the researcher. The questionnaire was administered online at

www.lindabender.com with an introductory cover page, instructions, and debriefing. The respondents were selected from authorized sites, and the survey was anonymous. The respondents' role was denoted by position on campus as self-reported. Four budget makers and four budget approvers from two districts and one college responded.

The study involved the methodological examination and illustration of concerns from questionnaire participants. The results from the current descriptive study of the four budget makers and four budget approvers were gathered via questionnaire sent out by the principal investigator. This created limitations to the generalization of the study. This was especially true because seven of the eight respondents were from the same district. So, the findings are more similar to a case study based on the representation of the respondents. The results were therefore skewed but still valid, with that fact taken into consideration when weighing and applying the results.

Summary of Findings

The results of the data analyzed in Chapter Four addressed the three research questions and three hypotheses, including descriptions of the sample and population. The following are key findings.

Key Findings for Hypothesis Question 1

There are different perceptions on where to prioritize spending from the different roles (budget approvers and budget makers).

Survey Questions 6a-y showed results that in all the areas except professional development (Survey Question 6u), the difference between the perceptions of priorities of the budget makers compared to budget approvers lacked significance at the .05 level. The results of Survey Questions 6a-y are listed below:

a. *Priority of access to basic skills*. The average score of budget makers was 5.00, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents was 4.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -1.000, $p = 0.356$.

b. *Priority of access to career technical education (CTE)*. The average score of budget makers was 4.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.25, and the average score of all respondents was 4.50. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = -1.441, $p = 0.207$.

c. *Priority of access to elective classes*. The average score of budget makers was 2.50, the average score of budget approvers was 3.50, and the average score of all respondents was 3.00. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 1.414, $p = 0.207$.

d. *Priority of access to English as a second language (ESL)/English language learner (ELL) classes*. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents was 4.25. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.333, $p = 0.190$.

e. *Priority of access to GED classes*. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.333, $p = 0.750$.

f. *Priority of access to or advances in technology*. The average score of budget makers was 4.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.50, and the average score of

all respondents was 4.37. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* =

8) = 0.447, *p* = 0.670.

g. *Priority of access to transfer classes*. The average score of budget makers was 5.00,

the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all

respondents was 4.87. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) =

-1.000, *p* = 0.356.

h. *Priority of access to campus culture*. The average score of budget makers was 4.50,

the average score of budget approvers was 4.25, and the average score of all

respondents was 4.37. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) =

-0.447, *p* = 0.670.

i. *Priority of access to child care*. The average score of budget makers was 2.75, the

average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents

was 3.37. There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = 1.987, *p* =

0.094.

j. *Priority of COLA*. The average score of budget makers was 3.50, the average score

of budget approvers was 3.25, and the average score of all respondents was 3.37.

There were no significant differences found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = -0.311, *p* = 0.766.

k. *Priority of employment opportunities for full-time faculty*. The average score of

budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 3.50, and the

average score of all respondents was 3.62. There were no significant differences

found, t (*df* = 6, *n* = 8) = -0.311, *p* = 0.766.

l. *Priority of employment opportunities for part-time faculty*. The average score of

budget makers was 3.00, the average score of budget approvers was 3.75, and the

average score of all respondents was 3.37. There were no significant differences

found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 1.000, $p = 0.356$.

m. *Priority of facilities repair/improvement.* The average score of budget makers was

3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all

respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) =

0.333, $p = 0.750$.

n. *Priority of access to financial aid.* The average score of budget makers was 4.50, the

average score of budget approvers was 4.50, and the average score of all respondents

was 4.50. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0, $p =$

1.000.

o. *Priority of first-year programs.* The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the

average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents

was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.397, $p =$

0.705.

p. *Priority of access to grants.* The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the

average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents

was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.397, $p =$

0.705.

q. *Priority of international student programs.* The average score of budget makers was

3.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all

respondents was 3.62. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) =

0.878, $p = 0.414$.

r. *Priority of learning communities*. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t $(df = 6, n = 8) = 0.397$, $p = 0.705$.

s. *Priority of multicultural (events, organizations, committees)*. The average score of budget makers was 4.00, the average score of budget approvers was 3.50, and the average of all respondents was 3.75. There were no significant differences found, t $(df = 6, n = 8) = -0.655$, $p = 0.537$.

t. *Priority of partnerships (K-12, local businesses, community)*. The average score of budget makers was 4.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents was 4.50. There were no significant differences found, t $(df = 6, n = 8) = 0.926$, $p = 0.390$.

v. *Priority of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)*. The average score of budget makers was 4.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.75, and the average score of all respondents was 4.50. There were no significant differences found, t $(df = 6, n = 8) = 1.414$, $p = 0.207$.

w. *Priority of student services (Extended Opportunity Programs and Services [EOPS], counseling, etc.)*. The average score of budget makers was 4.00, the average score of budget approvers was 4.25, and the average score of all respondents was 4.12. There were no significant differences found, t $(df = 6, n = 8) = 0.397$, $p = 0.705$.

x. *Priority of summer school*. The average score of budget makers was 3.25, the average score of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents

was 3.87. There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.522, $p =$

0.620.

y. *Priority of tutoring*. The average score of budget makers was 3.75, the average score

of budget approvers was 4.00, and the average score of all respondents was 4.00.

There were no significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 0.739, $p = 0.488$.

There was a significant difference at the .05 level for *priority of professional*

development (Survey Question 6u) between the budget makers' and budget approvers'

perceptions of priorities. The average score of budget makers was 3.25, the average

score of budget approvers was 4.50, and the average score of all respondents was 3.87.

There were significant differences found, t ($df = 6$, $n = 8$) = 3.273, $p = 0.017$.

Findings Related to the Literature for Hypothesis Question 1

McCurdy (1994) found that there were several areas of priority that were a

challenge to address during a budget crisis. These areas are all well reported on and

include basic skills (Survey Question 6a), ESL/ELL classes (Survey Question 6d), classes

that go toward certificates (Survey Question 6b), classes that go toward transfer (Survey

Questions 6v and 6g), access to financial aid (Survey Question 6n), and access to GED

classes (Survey Question 6e). Low priorities included items covered in several questions,

such as access to elective classes (Survey Question 6c); adding faculty (Survey Questions

6k and 6l); multicultural events, organizations, and committees (Survey Question 6s); and

COLA (Survey Question 6j).

Loveland (2012) cited the definition of professional development as a continuous

process of lifelong learning. Belzer (2003) defined professional development as a "state

department of education or other state-level entity responsible . . . to support and improve

the practice of adult basic and literacy education" (p. 44), and common features were scope, coherence, system-based planning, and accessibility. The Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE, 2010) found professional development to be of great importance, and the California Community Colleges Student Success Task Force (SSTF, 2012) echoed this as being key to a "cohesive framework for delivery of basic skills" (p. 46) and stated that with it the schools were better prepared to respond to the evolving student needs and measures of student success.

Belzer (2005) found it was important to focus on building a shared vision of professional development. This could be accomplished by improving participation and responding to the professional development needs of a broad range of practitioners, taking into account balancing depth and breadth of offerings and improving the impact of professional development on individual practice and program structures while checking this through ongoing program evaluation (Belzer, 2005). Hutchens (1998) found that in an ideal situation this would be done through forming communities of learners engaged in continuous professional development. This would include sharing best practices in teaching, curriculum development, and implementation. He also found that collaboration in professional development and teaching is more complementary (Hutchens, 1998).

Beavers (2009) stated there are numerous resources and studies for professional development; but there may be to extensive for an already overworked administrator. However, by using a few basic principles for teacher professional development can dramatically improve effectiveness.

Beavers further stated that ideally professional development offers support and training to solve problems facing teachers both in and out of the classroom..

There were several challenges to building a faculty community of teaching practice found through the research of Blanton and Stylianou (2009), and these areas were as follows:

> (a) the need for a culture of professional development, (b) developing old-timers and recruiting newcomers, (c) the need for teaching scholars to coordinate professional development, (d) challenging the "culture of service", and (e) the need for a language to mediate thinking about practice. (p. 79)

Key Findings for Hypothesis Question 2

The perception of how the cuts affected the institutions does not differ by role.

Research Question 2 was addressed through Survey Question 7 from the questionnaire given to budget makers and approvers. Survey Question 7 asked the respondents about their impressions of the recent and current budget situation (i.e., cuts) as to how it impacted services at their institution. The findings for Survey Question 7 indicated that most of the budget makers and budget approvers perceived the budget cuts as having impacted in important ways the services at their institution, especially in the area of class offerings and student services provided. This information was gathered through qualitative answers only, which were then analyzed; this allowed the question to be answered more in depth.

Findings Related to the Literature for Hypothesis Question 2

Baron (2013) spoke of the fact that the 2013-2014 school year was looking better than it had in the recent past. This was due to "Gov. Jerry Brown's revised budget released" May 14, 2013 (Baron, 2013, para. 1). With this increase, there was what McCurdy (1994) found in his California Community College system-wide study, *Broken Promises*, of the budget crisis of the 1990s. Once again, the same issues were faced and similar actions taken to address the priorities of reduction during budget cuts and then

expansion as the budget stabilized and once again began growing toward precrisis levels. The expansion is nowhere near precrisis levels yet, as the respondents' comments showed, but the pattern was once again seen.

Key Findings for Hypothesis Question 3

There are mixed perceptions on the reprioritization of student registration.

Research Question 3 was addressed through Survey Question 8 from the questionnaire given to budget makers and approvers. Survey Question 8 asked the respondents about their opinions of reprioritization of student registration at their institution. The findings for Survey Question 8 indicated that most of the budget makers and budget approvers perceived the reprioritization of student registration as being noble in intent and much needed but possibly not solved by the new implementation of the state's rules and guidelines. This information was gathered through qualitative answers only, which were then analyzed; this allowed the question to be answered more in depth.

Findings Related to the Literature for Hypothesis Question 3

The SSTF (2012), which set about creating the reprioritization of student registration, had much debate on this issue, and the new rules are now being enforced with financial ties to allocations from the state. The SSTF found that the previous registration methods were "ineffective enrollment priority policies" (p. 34), but the respondents still echoed the same complaints. However, this time money is being tied to the implementation of these rules. Taylor (2011) suggested following the intent of the Master Plan for Higher Education (Master Plan), but the rules seem to fix little, with so many loopholes.

Conclusions

The key findings related to the research questions and hypotheses support the following conclusions:

1. The budget makers and budget approvers were similar in their evaluation of the priority of funding for 24 of the 25 key areas of institution funding (every area but professional development).

2. The budget cuts did impact the institutions of those surveyed; several thought the cuts had a negative impact, while a few felt the cuts helped to further streamline the allocation of funds only where needed.

3. Reprioritization was noble in intent and an answer to a known problem, but there were kinks to be worked out for the institutions in implementation on schedule.

Implications for Practice

The implications for action can provide the California community colleges' budget makers and budget approvers with the knowledge of perceptions of budgetary priorities and information on how the budget situation impacted institutions and how reprioritization of student registration was viewed, including concerns about implementation.

1. The data showed that there is a connection between perceptions of how budgetary monies should be spent that is universally understood by the budget makers and budget approvers in all areas but professional development.

2. There is a perceived reality that severe budget cuts affect the services that can be provided effectively to the students and campus as a whole. This was seen in the systematic budget cuts of the 1990s, as reported by McCurdy (1994) in *Broken*

Promises, a study that found community colleges were underfunded. The issues found by McCurdy were the same ones seen in this study and seem to be the issues that occur in systematic budget cuts at the community college level.

3. Reprioritization of student registration was set out by the SSTF and instituted by the Student Success Act of 2012. It is an area that needed to be addressed and was by the SSTF, but the implementation of that aspect of the Student Success Act of 2012 is being met with challenges and the need for further retooling. Survey participants seemed to believe this reprioritization was a much needed change but that it still has issues that need to be dealt with. These issues will need to be further addressed at the state level and the institutional level.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study focused on the perceptions of budget makers and budget approvers of the California Community Colleges, and the implications of this study indicate additional research possibilities:

1. Duplicate this study and follow up with a focus group discussion and interviews with participants.

2. Perform a similar study that has open-ended questions on the reason for the perception of priority of a particular budgetary area.

3. Perform a study on the communication between the budget makers and budget approvers on setting the goals of the budget funding.

4. Perform a study on how long reserves should be kept at an optimal level to address possible future budget crises.

5. Duplicate this study with a larger participant group.

Concluding Comments

This study described the perceptions of priorities of budgetary funding of 25 particular areas of the institutions. The study was founded on research and educational strategies on the California Community College system budget makers versus budget approvers and their perceptions of priority of funding 25 areas of the institutions. The study further examined the impact of the recent budget crisis on the respondents' particular institution(s). Also, the study examined the issues regarding the reprioritization of student registration with all it entails.

The study presented a set of recommended actions that may significantly enhance the budget creation and approval process, along with considerations of how the budget crisis impacted institutions and the consequences of the reprioritization of student registration. In addition, this study has flexible implications for both policy and practice. First, the thorough examination of the literature provides a resource for future investigations of the budget priorities, impacts of budget crisis on institutions, and issues dealing with the reprioritization of the student registration process.

In summary, the review of the literature, the review of an earlier study (McCurdy, 1994), and its replication made available a very detectable policy recommendation for people participating in the budget process regarding the assessment and necessity of expressions of the funding of particular areas of the institutions. This study made clear that while there is a slight difference in the perceptions of priority in the funding of the 25 key areas of the institutions, there is only one area where budget makers and budget approvers have statistically different perceptions: professional development. This study also made clear what McCurdy (1994) found on not only the perception of priorities but

on how systematic budget cuts affect the institution over time. Finally, it revealed there

is hope for but legitimate issues with the reprioritization of student registration.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Survey

Perceptions of Priorities of Budget Makers and Approvers

The aim of this research is to assess the impression of current cuts as a major disruption or a minor one. The research focuses on budget cuts during a possible recovery.

Please take a moment to respond to the questions below. The results will be available for your review.

1) Please Select College District: [▼]

2) Please Select <u>College or</u> Choose Not Applicable:
[▼]

3) Role: [Select One   ▼] *required

Please explain role of "Other"

[text area]

4) How many years have you been at this institution?

5) Are you an HSI (Hispanic Serving Institution)?   [I don't know   ▼]

6) Please rank the following topics in terms of importance to your institution.

a.	Access to Basic Skills	No importance ● ● ● ● ● Most importance
b.	Access to CTE (Career Technical Education)	No importance ● ● ● ● ● Most importance
c.	Access to Elective Classes	No importance ● ● ● ● ● Most importance
d.	Access to ESL/ELL Classes	No importance ● ● ● ● ● Most importance
e.	Access to <u>GED Classes</u>	No importance ● ● ● ● ● Most importance
f.	Access to or Advances in Technology	No importance ● ● ● ● ● Most importance

g.	Access to Transfer Classes	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
h.	Campus Culture (staff morale, student activities, trust in leadership)	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
i.	Child Care	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
j.	COLA (Cost Of Living Allowance)	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
k.	Employment Opportunities for Full-time Faculties	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
l	Employment Opportunities for Part-time Faculties	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
m.	Facilities Repair/Improvement	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
n	Financial Aid	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
o.	First-Year Programs	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
p	Grants	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
q.	International Student Programs	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
r	Learning Communities	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
s.	Multicultural (events, organizations, committees)	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
t.	Partnerships (K-12, local businesses, community)	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
u.	Professional Development	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
v.	STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most
w.	Student Services (EOPS, counseling, etc.)	No importance importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most

x.	Summer School	No importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most importance	
y.	Tutoring	No importance	●	●	●	●	●	Most importance	

7) What is your impression of the recent and current budget situation (i.e. cuts) as to how it impacted services at your institution?

8) What are your opinions of reprioritization of student registration in your institution?

9) Please provide any additional comments.

Submit

Bottom of Form

End of Survey

APPENDIX B

Debriefing

Argosy University, Southern California

Department of Education

This study is concerned with budgetary decisions made and decided upon by persons of key roles in relation to aggregate of role, school's student population size and district population size. Previous studies and literature reviews suggest that key cuts are made, then slowly refunded based on needs of the school/district. There is only one key study of this kind and it was from the budget cuts of the 1990s by McCurdy in 1994. What is not fully understood is how the re-funding of the budget takes place based on priorities and who has a say in those priorities.

In this study, you were asked to respond to questions about 25 key areas in the school and the importance of funding them. When I analyze the data provided by the responses to the survey, I anticipate to find a relationship between role and priority of importance. I am also interested in learning how the reprioritization of student registration is seen by the different roles and how the budgetary cuts of the last several years has affected the institutions by role.

Whom to contact for more information

If you have had a negative experience with this survey, or if you wish to receive a summary report of the research when it is completed, please contact me at (714) 345-9576 or linda_bender@hotmail.com.

Whom to contacts about your rights in this experiment

This study is conducted under the supervision of Kenneth Miller, EdD from the Argosy University, Orange County, Department of Education. Dr. Miller can be contacted at KMiller@argosy.edu. You may also contact the Chair of the Argosy University, Southern California Institutional Review Board at 601 South Lewis Street, Orange, CA 92868, (714) 620-3804.

If you are interested in learning more about the topics of this research project please explore the following reading:

McCurdy, J. (1994). *Broken promises: The impact of budget cuts and fee increases on the California community colleges*. San Jose: California Higher Education Policy Center. Retrieved from ERIC database. (ED376869)

APPENDIX C

E-mail Recruitment Letter

To: Board of Trustee members, Chancellor, President, Vice Presidents, Faculty Senate President and Student Body President

       My name is Linda Bender and I am asking for your participation in my EdD dissertation study on budget makers/approvers' perceptions of how to reprioritize budget in California community colleges. You are receiving this email because your site has authorized me to recruit you for my study. This survey will take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete and can be found at www.lindabender.com.

       The survey is taken anonymously, with only the role required for aggregate reasons and the additional request for district and school are only to be collected to analyze data based on school/district size of student population. This letter is being emailed to you through your school's contact so that I have no emails to further assist in anonymity.

Thank you for your consideration and participation.

Linda Bender, Argosy University Southern California, EdD dissertation student

APPENDIX D

Informed Consent

Argosy University, Southern California
Informed Consent Form

Please read this consent agreement carefully before agreeing to participate in this study.

Title of Study: Budget makers/approvers' perceptions of how to reprioritize budget in California community colleges

Purpose of the Study: This research study is being conducted by Linda Bender at Argosy University, Southern California to determine how role may affect the perceptions of budget making/approving.

What you will do in this study: You will be asked to complete an online questionnaire. This involves answering a series of questions. Questions will include details about your role, with college or district being optional, and your perception on the importance of priority of funding on 25 key areas.

Time required: The study will take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete.

Risks: There are minimal risks for participation in this study. This research study is designed to test theories and perceptions of priorities.

Benefits:
There are no direct benefits to participants. However, it is hoped that your participation will help researchers learn more about how role at a college or district affects perceptions of priorities. At the end of the experiment, you will receive a full explanation of the study and the potential impact of the results from the study.

Confidentiality:
All information provided will remain confidential and will only be reported as group data with no identifying information. All the information gathered from the study, will be kept in a secure location and only those directly involved with the research will have access to them. After the research is completed, the information will be destroyed after a period of a year.

Participation and withdrawal:
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and this will not affect your current or future relations with Argosy University, Southern California. You may withdraw by telling the experimenter that you no longer wish to participate and the study will be stopped by emailing the researcher at linda_bender@hotmail.com or calling Linda Bender directly at (714) 345-9576.

By clicking the begin button at the bottom of the page you are consenting to the above.

APPENDIX E

Follow-up E-mail

To: Board of Trustee members, Chancellor, President, Vice Presidents, Faculty Senate President and Student Body President

My name is Linda Bender and I am once again I asking for your participation in my EdD dissertation study on budget makers/approvers' perceptions of how to reprioritize budget in California community colleges. You are receiving this email because your site has authorized me to recruit you for my study. This survey will take approximately 10-20 minutes to complete and can be found at www.lindabender.com. If you have already taken the survey then I greatly thank you for your time and participation.

The survey is taken anonymously, with only the role required for aggregate reasons and the additional request for district and school are only to be collected to analyze data based on school/district size of student population. This letter is being emailed to you through your school's contact so that I have no emails to further assist in anonymity.

Thank you for your consideration and participation.

Linda Bender, Argosy University Southern California, EdD dissertation student