1. What is the reason behind the 3-year timeline for funding cuts?

*We are entering the second year of the current funding cycle. Recall, we are on a biennium cycle. This coming fiscal year is the “counting year” that determines our baseline metrics that will be largely deterministic of our funding in the next biennium. The two factors are our WSCH and the total state appropriation to higher education. The WSCH determine our relative share of the total funding and the state allocations determine the total “pot” to be divided. So, the university seeks first to adjust to possible lower enrollments this coming year, prepare for a possible claw back this coming year and prepare for a tight funding cycle in the next biennium.*

2. Is protecting people a COB principle or a UTSA principle?

*This is a guiding principle adopted by the COB. Each college is given discretion for their own pathway to cuts.*

3. Is central administration also cutting their budget?

*All operating units have been given the same instructions (except the target for academic colleges is 9% instead of 10%).*

4. Aren’t we one of the most efficient colleges?

*Yes, we are very efficient. Our faculty serve more students per capital, and our staff serve more students and faculty per capita than other colleges. We have fewer associate deans than all large colleges. However, we can probably still find ways to be more efficient during a time of austerity.*

5. Instead of mass layoffs, could we do a salary cut across the board?

*We are not considering mass layoffs.*

6. Are there early numbers to show what freshmen enrollment may look like? And does freshmen enrollment affect our college budgets?
The early signs have been very encouraging. Our enrollments do have an effect on our budget. In the coming year, the effect will be on improved net operating margins at the end of the year, which benefits the college going forward.

7. How much would we have to increase enrollment to accommodate those cuts?

*We are in the process of modeling this under varying assumptions of enrollments (e.g., undergraduate, graduate).*

8. Do we have any assurances (in writing) that if enrollments increase in COB that this money would return to us?

*The principles of the IRM model are in writing (see the VPBA website). This state budget cut is outside of the IRM normal operating assumptions, but we have been assured the IRM principles will continue to be followed.*

9. Could we set up our classes to be part face-to-face for social distancing and part online where possibly half of a class attends face-to-face one day and the other half another day?

*This is one of several options being considered by the university as we plan for the fall semester.*

10. When will we know if we need to enact the additional 5% cut?

*We’ve been told that we will know by July if we need to enact the additional 5% cut.*

11. Will that cut include furloughs and layoffs?

*We are doing everything possible to avoid the potential for layoffs in the initial 9% cut. The plan that we submit to the university will not have any layoffs as part of the plan. If the plan is accepted, then we will make it through Phase I without needing any. If we are required to go to Phase II (an additional 5% cut), it would be impossible to do so without some layoffs.*

12. What items were included in the 9% reduction?

*As part of this initial cut we are proposing a reduction in teaching and research services, including decreasing the number of Teaching Assistants and reducing expenses in the Center for Professional Excellence. In addition, we are delaying several student success initiatives that had been planned. The plan that will be submitted to the university leadership will be posted on the COB Intranet.*

13. What items are considered permanent funds?

*For purposes of this budget cut exercise, all the cost centers that are budgeted on an annual basis are considered to be permanent. This includes state funding, tuition & fee,
incidental fees, sales & services. Even if it is a non-state funded cost center that is included in the budget, it is considered permanent. This is the reason some of the CPE cost centers are included.

14. If we are saving money on electricity, supplies, etc. working from home, would that be an option for fall to continue those savings?

Unfortunately, the cost savings are not great because the university must still maintain utility services in the building. We will see some reductions, but not enough to cover the deficits. Moreover, those utilities are provided by the university and make their way to our budget through the university tax system in the IRM budget.

15. Is this budget deficit related to the fact that the university was in a budget shortfall prior to the crisis?

The university had predicted a budget shortfall and that deficit increased during the year due to lower than expected enrollment at the university level. The deficits this year were offset by the sweep of college accounts last month. The budget cuts that are being planned currently are due to projected reduced funding that we'll receive from the state as a result of reduced state support.

16. Why would the Dean’s Office need to do a survey? They should easily be able to cut the budget if they have a thorough understanding of the operation.

The survey and the COB forums were conducted to be transparent and collaborative with all College of Business constituents. Yes, the budget is ultimately the Dean’s decision, but the process we follow is to include major stakeholders. Department chairs and several committees have been very active working with the Dean’s Office to determine the best possible pathway to a reduced budget that preserves our ability to protect the core mission and minimize the impact on employees.

17. Will the budget cuts remain in place for the rest of the year? What about 2021?

The budget cuts are technically permanent cuts. However, going forward, the budgets will be determined based on IRM principles. So, if enrollments increase, we should see the benefits of that increased revenue.

18. Does COB have any fundraising plans to compensate some of the budget cuts? For example, requesting local, state, and national IT companies whose revenues have increased due to the situations caused by the pandemic, to support COB by providing funds in return for promoting their names among COB students, faculty, and staff.

Fundraising is an option to fill in the gaps in areas that we have to make cuts. But, this would not offset the current budget cuts that we have to make. The college just recently
hired a new Assistant Director of Development after the passing of our previous Executive Director.

19. We seem to have way too many committees starting from the University level--how are these contributing to administrative expenses--maybe trim unnecessary ones?

While we cannot speak directly to university committees, College of Business committees do not account for any of our expenses, other than the service hours spent by the committee members.

20. As a full-time NTT, I am concerned about cuts in NTT positions when tenured faculty are not even taking a salary cut.

We are working hard to follow our principle of People First. All other options will be considered before we look at eliminating positions.

21. Should faculty be prepared for a salary cut in the long-term, given that the pandemic may stay with us for the rest of the year?

The president has not authorized any college to do salary cuts. If personnel are affected, it can only be through layoffs and RIFs.

22. What is the difference between Phase I and Phase II? In other words is Phase I a mandate from the UT System and Phase II from the state? Do we truly anticipate an additional cut will be requested (Phase II)? How is the state making that assessment?

Both cuts have been mandated by UTSA leadership in response to guidance from the UT System. We will learn in July if the second phase will need to be enacted once the university receives new budget projections from the state.

23. What are the major categories of expenses?

The categories that are included in the permanent budget are staff salaries, wages, faculty salaries, GRA/GTA, benefits, M&O, & reserves.

24. Is the Academic Innovation proposed budget and prior expenditures going to be made public?

As a state institution, the university budget is part of the public record. Given that Academic Innovation is a new division within Academic Affairs, it is not clear if the university budget will be broken down to the unit level necessary to see that specific department’s budget.

25. Should there be a cap on money spent for orientations and other student celebrations? Again, without making the student feel like we don't care.
The university is mandating budget cuts throughout all offices, department and colleges. Each unit will be responsible for how they reach that threshold. The COB is making cuts to these types of activities conducted within the college.

26. Which educational approach produces the highest ROI: online or traditional?

The ROI of each approach is a function of several factors. Enrollments are one of the biggest factors in either model. Because online courses can scale more easily than traditional sections of the same course, online delivery has the potential to create a higher ROI. However, that also depends on other factors, such as whether the course is a formula-funded course or an Option III course (such as the online cyber program).

27. Can hiring NTT instead of TT for Fall 2020 help?

Not at this point in time. Over the long run, the mix of TT and NTT faculty can be changed, but not so much in the short term. Still, accreditation requires that we maintain faculty sufficiency ratios and faculty of both types contribute in different ways to these ratios, and the mix must be carefully monitored and planned.

28. Biggest concern of everyone is incredible lack of transparency. Don’t just say you are transparent, actually be transparent. And release all of these comments to everyone in cob.

All questions and suggestions have been published on the College of Business Intranet page.

29. Does replacement of in-residence coursework with online instruction result in a net cost savings?

For this past spring, it does not. In the long run, online instruction can help lower costs, but many tradeoffs must be managed.

30. Instead of a broad haircut for all, punishing those who have managed their budgets tightly and rewarding those who have not, perform a value based review and hold individuals accountable for delivering value, in line with university/college goals. When 80+% of your courses are deliver by NTT and adjuncts professionals, something is out of balance.

The percentage of our SCHs delivered by NTTs is 71%. It does vary by department, the type of instruction, and the amount of expert knowledge required.

31. It’s not just about the budget funding cuts, but about the other side of the equation - revenues. Example: Set up via the Professional Center seminars/webinars in various aspects of business for a fee; expand the contracting research office to include faculty/graduate projects for funding by the city, state, companies etc.
We have a very successful center that offers professional and executive educational programs (CPE). The surplus generated from CPE over the years is what has paid for faculty research budgets, the level of Ph.D. funding, and other items which are not funded by the university. The CPE is constantly looking for opportunities to provide professional and executive training to generate surplus.

32. What is being done to reduce costs in the administrative units to ensure there are no layoffs of full-time NTT faculty who teach full courses and increase SCH income for the university?

We are working hard to follow our principle of People First. All other options will be considered before we look at eliminating positions. We must continue to focus on serving the educational needs of our students.

33. When will affected employees be notified if they are laid off or furloughed?

There will be no furloughs. If layoffs are required, we would follow university processes, which includes two months notice.

34. Many faculty have classes in excess of 150 and TAs are needed to help with grading. Please do not reduce the amount of TAs available for faculty.

We must follow the guidelines provided by the VPBA, and permanent funding accounts are impacted. TA/RA support is part of our permanent funding, so it is likely we may need to scale back instructional support.