

March 9, 2009

TO: The UVM Faculty
FROM: Robyn Warhol-Down, for the Senate Executive Council
RE: What is happening now with budget cuts

Last week at the Campus-wide Forum on the Future of Education at UVM, I said on behalf of the faculty: *“We need transparency. We need more real consultation. We need to save our co-workers’ jobs.”*

Since the forum, the Senate Executive Council, along with United Academics’ leadership, has been working with the administration to make significant progress on all these counts. The Executive Council is committed to keeping the faculty updated on developments, and to making sure the UVM community has the facts about the budget reconciliation process. Here is where we are today:

Layoffs:

In April, we will know more about what the state appropriation and tuition income for next year will be. At that time, the Administration will decide whether they have to make the second round of staff layoffs. Those staff who would be affected already know who they are. If enough money comes in, the Administration will find positions at UVM for any staff members that lose their jobs in the second round of layoffs. Right now President Fogel and Vice President Cate are hopeful that there will be enough money, though they can’t be certain before early April.

Non-reappointments of Lecturers and Unfunding of Tenure Lines:

To determine the specific, local effects of empty faculty lines on academic programs, Vice President Cate, along with other administrators and representatives of the Faculty Senate, will meet with deans over Spring Break, and then consult with chairs of affected departments. Many of these chairs have not yet had a chance to weigh in on the proposed cuts. The point of the meetings is for the administration to make better-informed decisions about whether or not to enact the cuts.

Effects on academic viability:

President Dan Fogel, Provost John Hughes, and Vice President Cate will scrutinize the proposed cuts from all the colleges and schools, and where budget reductions (such as unfilled tenure lines) threaten the academic quality of a program, they will make adjustments in the cuts, as they have already done in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

Executive bonuses:

President Fogel has now made a commitment to stop giving bonuses, deferred compensation, or other non-base-pay money to administrators. The only exceptions will be “when and only when such elements of comp are demonstrably necessary to be market-competitive” in higher education, or if the compensation was part of a contractual agreement made at the time of employment. All such special payments will be fully disclosed to the public.

Administrative pay and proliferation:

President Fogel is committed to complete disclosure of all elements of administrators’ pay now and in the future. He has given the Executive Council a spreadsheet showing that—contrary to

reports that have been circulating--the number of upper-level administrators in 2002-03 was comparable to the number who are in those ranks now.

Budget cuts in Central Administration:

Fogel and Cate have distributed to the Senate and UA leadership spreadsheets of the cuts proposed by all colleges and schools except Medicine. We also have a spreadsheet with expenditures that the Central Administration proposes to cut from their own operations, but we have no details about what those cuts represent. We are told the details are forthcoming. The proposed cuts in some administrative units (the President's, Provost's and General Counsel's office and the VP for Research and Graduate Education) are altogether about \$200,000 deeper than the targets announced in December. These spreadsheets are public information, and are available from Vice President Cate to anyone who asks for them.

Faculty input into budget cuts:

The purpose of sharing the spreadsheets with the Senate and the Union is to open up the budget-cutting decisions for discussion and faculty consultation. We now have (or soon will have) the information we need to make reasoned recommendations about the cuts.

Rationale for the 16 : 1 student/faculty ratio:

The administration has begun sharing with the Senate Financial and Physical Planning Committee (FPPC) the data and calculations behind the target student/faculty ratios. President Fogel will charge a task force consisting of members from the FPPC and the Senate Curricular Affairs Committee, along with Richard Cate and other administrators, to investigate the ratio's internal consistency, effect on policy making, and impact on the availability of curricular offerings.

The Senate Executive Council sees all this as progress. The Council supports Dan Fogel's steps towards more transparency, accountability, and consultation of the faculty, and believes it is in the University's best interest at this time for him to continue in the office.

Robyn Warhol-Down
President, Faculty Senate
Richard & Pamela Ader Green and Gold Professor of English
University of Vermont
Waterman 335
Burlington VT 05405
(802) 656-2019
robyn.warhol@uvm.edu