

Update to UWO faculty from your Faculty Senate Budget Committee

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To:Faculty <faculty@lists.uwosh.edu>

Hi UWO faculty colleagues!

This email is from your Faculty Senate Budget Committee. Its purpose is to provide updates on our current activities and progress. Our committee's purpose, as approved by the Faculty Senate, appears at the end of this update.

1) Upcoming fiscal year budget. Our university annual budget planning cycle progresses through various steps throughout the year. Bethany Rusch and Jenny Borgmann from our university financial services office will soon walk us through next year's budget (i.e., for July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025). Ed Martini is meeting with our committee on April 24 to see if/how we can be proactively involved in the budget process going forward. Our main objectives in being involved are to provide useful input that improves budget decisions, and to be able to explain budgets to faculty so we all have a better grasp of our situation and how we can work toward achieving long term financial stability.

2) Information access/sharing. Bethany Rusch and Jenny Borgmann will also share information with our committee about how they forecast and will help us answer questions related to the Deloitte project. This is an open meeting on May 22 from 10-11 am in Sage 2239. Please join us if you'd like to learn more.

3) Dashboards. Our university is working toward creating strategic dashboards. Various groups are providing input in that effort (e.g., our Strategic Planning Committee). Dashboards consist of key metrics that help guide and evaluate performance. As an example, see some dashboards used by UWGB (www.uwgb.edu/ise/dashboard-directory); some of these are open access (toward the right, scroll and click on the three-people icons). Our budget committee is working with Kim Langolf (Institutional Effectiveness) to provide input, particularly where financial metrics may align with components of our university's strategic priorities. This alignment can help create visibility around whether/how we invest in our strategic priorities, for example financially supporting activities associated with being a research enhanced university. Thank you to Professor Mike Ford for adding contributions to our committee's efforts in this area.

4) Budgetary implications of the Restructuring models

-- **a:** Compared to continuing with our current structure and practices, moving to either of the new structures and practices should save our campus somewhere in the range of \$600,000 to \$1,750,000 per year. This wide range reflects two main issues. First, we will make many choices as we implement a new structure and practices, and some choices will entail costs. Second, some of the savings are from eliminating costs that could be eliminated even if we stayed with our current structure, such as removing Dept. Chair compensation. Thus, we may achieve those savings with the migration to a new structure, but not because of the structure itself. We may reach the higher end of the \$600,000 to \$1,750,000 range, yet the savings strictly due to the restructuring itself are likely toward the lower end of the range.

-- **b:** Given some savings associated with the restructuring could be achieved by remaining with our current structure (as noted above) we have heard questions about pursuing those savings without changing structure. However, we have also heard comments that our culture is frequently "change resistant" and we may find it very difficult to make these cost savings changes within our current

structure. Moving to a new structure lets us hit a “reset” button that will require work but may be the most viable option for making these changes necessary to achieve the required budget savings.

-- **c:** As noted by Provost Martini, and by the Academic Planning Transition Team, we acknowledge that, in addition to restructuring, some other actions will be needed to fully close the remaining gap between our current spending levels and our proposed 2024-2025 allocation. We believe our university is correctly assessing this. Various other cost-saving measures have already been implemented or have started to be implemented.

-- **d:** We should achieve some long-term benefits from a restructuring that are not reflected in administrative savings but may have other cost savings. For example, more balanced sizes of colleges should reduce some current complexities that cause inefficiencies. And the new arrays of departments may lower some barriers to developing interdisciplinary curriculum (without a restructure, these barriers could be changed by adjusting how we approve curriculums, but getting people to agree to make those changes may be too challenging). Restructuring will also have some one-time costs, and we have not seen itemized estimates on these costs.

5) Your input. Please let us know what questions you have, either about the above information, or other things you would like our committee to explore. We appreciate your input. A few faculty members have already provided helpful suggestions, and you have our thanks.

Thank you from your Faculty Senate Budget Committee,

Chris Jones, Bryan Lilly, Kristine Nicolini, Nathan Stuart, George Thomas, and Jerry Thomas

Faculty Senate Budget Committee Purpose Statement

The Faculty Senate Budget Committee gathers and reviews information and provides advice and recommendations to the Faculty Senate on issues related to UW Oshkosh budgets:

- The Committee’s regular duties include:

- Developing faculty priorities for budgets and communicating these priorities to UW Oshkosh administration and to other university governance groups as warranted;
- Comparing actual revenue and spending outcomes to planned amounts, identifying areas of concern, and working with UW Oshkosh administration to improve future practices and outcomes.

- The Committee also completes specific fixed-term (not ongoing) tasks as charged by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

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