

Dear Ohio University Students, Faculty, and Staff:

Our communication on February 15th indicated that on March 10th we would provide an update on the budget process and respond to the suggestions that were posted on the budget website in December and January.

Budget Update

The draft budget recommendations were posted on February 15th, after which the following activities were undertaken:

*Four open budget forums were held in the last week of February to gather input on the budget recommendations. Notes from each of the forums are posted at

<http://www.ohio.edu/provost/Budget-Process.cfm>

*The budget suggestion website has been reopened and will remain active until March 12th

<http://www.ohio.edu/budget/feedback.cfm>

*A second series of face-to-face meetings with planning unit heads is almost complete.

As we hoped, each of these different activities is providing us important feedback on the draft budget recommendations. Although we are still involved in gathering information and trying to document potential consequences, what we have heard has been significant and substantive.

Work on evaluating feedback and consultation with planning unit heads and the president will continue for the next ten days, and then our focus will shift to finalizing recommendations. Those recommendations will be provided to the university community on March 29th.

December and January Budget Website Suggestions

In early December the University community was invited to post suggestions on how to save costs, generate revenue, and improve how the institution operates. The website remained active until January 29th and over 200 suggestions were posted. The suggestions were collected into a spreadsheet and made available to the university community in early February at

<http://www.ohio.edu/provost/Budget-Process.cfm>

In establishing the website, we pledged to review each suggestion submitted to the website and determine its potential for helping the university to meet its budgetary challenges. A document containing the suggestions and our responses is available at <http://www.ohio.edu/budget/> (OAK ID and password required). We were pleased with the quality of the suggestions and aim to make progress on the ones that offer the most promise.

Some things to note:

Where there were multiple suggestions on a particular issue, one representative suggestion was selected. The number of times a suggestion was made on a particular issue is indicated in brackets in the first column of the table.

Suggestions were edited for length, but every effort was made to preserve key elements.

Suggestions that were deemed promising offered the possibility of gaining some type of cost-saving, revenue generation, or efficiency. Their potential for assisting the university in meeting

budget challenges ranges. Some suggestions may result in modest gains while others offer the possibility of more significant results.

However, suggestions that seem promising will only remain suggestions unless action is taken to implement them. But implementation will require time and attention. Many initiatives already are underway at the University, which means that we need to take a measured approach to what we commit to pursuing.

To that end, we have grouped the best suggestions into different phases. Phase I suggestions will be targeted for implementation from now through Fall Quarter 2010. Phase 2 suggestions are those that need a longer timeline for implementation. EVPP & VPFA will report to the university community at the beginning of Fall Quarter 2010 on the progress made on Phase I items.

* Some examples of Phase I items include:

- Provide professional work experience/internships to students.
- Establish a university-wide course evaluation system.
- Make better use of our space through scheduling.
- Make recommendations on curtailing the production and distribution of internal notices, calendars, etc.

*Some examples of Phase II items include:

- Create mandatory online courses for incoming students who do not pass proficiency exams during summer orientation.
- Add more classes that are hybrid (i.e. online and face-to-face).
- Go to an entirely online room reservation system.

A number of the suggestions put forward do not need administrative action to implement; they need a personal commitment. For example, everyone has the ability to reduce university utility costs, paper consumption, food waste, and improve our recycling rate.

There were some suggestions that need to take root in a unit first. If you have a cost-saving measure or an idea for revenue generation that is tied to your unit we encourage you to have conversations with your chair, director, or planning unit head. Likewise, we encourage your chair, director, or planning unit head to listen and with your assistance fully assess the feasibility of your idea and what it might contribute.

We want to thank all the members of the university community who contributed suggestions. Please take a few minutes and read through the posted document. It will provide you a sense of how we can work together to meet some of the challenges that we face.

Sincerely,

Pam Benoit
Executive Vice President and Provost

Mike Angelini
Interim Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration