



Dear Members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee:

With Program Prioritization now over, but new budgetary challenges on the horizon, the Provost and I would like to respond to the concerns the Faculty Senate Executive Committee has outlined in its recent letter. It is hoped that, as the campus moves forward, it does so in a positive and productive way.

1. It has been made clear for a least a decade that our curriculum is larger than that which a campus of our size, including our budget, can sustain. Past administrative practice resulted in faculty hiring when program demand did not justify this action. The realities of the State's withdrawal of GPR support have exacerbated the matter. Recent faculty personnel decisions, which include foregoing the filling of some lines and the elimination of others, reflect the adjustment of academic staffing and curriculum size to the realities of the campus budget, program demand, and our enrollment.

As for the ratio of the employment of full-time vs. teaching academic staff, this issue is multi-faceted. The ratio should take into account the need for stability, for quality, and for flexibility. The use of both full-time faculty and teaching academic staff brings value to the classroom and allows for the utilization of special skills and expertise offered by each for the benefit of student instruction.

With this balance in mind, the standard often used across the country for an appropriate ratio of tenured and tenure-track faculty to other staffing is typically recommended to approximate 60%, irrespective of the size of the institution (NACUBO). There are serious ramifications for institutions that do not do so. If student demand for academic programs shifts, faculty capacity for delivery of the changed emphasis cannot. Tenured faculty members are not interchangeable parts in the sense of Henry Ford's manufacturing practice (a physics professor can't usually teach journalism, and vice versa). This reality can hinder the institution's capability to invest in innovation and to build faculty strength in high-demand or new programs. If budgets change, as we have seen changes with the decrease in GPR and the recent Governor's proposal, it is extremely difficult to adjust staffing in response to the new exigencies.

The practice of the previous Provost was to reduce the numbers of academic staff and replace them with faculty. This has placed our institution in a position with a current ratio of 88% faculty to 12% budgeted instructional academic staff. This is a ratio which clearly exceeds the universally accepted recommendation, and one that we cannot sustain in a very challenging budget climate.

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2. The issue of a pay differential of a campus compared to industry peers is pervasive across UW System. On average, compensation at all UW campuses hovers around 18% below peers. At UW-Superior, the percentage of differential indicated in the last salary compression study conducted for 2013 -2014 is 18%. As you know, the average means that some campuses are higher and some are lower. All campuses are concerned about the effect of salaries which are not competitive. This issue also is a priority at UW System. It has not been regular practice for UW System or the State to have its agencies fund pay plans outside of the state allocation. Allocations from UW System for market differentials were discontinued in 2010-11 when this funding was removed from campus budgets.

As you have stipulated, when one leaves our employ, it can happen for a variety of reasons (*e.g.*, to move closer to family, for medical reasons, to satisfy a desire for employment where there is heavier emphasis placed on research and a smaller teaching load). UW-Superior's statistics indicate that the primary reasons for faculty turnover are retirement and non-renewal of a contract. Data from 2011 to 2014 shows 12 faculty who departed for other reasons. Family or personal reasons, and better pay or teaching load/research opportunities were cited most often as the reasons for departure. UW-Superior is in line with other UW Institutions in the state in this regard.

3. Program Prioritization did not focus disproportionately on the academics of UW-Superior. Historically, the academic side of operations has been held relatively harmless, while the non-academic operation has repeatedly taken budget reductions. It is acknowledged that this is a new experience for the academic units of our institution, but one that was necessary. The Program Prioritization process affected all areas of the campus, including administrative and non-academic areas.

You should know that Academic Affairs makes up 64% of the campus operating budget (Fund 102), followed by Administration and Finance at 28%, and all other areas (Chancellor's Division, Campus Life, Athletics and Advancement) are each between one and five percent.

The reductions to the campus budget amount to \$1.8 million and break out as follows:

- Personnel Reductions
 - Administration and Finance: 35 positions were eliminated (2 have been held open for many years)
 - Academic Affairs: 12 positions were eliminated (8 of which were faculty, 5 of which were the result of retirements)
 - Student Affairs: 4 positions were eliminated (2 of these are funded by program revenue (auxiliaries); 1 was a reduction of executive title)
- The largest budget reduction as the result of program prioritization was in Administration and Finance. This area took a reduction of \$885,000 or just over 16.5% of its 102 budget. This was followed by the Chancellor's Division with a reduction of over 11% of its budget and Student Life with a reduction of more than 7% of its budget. Academic Affairs was reduced by \$706,764 or 5.8% of its budget.

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Advancement and Athletics were both reduced by just over 5% of each of their budgets.

4. Enrollment depends on a number of factors: recruitment and admissions processes, availability of desired programs in a form that meets a student's need and desire, outcomes which programs can demonstrate (*e.g.*, career or graduate school placement), and experiences that students receive when they attend the University (*i.e.*, a sequence of courses which helps them to graduate, academic experiences both within and outside of the classroom, and co-curricular experiences).

The chairs of each department have been provided with means to help with the processes of admissions, recruitment, and retention. These include the following, which were provided in an email transmitted from the Dean of Faculty to department chairs on October 14, 2014:

EXAMPLES OF HOW PROGRAMS CAN WORK SUPPORTIVELY WITH MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION EFFORTS (W/UNIVERSITY RELATIONS):

- *Send story ideas of interesting class projects, field trips, research*
- *Once a semester update on faculty and/or student research projects – we use them as selling points or story lead ideas*
- *Alumni success stories – send leads of alumni and brief description of what they are doing for potential alumni profile*
- *Job placement information, internship stories or other interesting story lead ideas*
- *Key selling points – help identify what makes the program unique, interesting, etc...*
 - *i.e. All psychology majors will engage in at least one course that works closely with a community organization, to tie their classroom learning to fulfill an organizational need (i.e. ASL)*

EXAMPLES OF HOW TO WORK SUPPORTIVELY WITH RECRUITMENT EFFORTS (W/ADMISSIONS):

- *Faculty outreach to admitted students (call or email)*
 - *Coordinate communication and messaging with admissions*
- *Provide a list of classes & times that are appropriate for prospective students to sit in on during campus visits*
- *Provide a list of faculty and times when they are available to meet with prospective students*
- *Work with admissions to coordinate classroom time at local high schools*
- *Attend, staff table, and participate in Admissions Preview Days and Admit Days*
- *Say hello and engage in conversation with any prospective student visiting campus*
 - *Introduce our campus ambassadors so faculty recognize tour guides*
 - *Standard tour hours happen M-F 10 am and 2pm*

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- *When in the YU stop into the Admissions office to see if there are any visitors – say hello, welcome and show friendly atmosphere*
- *Attend special events with maybe 10-12 students at request of admissions (i.e. Group visits, Upward Bound, etc....)*

RETENTION –WHAT PROGRAMS CAN DO TO PROMOTE RETENTION OF CURRENT STUDENTS (W/ADVISING):

- *Work with the Advising Office to host information sessions about various academic programs throughout the year*
- *Develop meaningful individual advising plans to assist students in navigation through their degrees.*
- *Be present and participate in campus events and activities*
- *Send handwritten notes of congratulations, happy birthday or other ways to make a personal connection*
- *Engage with student organizations that are of interest to you – consider being their advisor, ask to present to the group, serve on a panel, etc....*
- *Be champions of your own programs – for example, in your general education courses, plug success of program graduates, what makes the program unique, success and outcome stories*
- *Reach out to current students who have expressed an interest in your program, engage them, sell your program and benefits*

We will be following up to see how each program is performing in this regard.

Research indicates that a student's retention is highly dependent on academic progress. The Provost and the Dean of Faculty have encouraged numerous times that faculty:

- Streamline the curriculum so that course availability and sequence promote graduation.
- Provide a summer schedule which encourages student degree completion rather than reinforce preferences of a faculty member.
- Provide a regular schedule (some call it a pattern sheet or 4-year plan) that outlines clearly for a student how to integrate required major, general education, and electives in order to graduate in a timely manner.
- Consider alternative delivery methods to address students' needs.
- Evaluate faculty performance and student performance in gateway classes.
- Evaluate student retention rates in the department.
- Consider how the degree program can take into account students' needs and how students can be prepared for life after college in the world of employment. These goals need not be incompatible.
- Assess the quality of advising. It has been encouraged that there be the adoption of a model of advising which leverages the strength of professional advisors and the expertise of the faculty.

We will also follow-up to understand how all programs are performing in this regard.

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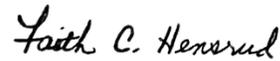
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5. We would sincerely hope that the University would never need to undergo such a process again as Program Prioritization. The mechanisms for future review have been accomplished in collaboration with the faculty and will be incorporated into the annual report and academic program review process. Should program eliminations be necessary in the future and, as such, trigger the possibility of the layoff of tenured faculty, these procedures are clearly enumerated in the Faculty Personnel Rules.

Administration and governance work together in a consultative partnership, each with our own areas of expertise and responsibility. We have engaged our governance units and are committed to doing so in the future. We look forward to the continued success of our campus and appreciate the outstanding and hard work done by all of the faculty and staff. Thank you for considering these points as we continue to work together to move forward.



Renee M. Wachter
Chancellor



Faith C. Hensrud
Provost