Dear Academic Staff Colleagues,

In the 2015-17 budget proposal, the University of Wisconsin System is facing $150 million in cuts for each year of the two-year budget which amounts to $300 million dollars. In addition, the Governor has also proposed shifting the University of Wisconsin System from a state agency to a public authority model. Yesterday, Chancellor Blank met with the Academic Staff Assembly, Faculty Senate, and Classified Staff Congress to provide an update on what is currently understood about the budget proposal.

Budget Impact at UW-Madison

UW-Madison historically takes 38% of System budget reductions. Below is an outline of what the proposed cuts will mean to UW-Madison:

- In the last biennial budget, the cost to continue funds were removed, and UW-Madison used discretionary reserves to cover these costs. This $23 million cut will continue in the next budget and will be handled through budget cuts.
- The amount of the budget cut for each of the UW System campuses has not been determined. Traditionally, UW-Madison receives a 38% cut which, if followed, would amount to $57 million.
- The state matching contributions to the WI Bioenergy Initiative grant may not be included. UW-Madison would need to assume responsibility for the state contribution, which would be an additional $3.5 million reduction.
- Municipal service payments have also been eliminated, which is approximately a $2.5 million reduction.

The total for the cuts outlined above is $86 million.

Public Authority

At the February 5 Board of Regents meeting, President Cross outlined the public authority proposal as it is currently understood (please note this list is not exhaustive):

- Creation of a public authority for UW System requires many changes in state statutory language.
- The shared governance rights articulated in Chapter 36 of state statute would be repealed. Instead, the Board of Regents would transfer the existing statutory language to Board policy. President Cross and Regent President Falbo indicated any subsequent changes to this language would be collaboratively developed through shared governance.
- UW System employees would become public employees rather than state employees. Employees would continue to participate in the state health insurance and retirement programs.
- The Board would have the ability to authorize pay plans.
- HR Design is unchanged and still scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2015.
- The Board of Regents would remain unchanged and would continue to be appointed by the Governor and approved by the Senate.
- The Board of Regents would continue to have the authority to set tuition.
- Campus buildings and land would be leased from the state for a period of 75 years.
- The Board would have procurement authority.
Budget Update February 10, 2015

Budget Process: Next Steps

Please note, the budget process has just begun and will continue for the next several months. The Joint Finance Committee (JFC) will hold public hearings before any amendments are introduced. Once the JFC votes, the budget bill will go to the Assembly and Senate for discussion and additional amendments. If the Assembly and Senate pass different versions of the budget, it will go back to the body that first considered the budget for concurrence. Once this process is completed, the budget will go to the Governor for final review, which may include line item vetoes.

For additional updates, please visit budget.wisc.edu. There is a link in the upper left corner of the page to send your questions about the budget.

ASEC, the Assembly and other shared governance partners will continue to monitor this proposal as it moves forward and work with the administration as more details become available. The Assembly will consider resolutions focused on the budget, the public authority model, and shared governance. ASEC will provide updates as events warrant.

If you are not a member of the Academic Staff Professionals Representation Organization (ASPRO) http://www.aspro.net/memInfo.html, please consider joining. Your membership in this organization, created by governance, provides for a stronger voice for academic staff at the Capitol. As a member, you will also receive legislative updates.

Please contact me or other members of ASEC with any concerns you would like us to share with the administration. If you would like to share concerns, comments, or questions, please email asec-chair@soas.wisc.edu.

UW-Madison Budget Forums

Chancellor Blank will provide budget updates and take questions at three campus forums this week. The forums will be held on:

- Wednesday, Feb. 11, 11 p.m.-12 a.m., 1306 Health Sciences Learning Center, 750 Highland Ave. Free parking for this session will be available at Lots 60, 74, 82, and 85.
- Thursday, Feb. 12, 2:30-3:30 p.m., Varsity Hall, Union South, 1308 W. Dayton St.
- Friday, Feb. 13, 9-10 a.m., Ebling Auditorium, Microbial Sciences, 1550 Linden Dr.

The Thursday and Friday sessions will also be live streamed and can be accessed at budget.wisc.edu.

Video of the Chancellor’s presentation to the Board of Regents can also be found at budget.wisc.edu.

Thank you for your contributions to the University’s mission of teaching, research, and service.

Sincerely,

Heather Mc Fadden
ASEC Chair