

In response to Provost Myron Allen's memo dated April 3, 2009, the University of Wyoming's Staff Senate presents the following addendum to its initial budget planning white paper.

Sustainability and conservation.

As noted in University Plan 3 (UP3), "The University of Wyoming is ... an institution with a distinctive character ... (that) embraces both its historic sense of place and its mandate to create the future" (p. 2). Preservation and conservation of UW's physical, human, and fiscal resources are paramount to creating "a society to match its scenery" (UP3, p. 2).

In *Action Plan for Facilities and Utilities* (January 15, 2009), the University of Wyoming Sustainability Committee proposed (a) a set of measures to upgrade existing buildings, (b) a set of principles to guide the design and setting of new buildings, and (c) a set of recommended operating practices that UW can realistically implement by 2012. The committee provided a number of action items to implement their directive. Building on the principles set forth by UW's Sustainability Committee, Staff Senate contributes the following recommendation for capturing fiscal resources through solar energy.

- Install solar collections systems on campus facilities, such as on animal barn roofs at the stock farms.
- Install a parabolic solar collection system west of the Central Energy Plant that could preheat water into steam for campus heating or steam electrical generation.

Solar collection systems will require assumption of maintenance overhead costs. To alleviate the financial burden on an already limited budget, we suggest inviting the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences to incorporate the engineering, maintenance, and monitoring of these solar collection systems into academic curricula. Not only would the variable upkeep costs be neutralized, but such an arrangement would further UW's commitment to exposing students to technological and academic frontiers.

Unfortunately, due to the hypothetical nature of this suggestion, and the limited investigative resources of Staff Senate members, accurate quantitative estimates of budget savings will not be presented in this addendum. However, given the fact that Laramie enjoys more than two hundred days of sunshine annually, any incorporation of solar collection could mean a significant reduction in UW's future utility bills. Potential savings are likely to outweigh additional capital investment, leading to a community that exists in harmony with its unique environmental surroundings.

Overtime

UP3 establishes two ground rules that will guide budget planning (p. 3):

1. "It is unacceptable to envision budget measures, such as across-the-board reductions, that dissipate...progress and diminish UW's distinctiveness."
2. "...teaching, research, and service...lie at the core of this vision, and they should be the last of our endeavors to suffer from budget reductions..."

Support staff is essential for the daily operations of the university; they are the 'service' component of the vision mentioned in ground rule number two above. To this end, it is imperative that any policy that directly or indirectly inhibits the ability of staff to adequately serve students, faculty, other staff or our constituents at large be considered detrimental to the attainment of the university's mission.

Overtime is, by definition, work that cannot be accomplished during a normal work schedule. At times, staff is required to work additional hours in order to maintain the level of service demanded by their

constituents. For example, in the physical plant, overtime is considered a necessity to manage the work load. The Director of the physical plant has stated, "We cannot afford compensatory time. We need our people on the job when deadlines need to be met." In line with UP3's attestation that across-the-board policies undermine sound budget practices, we suggest that exceptions to a policy against overtime should be considered and granted. For example, emergency callouts for skilled crafts to repair life supporting systems (fire alarm system, security, electrical power outage, plumbing, and heating/air conditioning) should never be compromised for the sake of financial gain.

Additionally, existing policies in UW departments disallowing compensatory time or limiting the number of hours that can be accrued conflict with a policy banning overtime; these discrepancies will need to be addressed.

#### Staff Redundancies

Fostering excellence is identified in UP3 as a primary planning motif for the UW community. One of the areas in which the opportunity exists to develop excellence is "in the institution's responsibility to build excellence in human capital" (UP3, p. 15). Indeed, "The foundation of an excellent university is excellent people" (UP3, p. 25). As mentioned previously, support staff is the backbone upon which the university depends to implement policy and procedure and to provide services to faculty, administrators, and students.

Promoting the professional development of existing employees so as to create advantageous competencies within functional areas will discourage redundancies among staff positions and increase the quality of service provided by support staff members. Financial gain also results when informed analysis of existing service centers results in "the establishment of pools of business-service staff that serve several departments simultaneously..." (M. Allen, Memo to Staff Senate, April 3, 2009).

One area where staff redundancies exist is in the Outreach School. The Outreach School currently operates with its own administrative processes for marketing, academic advising, recruiting, admissions, registration, student billing and collections, scholarship allocations, information technology, and accounting. All of these processes are also in place in more effective and efficient forms for all other divisions of the university, and do not need to be duplicated. Absorbing the underlying administrative functions of the Outreach School would not only provide budgetary relief, but would also provide clear, consistent, and standardized procedures for students.

Other areas to consider are small units who are responsible for their own bookkeeping. There may be potential within divisions for larger offices within the unit to absorb some of the accounting functions. This could be considered on a case by case basis when positions are vacated, or where a person in one unit has other significant job duties or are burdened with extra workload due to other position losses. A large move towards centralization of the campus is not recommended, rather an evaluation of resources similar to what will occur with vacated positions.

#### Central Salary Management

UP3 advocates for central staff position management (CSM) as a means for increasing resources available for reallocation upon the vacancy of a staff position. According to UP3, "Preliminary estimates suggest that collecting only the salary dollars in excess of those needed to refill at the entry level for each pay grade could yield roughly \$1 million per year in institution-wide capacity to make decisions about the staff salary budget. Thus it may be possible to add new staff positions each year or to

**reallocate to other purposes** the money left over from refilled positions” (p. 26). Staff Senate is concerned about the operational details of the CSM system; of particular concern is how excess resources will be allocated.

Staff Senate advocates for the reallocation of resources obtained by CSM to the creation of new staff positions in departments critical to teaching, research, and service, or to support existing staff positions. Such a policy coincides with the values asserted by Provost Myron Allen in his April 3, 2009, memo to Staff Senate: “UW must preserve its ability to compete with the best institutions in the world for talented employees, and it should strive to be Wyoming’s model employer...UW should seek to *improve* its employees’ compensation at every opportunity.” Staff Senate does not support the use of CSM-recovered funds for meeting the goals set forth in UP3’s Action Item 65, which advocates for “an increase in the mandatory raise associated with promotion to full professor, from 10 percent to 20 percent” (p. 26).

Although Staff Senate would agree with Provost Allen that it is important to treat existing employees well, we respectfully suggest that even a small number of well treated employees cannot sustain the level of excellence expected of an institution whose focus is to increase the number of staff constituents (ie students, faculty and administrators) and the services provided to these constituents.