

**THE UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING**  
**FINANCIAL CRISIS ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE**

*FY18 Budget Reduction Listening Session*  
**Monday, October 17, 2016**

**Public Session**

**FY18 Budget Reduction Listening Session**

A member of the campus community began the listening session by stating that she appreciated that if the retirement incentive was offered that some of those funds would be allocated to hire back some of the positions that would be vacated by this incentive. She added that this technique would be important for the University moving forward.

Committee Chair Bieber explained that he had received numerous questions about who was qualified to receive this incentive. He added that University President Nichols had clearly stated that this incentive would be for tenured faculty, tenure track faculty, extended term faculty, and clinical faculty. Committee Chair Bieber noted that extended term faculty's titles were mostly utilized in the American Heritage Center and the UW Libraries. He stated that academic professionals were not eligible but if there was the term "faculty" in a campus member's job title they should contact the President's Office to clarify if they were eligible for this retirement incentive. Committee Chair stated that currently there was no end date to opt into the retirement incentive because the official plan needed to be approved by the Board of Trustees before that information could be released. It was noted that this incentive should take into account preparation for the 2017 fall semester. Committee Chair Bieber explained that this incentive would be paid out on a nine-month salary basis even though there were some faculty that were on 11 or 12 month contracts. He added that additional information would be provided immediately following trustee approval. Committee Chair Bieber noted that any individuals who were to take this incentive would be able to sell their sick leave in increments of 40 hours for 1.5 months of health care coverage instead of the current system. He added that a frequently asked questions was to determine if only offering a faculty retirement package was legal, noting that it is completely legal based on consultation with general council and other universities.

A campus community member asked if this approach had received as a positive approach to the budget reductions.

Committee Chair Bieber stated that it had been received as a mixed blessing. He added that often times strictly offering early retirement sometimes resulted in losing faculty and staff in a nonstrategic manner and without control, this situation could lead to an uneven distribution of vacancies. Committee Chair Bieber stated that planning to have enough funding to back fill positions where there was need was important to this process. He added that University President Nichols had been in control of the release of positions back into the pool to be filled based on needs across campus and it was through this same system that vacancies would be filled following this incentive. Committee Chair Bieber explained that it was thought this incentive was targeted towards 30-35 faculty members and that attrition could result in 60 fewer faculty and staff on campus. He added that this was a large amount of people to accommodate leaving in the next year, adding that overall this incentive had good aspects and a few downsides.

A member of the committee stated that this approach would strictly lead to downsizing across the entire University. Committee Chair Bieber explained that many of the approaches taken over the past few months in regards to the faculty work load and not hiring adjunct or part time faculty were all efforts made to begin downsizing the amount of faculty and staff on campus. He added

that the downsize of faculty and staff was meant to be a permanent line item cut from the UW budget.

A campus community member asked how the targets were reached for each of the colleges as presented during the Town Hall Meeting. They asked if these numbers were suggested by the dean of each college or if they were reached through some other avenue.

Committee Chair Bieber stated that the original target numbers across the 10 main divisions of campus were distributed based on proportions of the overall budget and the target reduction. He added that after discussions with University President Nichols, she decided that some divisions would take their fully recommend cut while others would not take cuts that were quite so large, but they had not been distributed proportionately. Committee Chair Bieber added that she appeared to take into account the information given to her by each department across campus. A committee member noted that colleges that were currently operating an initiative were protected.

The campus community member expressed concern based on the reduction given to the College of Arts and Sciences. He stated that this reduction was exactly equal to the cost to keep his department running. The campus community member stated that he had received emails stating that his department would be eliminated to account for the entire College of Arts and Sciences budget reduction. He explained that his department repaired equipment for departments across campus, did work for physical plant, fleet, and grounds crew.

Committee Chair Bieber explained that only Provost Miller would be able to answer that question more specifically. He added that this had not been indicated in conversations he had participated in. Committee Chair Bieber stated that each dean had been given their target that was to be reached by July 1, 2017 and were tasked doing this as they saw fit, and that the specifics had not been presented to the FCAC.

Another number of the campus community stated that based on the retirement incentive and the anxious attrition that may occur, if they were a dean of a college where departments were panicked because they knew they would only receive money to rebuild from those faculty members who opted into the retirement incentive, they would be worried about how different the college would begin to look in the coming years.

A member of the FCAC stated that they believed that based on these facts, the idea of the adjunct professor would begin to resurface in the need to cover these large losses. He added that he did not believe that the fiscal situation was going to get better over the next two to four years and deans would have to begin planning out their full needs for that time. The committee member stated that savings could be realized through buying time until faculty members could be replaced. He added that he hoped the deans were looking to plan for the long term but understood there were some colleges that had more immediate needs that should be filled much sooner than others.

Another member of the FCAC stated that as they understood it the faculty that retire through the incentive, those funds would not go directly back to the college but to a general pool that would be allocated based on needs across campus. He added that this concept would be more of a central

management of positions, where each college would need to propose why their needs were greater than other departments when needing to fill these positions.

A campus community member stated that they felt that currently their department did not know how to project out far enough to anticipate retirements and think through that lens to potentially scale back certain hopes and dreams based on the level of faculty and staff available.

Committee Chair Bieber stated that there were some very specific items noted in the plan even though these specifics may not all be clear. He added that these specifics would be addressed in the spring semester and UW would begin to rebuild based on that information, but no specifics besides what had been presented about the Huron Report had been provided. A member of the FCAC asked how these reductions affected UW at Casper. Committee Chair Bieber stated that he did not believe that it directly affected UW at Casper. He added perhaps faculty lines between UW and UW Casper might have an affect or perhaps the retirement incentive might also affect them. A member of the committee stated that the specifics of the retirement incentive had not been completed and the incentive may or may not be available at UW Casper it would be decided following conversations with the Board of Trustees.

A member of the FCAC stated that the committee had not discussed how the Board of Trustees might react to the plan as it was proposed to them. Committee Chair Bieber noted that the committee was tasked with assisting with the development of the plan that would work to preserve the integrity of the institution without the termination of tenured faculty positions. He added that there was not a lot of specificity in the plan because it had been realized that the President had been making good decisions through planning to achieve the reductions in a way that would benefit UW moving forward. Committee Chair Bieber added that the lack of specificity allowed for there to be additional flexibility in the plan.

Committee Chair Bieber thanked the members of the campus community for their attendance and their comments.