



TO: Dave Sprott, Cameron Wright, David Jones, Klint Alexander, Scott Turpen, Ed Synakowski, Kim Chestnut, Tom Burman, Rudi Michalak, Riley Talamantes, James Wheeler

FROM: President Designate Ed Seidel

CC: Co-Chairs Neil Theobald, Acting President and Anne Alexander, Interim Provost Designate

RE: Budget Reduction Working Group

At the direction of the Chair of the UW Board of Trustees, Pres. Designate Seidel requests your participation in the UW Budget Reduction Working Group.

Background:

In response to Wyoming's significant revenue shortfalls, Governor Gordon has instructed all state agencies and entities, including UW, shall demonstrate by June 30, 2020 how they will reduce their 2021-22 biennial general fund expenditures by ten percent. The Governor has also charged us with explaining the impact of these reductions on UW and the state of Wyoming. By July 15, we must prepare another 10% reduction.

This should be seen as an opportunity to revamp the way we operate, to do things that are otherwise harder to do, with an eye toward reducing obstacles that prevent us from moving where we want to go over the coming years. The 21st century land grant mission has evolved rapidly to (a) broadly educating students to be productive citizens in a modern era, and (b) being engines of innovation and economic development for the state.

As cross-cutting themes that help us build towards such goals, I would like us to develop plans that over the long term enable us to become a best-of-breed 21st century land grant institution. This includes several "cultural" themes that should be embedded throughout the university, across all programs:

- More digital: from online education to computation and data-enabled education and research programs, regardless of discipline of or major
- More entrepreneurial: from traditional entrepreneurship training to a more entrepreneurial mindset of the faculty both to hustle for grants and outside support to actually spawning companies, and support structures to accomplish this both in Laramie and across the state
- More interdisciplinary; :to mobilize the university to address complex challenges that the state of Wyoming has
- More inclusive; : growing our diversity with students and faculty from all walks of life, focusing on social mobility for growth of productive workforce of the state

Over time, if we invest selectively, and we develop programs and partnerships across the state with these qualities in mind, we can transform the university.

How do we do this in a time of budget cuts? We need to be very strategic, cut where things do not contribute to the above themes, or where they are stale or not growing, and selectively invest where they

do. As such we are asking units to request funding from UW's special projects reserve account to strengthen existing activities or even to propose new ones that move us in important directions for the future.

Charge: Develop recommendations to (a) produce scenarios that reduce UW's 21-22 biennial State general fund expenditures by ten, fifteen, and twenty percent in permanent ongoing funding, and (b) target strategic investments at each reduction level that will move UW forward in important directions for the future. We need to create a university on the other side of this reduction that is sustainable and thriving.

For context, 10% of block grant state aid is \$17.5 Million.

Phase I:

1. Develop a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Challenges analysis of the university's programs.
2. Develop parameters for the reductions that truly reduce reliance on the State's general fund. For example, development dollars and reserves should be used strategically and not to replace operations funding from the state.
3. Evaluate and prioritize reduction or elimination of lower priority, lower enrollment, low growth programs.
4. Consider partnerships with community colleges for general education activities.
5. Implement a hiring freeze with exceptions for key priority and strategic hires, which must be approved by the President or through a process that he approves.
6. Evaluate and recommend potential immediate activities that will reduce expenditures and/or reliance on the general fund.
7. Develop a set of mechanisms that will allow for feedback, input, and consultation with campus and statewide stakeholders.

Phase II: Develop a recommended process for units to make strategic investments.

1. Ask units to propose strategic initiatives that support key goals as articulated above. These could include cluster hires in certain areas such as entrepreneurship, computational/data science, and research and education centers of excellence that would support economic development of key industries and other areas of strategic strength or growth potential at UW. These would be most likely to be successful if they were cross-cutting involving multiple units (e.g., interdisciplinary) and they supported addressing community, development, and large societal problems in the state.

Charge: Evaluate and Articulate Impacts on UW and the state of Wyoming

Charge: Develop Recommendations on Revenue Side:

1. Develop recommendations to increase R&D. Growing the research enterprise will be critical for the future development of the university. We need to incentivize and hire faculty to be more research active, and support them better in doing so. This will take time. Develop recommendations that will accelerate this process.
2. Develop recommendations to grow tuition revenues, particularly by working to increase net-revenue-generating enrollment from out of state and international, looking at online degrees, considering optimizing differential tuition by program, etc.
3. Develop recommendations that will incentivize corporate partnerships, both for workforce development and for joint R&D activities.

4. Develop recommendations to accelerate philanthropic work.

Shared Governance

We will need significant feedback, collaboration, and partnership from Faculty Senate (particularly with the Faculty Senate Executive, Budget, and Academic Planning Committees), Staff Senate, and ASUW. We ask that the senate chairs and presidents on this memo to appoint a representative to the group as well as prepare your constituencies for working with the group iteratively to come to a resolution for our budget situation. Mechanisms will be in developed by the working group for input, consultation as part of the working group's brief.

Timeline:

- By June 12: First meeting + set standing meetings
- By June 25: Initial recommendations to Pres. Seidel
- By June 27: Pres. Seidel presents initial recommendation to UW Board of Trustees
- By June 30: Pres. Seidel presents initial recommendations to Governor Gordon
- By July 10: Baseline second 10% recommendations to Pres. Seidel
- By July 14: Pres Seidel presents baseline recommendations to UW Board of Trustees
- By July 15: Pres Seidel presents baseline recommendations to Governor Gordon
- August – October: Recommendations refined with campus and stakeholder feedback

Relevant or Potentially Relevant UW Regulations:

- [UW Regulation 2-12](#)
- [UW Regulation 2-13](#)
- [UW Regulation 5-3](#)