



Southern Illinois University Carbondale

FACULTY ASSOCIATION, IEA-NEA

A Professional Association Dedicated to the Advancement and Well-being of Higher Education

1500 E. Plaza Drive, Suite 5, Carterville IL 62918 Phone: (618) 733-4472 or (800) 431-3730 FAX: (618) 733-4481

27 April 2017

Dear Associate Provost DiLalla,

The FA has a vital interest in determining whether ongoing budget cuts are designed to protect essential areas (our academic mission) by making all practicable cuts to non-essential areas first. This interest is codified in contractual language, including in articles 18 and 19. Figures provided to the campus community in the Chancellor's message of March 29, however, do not allow us to determine whether the cuts being planned are designed to protect academics, nor have any more complete figures appeared in the meantime.

We know that the administration is working hard to make difficult decisions within a short time frame, so that a lengthy request for information from the FA may seem ill-timed. But we believe it is in the best interest of all at SIUC to have this conversation earlier rather than later, while there is still time to influence decisions, and to provide greater transparency and accountability as the decision making process is underway. Disagreements later could produce a crisis in administration-faculty relations at the same time that the institution is struggling to address the greatest financial crisis in its history.

The specific questions below are mainly driven by three concerns.

A. Raw totals giving figures for cuts are not very meaningful without a transparent accounting of the total budget in a given area. Call this the **denominator problem** (i.e., the publicly released cut figures usually provide only numerators, leaving unclear what percentage is being cut in any area).

B. To judge the impact of cuts, we cannot limit ourselves to **state funds** (from state appropriations and tuition) but must also consider **overall spending**, including spending from other sources. For example, a 10% cut to an area like academic affairs, which receives the lion's share of its funding from state appropriations, is far more severe than a 10% cut in state spending to an area like athletics, which receives the majority of its funding from student fees. We of course recognize that there are limitations to what can be cut from non-state funding, but such funding provides some areas with a far greater cushion than others. We therefore generally request two denominators for cuts: (a) state funds and (b) overall spending.

C. It is vital that budget information be as **transparent** as possible. To that end, we would happily be referred to publicly available documents that answer these questions, or provide additional context for budgetary matters. But as you are no doubt aware, most such documents are dated, and they address the budget in a number of different ways, none of them obviously parallel to the categories provided in the Chancellor's message of March 29.

Bold headings below are drawn from the Chancellor's March 29 message.

1. **Vacant positions, \$10 million.**

- a. What proportion of the approximately 158 vacant positions do you anticipate coming from TT and NTT faculty lines?¹ Please provide estimates both of numbers of positions and of the salary totals for each area. Past vacant positions are one natural place to look for this.
 - b. The Chancellor has indicated that in most years \$12 to \$13 million in salary money is opened up by vacated positions, so that the university will have \$2 to \$3 million to spend to fill vacancies. Have you established any guidelines to aid in prioritization of which positions will be filled? We would be most interested in whether you are committed to filling a set proportion of lost TT and NTT faculty positions.
2. GA spending. The Chancellor's message addresses the GA budget, another vital aspect of our academic mission, only obliquely. Do the planned cuts incorporate cuts in GA positions? If so, where are they incorporated, and what percentage of GA positions would be affected?
3. **Equipment, supplies and contractual services, \$1.5 million.** Please provide the relevant denominators: i.e., what proportion of (a) state spending and (b) overall spending on such things would be cut by eliminating \$1.5 million in spending?
4. **Campus work opportunities for students: \$1 million.** You say this will affect approximately 200 of 3,700 student positions. Will it result in a similar percentage of savings in this area (c. 5%)?
5. **Plant and service operations, \$1.5 million.** Please provide the relevant denominators: i.e., what proportion of (a) state spending and (b) overall spending on PSO would be cut by eliminating \$1.5 million in spending?
6. **Partially self-supporting units, \$1.2 million.** Again, please provide denominators: i.e., what proportion of (a) state spending and (b) overall spending on these units would be cut by eliminating \$1.2 million in spending?
7. As the Chancellor's message indicates, spending on athletics is controversial.
- a. What proportion of state spending on athletics would be cut, and what proportion of the overall budget on athletics (including but not limited to income from student fees, ticket sales, and donations) will this amount to?
 - b. Will athletics, in addition to these budgeted figures, be running a deficit next year, as it has in past years? If so, what is the projected deficit?

8. **Academic administration, \$1 million.**

- a. Please provide the most relevant denominators: i.e., what proportion of (a) state spending and (b) overall spending on academic administration would be cut by eliminating \$1 million in spending?

¹ The FA, of course, only represents TT faculty. But we have a contractual interest in determining whether cuts are to "essential" or "non-essential" areas, so our interest is broader than the amount of spending on TT faculty. All instructional staff, including NTT, are essential to our academic mission.

- b. The Chancellor's message notes that the \$1 million cut reflects a .76% cut in the state budget for academic affairs. We were unable to find a figure in readily available public documents that shows the Academic Affairs budget as c. \$76 million. Please provide a document that confirms this denominator.
9. **Non-academic administration, \$750,000.**
 - a. Please provide the most relevant denominators: i.e., what proportion of (a) state spending and (b) overall overall spending on non-academic administration would be cut by eliminating \$750,000 in spending?
 - b. The Chancellor's message notes that the \$750,000 cut reflects a 1.7% cut in the budget for "units outside of academic affairs". We were unable to find a figure in readily available public documents to confirm this total. Please provide a document that confirms this denominator.
10. **Information technology, \$500,000.** Again, please provide the relevant denominators: what proportion of (a) state funding and (b) overall funding will be lost if IT is cut by \$500,000?
11. **School of Law, \$465,000.** The Chancellor's message notes that the cut of \$465,000 to the Law School would amount to a 15% cut in its "state-appropriated budget" (which suggests a state appropriation of c. \$3.1 million). Please provide a figure for the full budget of the Law School (which would, in this case, add not only non-state funding but tuition revenue to the state appropriated total). This information is particularly topical given that President Dunn suggested eliminating all state spending to the Law School in the event of no FY17 budget.
12. **Library, \$400,000.** Again, please provide two denominators: (a) state spending on library affairs and (b) overall spending.
13. **Development and Alumni relations, \$166,000.** Again, please provide two denominators: (a) overall state spending on this area and (b) overall spending. This area is also topical given that President Dunn suggested eliminating all state spending to Vice Chancellor in this area in the event of no FY17 budget.
14. **Campus units \$4.3 million to \$7 million.** This heading is particularly vague. Let us assume, to simplify, that the cuts will be at \$7 million (unless you have reason to believe another figure is more likely).
 - a. Which campus units would be targeted by these cuts? Would units already cut above also be targeted for these cuts?
 - b. Cuts here are said to be "prorated based by unit based on its spending from state funds". Is the ratio (percentage cut) to be across the board for all campus units targeted? What would this percentage cut be as a matter of (a) state spending and (b) overall spending?
15. **Unrestricted plant funds, \$2 million.** Again, please provide the relevant denominators: what percentage of (a) state funds and (b) overall funds in this area will be cut?
16. **Central allocation of DE tuition, \$1 million.**
 - a. What proportion of centrally allocated DE tuition does \$1 million represent?
 - b. What would these funds have been spent on if they were not applied to repayment of funds?

17. Central allocation of summer semester tuition, \$1 million.

- a. What proportion of centrally allocated summer tuition does \$1 million represent?
- b. What would these funds have been spent on if they were not applied to repayment of funds?

18. The fungibility of non-state funds. Not all non-state funds are restricted in the short or long run. We have two questions in this line.

- a. What non-state funds currently earmarked for other areas could be redirected to salaries for instructional staff in the short term? Please provide a list of such funds that could be redirected, with estimates of how much money could be redirected. An example here would be a student fee for a given service that could be redirected for instructional salaries within a short time frame (i.e., within weeks or months rather than only at the start of a new academic year).
- b. What non-state funds currently earmarked for other areas could legally be redirected to salaries for instructional staff in the medium term? Please provide a list of such funds that could be redirected, with estimates of how much money could be redirected. An example here would be board action, before tuition and fees are set for a given year, to lower a student fee in one area while making a corresponding increase in tuition or in a fee meant to fund instructional staff.

We recognize that this is a lengthy list of questions, though we would hope that many could be answered readily enough by those expert in the budget. If you can answer some of these questions promptly and would like more time for others, we are open to receiving partial replies as a first step. We would also be happy to meet with the responsible administration officials, receive written replies, or both. We do however request that you provide your full response to these requests as soon as possible and by May 8 at the latest, in order to provide us with enough time for analysis and further discussion before these cuts are finalized.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David M. Johnson". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

David M. Johnson

President, SIUC-FA