

## **Chancellor Richard H. Wells's statement on the budget**

by Chancellor Richard H. Wells - Thursday, October 30, 2008

<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/1465/chancellor-richard-h-wells-statement-on-the-budget/>

This memo is a follow-up to my [earlier communication](#) regarding the challenges posed by the state's projected fiscal deficit. Several initiatives have taken place since the prior communication was sent. First, we held an open forum on budget issues October 27. Additionally, the University's U-PLAN Council (University Planning, Leadership and Needs Council) met October 28 to review and discuss these same issues. Further, we announced the formation and membership of the Student Financial Emergency Response Team to assist students experiencing serious unexpected financial difficulties.

Governor Doyle requested that state agencies add a contingency spending reduction plan to the budget requests for the 2009-2011 biennial budget currently under review by the University of Wisconsin System and the Board of Regents. The Regents meet next week and we anticipate further direction will be provided to the campuses after the state completes the revenue projections on November 20.

The strength of our budget for the 2008-2009 fiscal year should be sufficient to address a required budgetary lapse in funds for the current biennium. We are working with all campus constituencies to ensure that any changes we make to our plans for the 2009-2011 biennium will be consistent with the input we receive from our governance group leaders and other members of the campus community.

- Regarding class seats – We evaluate all budget decisions with an awareness of the need to ensure that our enrolled students have the ability to enroll in required courses. This means that we put the instructional needs of students at the top of our list of priorities and needs. Historically, when we have faced challenges that require a reduction in resources, we have maintained unwavering support for instruction. The last time we had significant reductions, we cut administrative costs first and foremost. We will continue to adhere to our philosophy of ensuring student access to instruction.
- Regarding tuition and fee increases – The University of Wisconsin System has provided leadership to keep higher education affordable. We will strongly advocate that the future rate of tuition/fee increases be set at levels similar to those in the past two years.
- Regarding the compensation plan – Compensation (pay plan) for 2008-09 is being applied in two phases: Phase I at 1% was granted July 1, 2008; Phase II at 2% will be applied June 1, 2009 (paid 7/1/09) based on previously agreed upon campus compensation guidelines.
- Regarding position searches – The University of Wisconsin System has been exempted from Governor Doyle's centralized process that requires each State agency to submit positions requests to the Department of Administration for review and approval. However, the UW System will require reports that reflect how UW System institutions justify hiring decisions. Currently, UW Oshkosh requires approval by the unit's Vice Chancellor and the Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services for final approval on behalf of the Chancellor. All currently authorized searches, including faculty Growth Agenda searches, will continue as planned.
- Regarding student services funded by differential tuition – Functions that receive differential tuition support (i.e., counseling center, academic advising, career services, and the Center for

Academic Resources) have been held harmless in past budget reduction processes. These units will continue to be held harmless in the process so that differential tuition will not be used to offset the state's potential reduction in support for our students.

In addition, please review the Power Point presentation we shared in the open forum held on Monday and with the U-PLAN Council on Tuesday and the University's key operational plan for finance and budgeting. I especially encourage you to actively participate in the dialogue that will continue and to share your ideas with your governance and administrative leaders.

UW Oshkosh is a strong, healthy and vibrant academic community. We have made wise and prudent decisions and our budgeting process reflects the priorities that have been developed and endorsed through our strategic and operational planning process. As our efforts continue, we will rely on the quality of the recommendations and advice that we receive from all of you. We will continue to provide periodic updates to the campus community as needed.