



Budget Message from the Chancellor

March 3, 2009

Dear UWM Faculty, Staff and Students,

I want to share with you more specific information about how the proposed 2009-2011 budget will affect UW-Milwaukee.

A projection released late yesterday by UW System shows a \$19.8 million cut to the UWM 2009-2011 biennial budget, and the total cut to the UW System of \$174 million. The subject is expected to be discussed in depth at the Board of Regents meeting later this week.

One very large variable yet to be entered into the equation is whether any portion of the budget cuts would be offset by tuition increases. The tuition topic is not likely to be specifically addressed by the Board of Regents until the state budget is approved.

It is important to note that these totals are still projections and there remains a great distance for the budget to travel — through the Joint Finance Committee (which is scheduled to hold its first hearing later this month) and both houses of the Wisconsin State Legislature — before it returns to Governor Jim Doyle in May or June for his final consideration. The proposed \$19.8 million cut to UWM, however, provides us with a more distinct framework within which we can continue our budget planning.

Previously, I have shared with you our budget planning guiding principles:

- We will retain current students and guide them toward their degrees.
- We will continue to recruit students and maintain the stream of tuition revenue that is vital to our institution.
- We will keep our commitment to the UW System Growth Agenda, which supports a major expansion in UWM's funded research.
- We will maintain educational quality while dealing with budget constraints.
- We will protect the safety and well-being of our students, faculty and staff.
- We will continue to support diversity and a welcoming climate at UWM for all students, faculty and staff.

- We will address issues relating to the university's budget with openness and transparency.

I know I speak on behalf of the UWM administrative team when I state that we remain committed to all of these principles. We know we must address these budget hardships with a minimum of impact upon teaching, research, access and student services. As we retain our focus on quality, our students will continue to receive an outstanding education that will ultimately benefit the state of Wisconsin, where nearly 75% of our alumni currently reside.

There is a great deal of work that has taken place across campus in recent months to plan for expected budget reductions. Early work has focused on reducing costs in administrative areas. Also being reviewed is making better use of technology for greater efficiencies, examining printing and other communication tools to reduce expenses, and eliminating most travel. I have also asked deans and division heads to work with their faculty and staff to help determine how each campus unit will manage reductions required by the biennial budget.

While dealing with these current challenges, I have been sharing with campus leaders the important role that UWM will be expected to play as the economy recovers and improves in the months and years ahead. The governor, legislators and business leaders have all told me in recent weeks that UWM must remain committed to its portion of the UW System Growth Agenda and continue to focus on a major expansion of our funded research. By doing so, UWM will have an even more powerful impact on the academic and economic growth of the region and state. We continue to be grateful to the state for the Growth Agenda Phase 1 investments in UWM, and hope to find funding sources for at least a portion of Phase 2. It will not be supported through a campus reallocation.

We also continue to appreciate support for authorization of the new School of Freshwater Sciences and School of Public Health in the governor's proposed budget. In my discussions with a broad range of state legislators, I know support for these schools is wide and deep.

The budget conversation to date has focused primarily on operational accounts. Capital spending on facilities is still to be considered. We remain hopeful that there will be support coming for UWM through the federal economic stimulus spending and the state's capital development plan.

I thank faculty, staff and students for their commitment to working together to address our budget issues. We need to maintain and strengthen this spirit of cooperation because the 2009-2011 state budget is far from complete. There is much work ahead. And when we are successful, our focus on teaching, research, access and student services will result in a stronger UWM and a better Wisconsin.

Sincerely,

Carlos E. Santiago, Chancellor
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

For more information on the issues addressed in this message:

“UW Regents to discuss budget allocations this week”
<http://www.wisconsin.edu/news/2009/r090302.htm>

A Growth Agenda for Wisconsin
<http://www.wisconsin.edu/growthagenda/>