



Office of the Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

TO: Chairs/Program Directors

FROM: Michael R. Halleran
Dean *Michael*

SUBJECT: Budget and Curriculum

DATE: January 29, 2009

Following up on my memo of January 9th and our discussion last week at the meeting of chairs and program directors, this memo seeks to provide greater specificity for budget and curriculum planning for next year in light of current uncertainties. Planning next year's curriculum while simultaneously developing budgets for scenarios of 5% and 10% cuts is difficult, but this is what we need to do.

Our priorities during this period remain our students' education, the quality of our programs, and protecting current employees (faculty and staff). We may need to make some compromises in the breadth of offerings and class size, but the fundamental priorities do not change.

Since most of our budget is in personnel costs for permanent or recurring faculty and staff, our chief area of budgetary flexibility, after vacant positions, is in temporary instructors—VAPs, non-recurring lecturers (that is, those who are employed for an ad-hoc purpose), and part-time/overtime expenses, which collectively we typically refer to as "PT/OT." In FY08, the total expenditure in this area was \$2,000,000. We cannot offer our essential curricula while reducing this cost to zero, but it is the area where there is the greatest opportunity for budget cuts.

In planning for next year, please make the following assumptions:

- 1) Student enrollments will not be significantly different;
- 2) The available resources for non-recurring instructional staff, (PT/OT) will be greatly reduced;
- 3) "Business as usual" in regard to course offerings won't suffice; and
- 4) Flexibility will be needed as we develop plans before knowing the actual FY10 budget.

What do these assumptions mean as a practical matter? This will vary by department and program. For all, it means making sure that we are efficient in our course offerings. Review recent course enrollment and major data and trends. Which courses could be offered less frequently? How many 500-level and 600-level courses are essential each semester? In cases where there are multiple sections, can fewer sections be offered? Where can course caps be raised? Where can courses be co- or cross-listed to meet the needs of more than one degree program? Where can departments and IDS programs join in

addressing multiple teaching responsibilities? Where can TAs be reassigned more effectively to meet the most pressing teaching needs? In many cases, these decisions will not be easy and there will be arguments for retaining a smaller class size or offering a low-enrolled course. Classrooms—both availability and absolute size—will also constrain some changes in offerings. But overall, we must plan based on fewer resources. In some programs, it may make sense to schedule a “dummy” section, one which would not be opened until the need for it is clear, and in some instances it will be necessary to reassign faculty to (typically) lower-level courses. It is much easier (and more enjoyable) to be able to add sections or reduce class size, if/when the budget information is positive. And I hope that this will be the case. At the same time, it is valuable to have the admittedly enforced opportunity to review the efficiency of our offerings.

In terms of enrollment management, courses that have low enrollments will be cancelled. “Low enrollment” will be defined as a graduate course (500- or 600-level) with 5 or fewer students or an undergraduate course with 10 or fewer students. Obviously, there will be some exceptions to this policy, especially in cases where the course is necessary for students to complete their major, but the exceptions will be few. Faculty whose classes are cancelled would be reassigned to another course, and thus the sooner these decisions can be made the easier it will be to reassign the teaching and save further on PT/OT expenditures.

If as you develop your course offerings for 2009-10 you think you might need some PT/OT support for some proposed courses, please consult with your Senior Associate Dean as soon as possible (no later than Monday, February 16th) so you can discuss what funding might be available. This might require an iterative process. No offers based on PT/OT funding may be made *without prior approval* from your Senior Associate Dean.

On a greater level of detail: in creating your on-line schedule, please list only the names of regular full-time faculty; list instructor as “Faculty” for sections to be taught by NTT Faculty with recurring, budgeted appointments or regular TAs; and list instructor as TBA for any sections that will require temporary, part-time or overload appointments. You will need to submit to your Senior Associate Dean a memo with information regarding the planned assignments for budgeted positions (TT and NTT faculty and TAs) and courses without instructors requiring PT/OT funding. (A revised template for PT/OT requests is available on the College Fiscal Affairs website.) In addition, your memo should outline any changes you have made in your course offerings (fewer but larger introductory sections, upper-level sections reduced based on prior enrollment). It should also include the impact to your program of not filling requested positions.

I appreciate your cooperation and creative solutions to planning in uncertain times. If you have any questions or other ideas for providing course offerings in the current environment, please consult with your Senior Associate Dean or me.