

Dear Colleagues:

I strongly believe that an AAU institution is defined by its faculty...the faculty who take ownership of the academic enterprise and fulfill this responsibility with integrity and courage. You have been identified by your peers as being one such faculty and, therefore, I am pleased to invite you to serve on the newly constituted Budget Priorities Taskforce.

As you know, USF has been asked to reduce its budget by 4% and submit a plan to reduce it by 10%. We have two choices: either to reduce everyone's budget or to become strategic and take programmatic cuts. Your choice, as reflected through the Faculty Senate and your emails, is to take strategic cuts. In this context and in full consultation with the Faculty Senate, I am forming the Budget Priorities Taskforce and inviting you to serve on it. The taskforce is advisory in nature, will consist of 45 members (35 faculty, 5 students, and 5 staff) and will be co-chaired by Drs. Dale Johnson and John Ward. Vice Provost Dwayne Smith will aid in coordinating the Taskforce's activities.

The charge of the Taskforce is to:

1. Organize itself into several (8-10) subcommittees;
2. Evaluate all academic centers, institutes, programs, departments and services on the basis of their centrality, quality, demand, and viability/sustainability;
3. Review quantitative data (provided by the Office of Decision Support), qualitative narratives (provided by units), and budget information (provided by the Office of Budget) on each area; and finally,
4. Make recommendations to me suggesting consolidation, elimination, reduction, or redirection of units to save approximately \$12 million;
5. Submit its report by December 1, 2007.

I, in consultation with deans, will make final decisions about programmatic cuts. It goes without saying that the role of the Taskforce is extremely important, but it is even more critical in light of our new Strategic Plan that will require investing strategically and building on our strengths. It is my hope that the Taskforce, after completing its task, will transform itself into the University Planning Council to guide implementation and monitor the Strategic Plan.

I applaud the Faculty Senate for its enthusiastic support and championing role in getting this initiative started. I am particularly thankful to Dr. Michael Barber for his leadership and to Drs. Dale Johnson and John Ward for agreeing to co-chair this historic taskforce.

I hope you will accept my invitation and agree to serve on this historic taskforce by responding to this message. If so, please mark your calendar for the first meeting on **Thursday, August 23rd from 11:00am to 12:30pm in ADM 185** (first floor of the Administration Building)

I thank you in advance for your service.

Renu Khator

Provost and Senior Vice President

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