

Dear UW Colleges Colleagues and Board of Visitors,

The new academic year is upon us and I want to bring you up to speed with a recap of recent events related to our budget reduction. Most of this is not new news (see previous communications [here](#)). Still, I thought it might be useful to provide you with a one-stop summary, including relevant links and other information, especially as our faculty colleagues return to campus after the summer break. I encourage you to review the various documents linked in this message. They provide a great deal of information.

Clearly, we have some major challenges ahead of us. The final state budget confirmed a \$125 million reduction in the UW System's annual base budget (\$250 million over the biennium), effective July 1, 2015. It also left UW with \$15.5 million of additional unfunded costs, for a total annual reduction impact of \$140.5 million. Under the allocation plan approved by the Board of Regents, UW Colleges' share of the total reduction will be **\$5 million**.

These are historic cuts, and they will significantly impact our institution. There is no denying the situation we face is severe and, regrettably, our budget reduction requires us to eliminate over 80 positions. This is enormously sad for me as it is for all of us, but this is the reality imposed upon us. We will move forward as compassionately and supportively as we possibly can.

Based on input from many of you, we have engaged over 100 faculty and staff members and students over the summer to be actively involved in budget implementation planning for Round 1 decisions. In doing so, they have kept student success in the forefront of their work. I want to express my sincere appreciation for their hard work and dedication to the UW Colleges.

Here is a brief summary of major announcements since May.

- May 15 – [Round 1 budget decisions](#) are announced, expected to save almost \$2.6 million across UW Colleges.
- May 22 – The Budget Implementation Steering Committee (BISC) is established. (See the [BISC site](#))
- May 29 – The Joint Committee on Finance passes a 2015-17 budget motion, including a \$50 million reduction in the Governor's proposed budget cut to the UW System. (See my [statement](#) and [June 1 communication](#))
- July 7 – Legislature passes budget
- July 9 – Board of Regents passes UW System 2015-16 budget and approves a funding allocation plan. (See my [July 6 communication](#))
- July 9 – Board reaffirms tenure in Board Policy (See the July 9 UW System [news summary](#))
- July 12 – Governor Walker signs the 2015-17 State Budget into law (See my [July 13 statement](#))
- July 21 – [Round 2 budget decisions](#) are announced expected to save \$3.9 million. The UW Colleges will adopt a new regional leadership approach that will significantly reduce overall costs while preserving the quality of our students' educational experience. Under the new model, the 13 UW Colleges campuses will be grouped into four regions, with a single regional executive officer/dean for each region. No faculty positions will be eliminated. There will be no campus closures. (See my [July 21 communication](#) and [FAQs](#))
- Early September – Announcement of Round 1 implementation decisions, and commencement of Round 2 implementation planning.

As we move into the fall semester, there will be more communication about the budget as well as opportunities for you to provide input. I hope you found it helpful to have key events and communication summarized in one place.

This will be a challenging year in so many ways. I appreciate all of our faculty and staff members who work hard every day to provide our students with the education they expect and deserve.

Thank you,

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