

Summary of Academic Affairs Town Hall Meeting (January 12, 2018) --SScheck

President Fuller has directed all vice presidents to craft a strategic plan for their sphere of responsibility that aligns with the University Strategic Plan. These “plans for the plan” are to be completed by the end of the current academic year.

- I. **Academic Affairs Plan** - The Provost Office is currently developing an Academic Affairs Plan (AA Plan) that will serve to prioritize and operationalize the University Strategic Plan’s aspirations relevant to academic affairs through the lens of the contextual (e.g., accreditation) and fiscal realities currently faced by the institution. I will share the evolving AA Plan with the academic community at future provost town hall sessions, at division chair meetings, and at Faculty Senate.

I have chosen to focus the AA Plan on the premise that Academic Affairs operations need to be sustainable and should focus on the *student experience*. Thus, larger framing concepts in the AA Plan, including funding prioritization, will include emphasis on:

- a. Capitalizing on streamlined pathways to *degree completion*
 - b. Creating and supporting internal processes that sustainably ensure *academic excellence*,
 - c. *Accountability to students* – as an institution, do we deliver what we pledge?
- II. **Current Budget Status** – beginning with the 2018-2019 fiscal year, we *must* balance costs to revenues.
 - a. With authorization from the Board of Trustees, the current budgetary year is pulling from reserves to cover a **\$1-2 million** shortfall.
 - b. The Board has assigned President Fuller to enter FY 2018-2019 with a balanced budget.
 - c. As long as enrollments remain “flat” (after a 602 student FTE drop since 2013) reductions are inevitable. Academic Affairs comprises approximately 60% of the university’s general fund budget; it bears the lion’s share of responsibility to ensure a balanced budget.
 - d. To maintain the sustainability of the university and avoid the potentially catastrophic disruptions that an ongoing budget imbalance could trigger, the Provost’s office:
 - i. is developing systems for transparency regarding the current (and ongoing) fiscal situation and costing metrics to inform total cost of operation and allow us to share common understandings of success and its costs.
 - ii. has begun conducting detailed workload analysis both faculty (teaching vs. reassignment work) and classified/ unclassified staff to inform how best to maximize faculty engagement with students.
 - iii. Is developing frameworks for more efficient and cost effective operations.
- III. **New Initiatives** - While we must make reductions or generate new revenues *in excess* of balancing the budget in order to provide reallocation funds for new investments, we should remain forward-looking for how we can grow enrollments and improve the *completion rate* while maintaining a *strong academic experience* for students.
 - a. To support this innovation process, President Fuller will be forwarding a portfolio of new budget requests to the University Budget Committee that have passed review of president’s cabinet.