

Dear faculty, staff and students,

Gov. Scott Walker has signed the 2015-17 budget, vetoing several items approved by the state legislature last week.

UW-Stevens Point received legislative approval to pursue differential tuition -- if students support it in a referendum. This funding mechanism would help relieve bottleneck courses and provide academic advising so students can graduate on time. It is now in the hands of our students. (See video <https://youtu.be/I9sJG6LYICo> )

We are still analyzing complete budget documents (more than 1,600 pages) and seeking further guidance from the Legislative Fiscal Bureau to interpret the governor's vetoes, so the following may change. This is what we understand as of tonight:

- \$5.76 million must be cut from base state funding. While substantial, this is \$1.3 million less than initially proposed by the governor.
- More than \$500,000 in segregated program funds appear to be restored, less than recommended by the Joint Finance Committee (JFC):
  - \$417,500 was restored for the Northern Aquaculture Demonstration Facility. An additional \$100,000 recommended by JFC was vetoed by the governor.
  - Although the legislature approved restoring funding of the Paper Science and Engineering's paper machine operator (\$84,000) and an additional \$40,000 for the paper machine, these items also appear to have been vetoed by the governor.
  - We are seeking clarification on the status of \$101,600 approved by the legislature for environmental education program grants in FY16 and \$53,700 for Becoming an Outdoors Woman program.
- Of the \$1,005,800 originally cut from fringe benefits in our FY16 budget, \$339,300 was restored for UW-Stevens Point.
- \$331,500 will be distributed to UW-Stevens Point as a one-time allocation from a System-wide fund balance.

Now that the budget is signed and we will soon know our final numbers, university leaders are working with the UW-Stevens Point Budget Review and Advisory Committee and shared governance groups to discuss the most strategic investment of redistributed funds. These discussions will continue for several weeks, and a campus forum will be held. (See video: <http://www.uwsp.edu/media/Admin/Pages/Chancellor-Patterson-Next-Step-072015.aspx> )

When it comes to differential tuition, I'm reminded of what Winston Churchill said: "Never, ever, ever give up." My sincere thanks for the tireless efforts and fearless leadership of students, faculty, staff, community and business leaders, legislators and Regents in driving this success. Each of you has made a profound difference for this university.

We now need to turn our attention to building a tenure system on par with the best universities in the country.

Sincerely,

Chancellor Bernie Patterson

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