

From: Chancellor Bernie Patterson
Sent: Monday, January 26, 2015 12:09 PM
Subject: Budget Update

Dear Colleagues,

As many of you are aware from news media reports, the state of Wisconsin is facing a budget shortfall of \$2.2 billion, a figure that includes new budget requests from state agencies. It has been reported by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel that the UW System could see a cut to its ongoing budget as high as \$150 million, a total reduction for the biennium of \$300 million. It has also been reported that Governor Walker's proposed budget might include the creation of a UW Authority, granting some level of enhanced flexibility to UW System.

Governor Walker is expected to present a budget to the State Legislature on February 3, at which time we will have a better idea of the scope of potential budget cuts to our university. On February 4, the university will hold the first of several open forums on the subject, led by Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs Greg Summers. Please watch for event details in Campus Announcements. I will not be able to join you at the forum on February 4. I will be meeting with key legislators in Madison before attending the Board of Regents meeting on February 5-6.

The Vice Chancellors and Deans will work with governance groups to determine and implement a plan for any difficult budget decisions ahead. Among those involved are the Budget Review and Advisory Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee, both of which have representation from students, faculty, academic staff and classified staff.

While UW System administrators continue to work with the Governor's office and legislative leadership for increased autonomy, I have asked the Vice Chancellors to retain as much flexibility as possible in our own financial commitments until we know the impact of the state budget on UW-Stevens Point.

You may also have read about the potential of moving shared governance and tenure from state statute to the proposed UW Authority. Tenure and shared governance are at the core of who we are as a university, and we will make the strongest case possible that these institutions be preserved regardless of how they are articulated in state policy.

There is no doubt we are entering a challenging time for our university. There is also no doubt we have the intelligence and resilience to weather the storms ahead, and the ability to treat one another with dignity and respect during the process. In the end, we will not be the same. We will persevere. We owe it to our students, our community and each other to continue working together to fulfill our mission. We are all in this together.

Bernie