

Washburn Town Hall meetings, March 5 and 6, 2009

On March 5 and 6, many faculty and staff attended town hall meetings at which they were invited to participate in the process of identifying budget reductions. The following are the comments made during the town hall meetings, as well as those subsequently submitted to the president's office.

Please note final decisions have not been made and the data included in the suggestions has not been verified. The special budget review task force has been formed and will continue to meet to discuss options.

- Changing the retirement contribution Washburn makes – cut to say five percent or six percent with a yearly review.
- Cutting back to a four day work week. Not everyone on same time schedule, staggering personnel.
- Identify all employees eligible for the early retirement program. How many would have to take early retirement in order for it to be beneficial to the University? Any thoughts about a mandatory retirement age?
- Appropriate use of general fund monies needs to be included in the WUPRPM.
- **STOP:**
 - Unnecessary spending, pay only the needs to operate the University.
 - Strawberry Breakfast, employee recognition ceremony and awards, holiday party and other events until budget is stable.
 - Best & Aspire classes and training workshops at A Place in Time.
 - The Wellness Program. Do employees complete wellness profiles just to get the incentive funds and not better their health? Evaluate if and how wellness program is being utilized by employees?
 - Unnecessary travel and reimbursements (conferences, parking, meals, etc.). (Tips shouldn't be reimbursed, meals after a conference is over, i.e. scheduling a later flight for own entertainment, charging University for meals...)
 - Unnecessary entertaining and gifts (WEA restricted funds usage).
 - Paying for Lindyspring/bottled water, soft drinks and coffee.
 - Food/drink for departmental meetings.

- Supplemental pay.
- Six-month probationary increases.
- Department employees contribute to an office account to pay for cards, flowers, gifts, beverages, etc.
- Department heads, deans and chairs be more conservative of office operations (i.e., duplexing when copying, not using color ink, combine payment vouchers to same vendor, combine deposits to same FOAPAL).
- Purchase office supplies from the Bookstore, OfficeMax Solutions or use P-card. The University loses money paying sales tax on reimbursements to employees.
- Payment vouchers and purchase orders should have a detailed description of purchases for an explanation of any charges to the University.
- Eliminate cell phone usage paid by the University.
- Charge credit card fees.
- Supervisors be conscious of employees time worked and personal time used.
- Remove from WUPRPM: 4.7.1. Exempt employees shall report personal leave in four hour increments. Absences of less than four hours need not be reported. The University is losing money by employees not being productive, not working 40 hours/week.
- Imaging for more offices – save folders, labels and filing time.
- Athletics travel – can men and women travel in one bus?
- Facilities Services laborers should have departments sign a time in/time out form for completed jobs. Departments being overcharged by laborers overstating time worked on jobs.
- Unnecessary pages printing at end of Banner report runs needs to be eliminated (i.e. Report Control Information prints blank at end of report runs, could be eliminated to save paper and printer ink).
- Furloughs:
 - Per CFO at KSU – furloughs are their last resort option;
 - Implementation of furloughs would be an administrative and payroll nightmare;
 - If furlough is our only option, not all individuals would require furlough;
 - Timing of individual furloughs would need to vary as programs and activities vary throughout the year;
 - Candidates for furlough should be considered in this order:
 - Administrators in salary range >\$75,000 (or \$100,000?) should participate in the first round of furloughs;

- If additional furloughs required, faculty that teach repetitive courses, such as math or English semester after semester. Prep time for these courses are different than academic programs (as in Allied Health) that require continuous preparation and a clinical component, which could be a liability issue w/students in hospitals;
 - Faculty teaching online or with new LMS will face the challenge of learning, using and integrating Angel this summer/fall. A furlough at that time would make it difficult to prep courses. In addition, full-time faculty will need to prepare courses for adjuncts.
- WTE:
 - Possibly temporarily put WTE on furlough for a minimum of two years or consolidate in to one department with one director of services of WTE;
 - Rumor has it we will be hiring an associate director for the leadership institute. Why? when they currently have a director and instructor in that area;
 - Perhaps move or tie WTE to the honors program as another alternative.
 - WTE is the way to terminate enrollment.
 - Make the WTE an honors requirement only. Internal surveys of students who have not completed a WTE are highly negative. More formal surveys of students who have completed WTEs are positive. Many faculty and students believe the WTEs are negatively affecting enrollments.
 - Assess student perception of those students who have not taken or begun their WTE. Is this a liability or an asset? I am only privy to the opinions of pro-WTE administrators and a few faculty.
 - Make WTE mandatory for honors and optional for everyone else. Students come here for the major (pre-med, Allied Health, etc.) not WTE. Students may choose other schools because they can obtain the same degree with less requirements.
 - Table WTE until the University is more stable.
- Utilization of resources and facilities:
 - Obviously a five-day work week is important for us and our students. However, it might save money on utilities if offices and facilities were open four days rather than five. One day of work from home is also an option/trade off (utilities, phone calls, etc. are then placed on the individual). This would maintain a five-day work week and accessibility for students;
 - Shut off all computers and monitors when not in office (also environmentally friendly);

- Close the swimming pool. Additionally, when the economy is better, this would provide additional space;
- All agendas and meeting documents should be sent to members in PDF.
- Student Health Center:
 - Possibly require a \$5 or \$10 co-pay for students, faculty and staff (\$5 for students/\$10 for faculty and staff might be appropriate; or, \$0 to see the nurse, \$5 for nurse practitioner, \$10 for the doctor. If cannot pay at the time, add to their bill in the business office so no one is turned away. Can we bill BCBS?
- Comments on WTE, furloughs, resource utilization:
 - I like the idea of WTE on furlough and a four-day work week. Would be nice to become more virtual, only hold office hours for advising, etc. Things can be done from home, sometimes more efficiently, in a quiet environment.
 - Agree with furloughs, but would prefer administrative rather than faculty, would have the least impact on students (academics). Faculty will have increased prep time in the WebCT to Angel conversion and furloughs would create delays in accomplishing this.
 - If working from home, students would have to have a phone number and a schedule. Would also need a better system of accessing work computers from home.
 - Will we see some effects from President Obama's stimulus package directed toward us (WU) and higher ed "Stimulus Package offers college students \$50 billion in benefits; provisions offer tax credits & increases in federal grant funding to help students rely less on student loans to cover tuition." More Pell grants and funds for higher ed could mean increasing student fees (for WTE) and/or tuition would fit in this stimulus spending.
 - Bookstore's \$3 million budget seems high for textbooks and what the bookstore offers for how much revenue stream?
- Reducing the budget should not be mandated from the administration without input from all areas of the institution. Utilize strategic planning to evaluate where/what is cut. Allied Health programs and what we offer are unique and must be assessed/evaluated fairly, not with an across-the-board six percent cut from everyone's budget.
- Employees should not drive around in University vehicles when not working at a specific job site (they can walk around the campus).
- Hold supervisors accountable for approving timesheets that are not accurate (if employee didn't report correct leave time). This is a budget issue when/if employee separates from employment they are paid for unused personal time.

- To reduce utility costs, STOP using electric heaters. And when warmer temperatures arrive, fans will be used. All areas should follow the same rule, otherwise reductions in utility costs will not work.
- Communicate campus-wide to inform employees of necessary changes. We can suggest all we want, but the bottom line is the whole University needs to implement changes. If a person doesn't follow implementations, there needs to be repercussion for their actions.
- Increase the employee paid portion of health plan on average \$100 per month (this would be in addition to whatever increase is required for the increased premium according to the current cost-sharing formula, i.e., if a 15 percent increase in premiums is required to fund the plan and the University normally splits the increase w/employee, this proposal is that X percent plus \$100). A rough savings would be \$500K and has the advantage of becoming an actual cost to employees of approximately \$75/month because it is a pre-tax deduction. The stimulus tax relief is reported to be \$70/month per jointly filing household, so the increase amounts to a net wash on average for employees.
- Temporarily halve the University's CREF contribution. A possible \$2 million savings per year.
- In regard to public relations and advertising that the University projects, we are missing some opportunities to use our accomplishments to promote our future.
- These changes buy time to deal with manpower reduction issues should they become necessary in subsequent years. Maintenance of basic payroll at current levels ensures the community (and by extension the University) experiences no loss in commerce/local tax revenue as a result of WU's cost-cutting.
- Costly printings (i.e., annual report, Plaudits, etc.) should be put online.
- Consider very targeted marketing, particularly with professional association in the applied fields for online programs. Ours are less expensive than similar ones on West and East coasts.
- Granting WTE for students graduating with honors.
- Granting lower tuition to qualifying out-of-state students.
- Increase the breadth of online and evening courses (many non-trads/working people might take courses, perhaps we could market them).
- Twenty percent cut in wages for anyone making \$38,000 or more.
- Tax furloughs based on income.
- Washburn commercials are not competitive.

- New advertising – ones that:
 - Tell a story, give reasons (small classes, individual attention) to come to WU;
 - Promote WTE, don't let other recruiters gossip, tell the story for us;
 - Underline quality (vs. community colleges).
- Simplify process on WTE. Will save paperwork and staff time. Some reduction in WTE funding (i.e., \$750 instead of \$1,000 for international travel) on a temporary basis.
- Summer school – only online or travel.
- Develop alternative energy sources to reduce expenses (eventually, of course, but with focused fund-raising to support it) (e.g. solar cells atop HLRC).
- Competitive food provision. Costs paid to Chartwells for campus events are always higher than they might be.
- One-time tuition reduction, promoted as our bit toward economic stimulus, IF it might balance out in greater enrollment.
- Eliminate management contract for Facilities Services management; hire a director. Quit hiring overpriced contractors for management.
- Close buildings and turn off lights at night and weekends. Turn down heat or turn up A/C.
- Hire new employees at entry rates.
- Institute a parking fee for staff.
- Streamline Purchasing:
 - Central warehouse receiving and distribution center, all purchasing and tracking goes through this warehouse
 - Get rid of P-cards
- Increase online general education courses. These fill every semester regardless of tuition.
- Refine transfer process to attract more transfer students. Transfer credits, especially out of state, do not easily transfer as course equivalencies to WU.
- Go to a four-day (10 hour) work week during summer to save utility costs. Change classes and work week to a four-day week. Faculty can advise/work on day five (option).
- Omit tuition reduction for faculty and staff.
- Omit tuition reduction for children of faculty and staff.
- Add fees for some services.
- Institute a technology fee.

- Institute a library fee. Everyone uses the library and has access to it. Charge a book rental or use e-books only. Cap book costs some way to attract students due to lower book costs vs. other universities.
- Permit others who are nearing retirement (60-62) to take the early retirement buyout as well.
- Don't pay for experts (consultants) to tell us what is wrong with our technology. If we survey staff, faculty and students, the University can identify problems we know exist and could rather easily address those problems. To save on costs, utilize the talents and wisdom of faculty through the Faculty Senate and committees as well as special committees appointed by the president, the VPAA or VPAT.
- Increase efficiency of internal input and eliminate external consultants' fees for the short term (i.e., ISS campus-wide technology consultant).
- Think green: recycle, reuse. Purchase energy-efficient equipment and computers.
- Institute a hiring freeze. Shift personnel into key positions to avoid layoffs. Freeze the hiring of additional Leadership Institute faculty/staff for FY 09 and FY 10.
- Institute across-the-board salary reductions. Spread these out through the fiscal year.
- Reduce percentage matching contributions to TIAA-CREF and communicate to employees how much used to be contributed and how they can still contribute tax free. Mandatory three percent contribution from employees to qualify for WU 10 percent contribution to reduce WU's tax load.
- If TIAA reduction happens, we should use a percentage to cut from everyone. I would like to see WU use a cap to retirement.
- Institute a campus-wide printing solution – only so many free copies, then charge.
- Create new advertising (including student comments) about our unique transformational experiences.
- In the FY 09 budget is a cost/expense of “team buses and meals.” Why not require students to pay for their own meals. Other student groups pay for their own meals on trips, etc.
- A second round of cuts needs to be carefully and sensitively addressed by faculty as well as administration. Across-the-board cuts are not fair, penalizing departments doing very well and treating them the same and making cuts within them the same as departments that are not as successful/profitable is unfair.
- Institute a two-year freeze on WTE requirements.
- Consolidate departments and cut deans' salaries.
- Cut the number of hard copy announcements/flyers we send/get on campus; change to e-mail notification. This isn't a huge savings, but every little bit helps.

- Hold on raises for one year.
- Do not replace faculty computers that are up for replacement – can they go one more year prior to replacement?
- Reduce journal subscriptions in Mabee and/or book money. Students tend to utilize e-sources more.
- Unplug or turn off power strips with all electronic devices (phantom power to TVs, VCRs, power cords for laptops). Secretaries could check offices before they leave for the day.
- Become more paperless – no paper used by University or library or computer lab.
- Create more online courses, especially masters, MBA – charge less, enroll more.
- Have reduced tuition for high GPA/ACT out-of-state students.
- R.O.I. for consultants?
- Eliminate merit pay (biased and discriminatory), some employees held back, others rewarded generously.
- Re-evaluate the effectiveness of offices on campus. Get information from students and faculty (survey). Student input is important; students unaware of certain offices on campus; some offices are not being run effectively.
- Pay cuts should start from the top. Combine offices, re-evaluate director positions and effectiveness.
- Offer furlough for the summer when students are not on campus; however, will all benefits stay the same?
- Reduce number of employees working at the same time – rotation.
- Change the compensation plan for summer school teaching to a flat rate and credit hour (perhaps scaled somewhat for the number of students actually enrolled in the course). Discontinue plan which uses a percentage of salary as the determiner for summer school compensation.
- Take another look at degrees offered.
- Combine Facilities Scheduling & ICard operations. Hire temps during peak times.
- Eliminate Academic Scheduling and Commencement Services position. Commencement by committee, academic schedule to the VPAAs office.
- In Student Life:
 - Make nurse position half time or nine months.
 - Make secretary half time
 - Make counselor position 10 month.
- Charge the same tuition if carrying 12 to 18 hours.

- Extend in-state tuition waivers to out-of-state markets like Nebraska (Omaha and Lincoln) and Oklahoma (Tulsa and OKC) to increase the market pool (for the short mid-term).
- Establish in-state employment requirement for out-state students who receive a waiver on scholarship (long-term).
- Include Topeka in recruitment mailings (local residents report receiving info from Regents schools but not from Washburn).
- Post a list of small ways to save that would be more significant collectively (e.g., copy double-sided, recycle paper for notes, lights off at end of day, etc.)
- Get classification/salary review before establishing positions (and use the information).
- Route information rather than make copies for all, or use e-mail or electronic copies.
- Include administrative and classified representatives on committee.
- Health services and counseling services do not need to be free for staff/faculty. WU pays for insurance for faculty/staff – in essence paying twice for these services.
- Offer discount for Topeka residents for tuition (similar to resident/non-resident rates), some off if from Topeka.
- Cut back on using paper (i.e. wellness brochures, etc.), they could be put on-line (pdf).
- Cut down printing of Washburn Review – place online.
- On early retirement – what about employees who have been here more than 10 years but aren't 62 yet and want to take early retirement?
- Clock in on computers instead of having time cards.
- Reduce lighting. Make sure lights are turned off in offices not in use or when you leave.
- Have secretaries work for more than one or two people.
- Collect unpaid tuition.
- Residential Living (student housing) needs more stringent programming. They have a “model” not being followed, need one with more “teeth.” Students are not gaining academically, socially and WU is losing potential students. Students stay in their rooms and housing does not know the circumstances to intervene.
- Would more master's degrees offered bring in more \$?
- Permit academic and administrative units to address reduction differently, i.e. one could use furloughs another layoffs another reduce operating expenses.
- If salary reductions are required apply reductions based on merit.
- Everyone take a two percent salary cut across the board. If everyone is not treated the same, will cause a drop in morale which will effect the students.

- Furloughs instead of layoffs, reduction in retirement contribution instead of furloughs or layoffs.
- University contribution to retirement reduced to five percent temporarily. Does not impact people immediately, like furloughs or layoffs. Could be made up over time. Unlike salary reductions which are very slow to recover.
- Retirement contribution reduction does not take money from people immediately as furloughs and layoffs do.

Targeted travel fund reduction:

- Eliminate funding for people not presenting.
- Preserve funding for junior faculty who need it more and can afford it less.
- Ensure that reductions are temporary and don't become the new norm.

Facilities Related Cost Saving Ideas:

- Combine the three separate custodial departments.
 - Increased buying power for products, supplies and materials will save money.
 - Standardization of cleaning supplies, soaps and paper goods would make the level of cleaning consistent across campus.
 - The management team might be better utilized and more effective resulting in a better use of "management" dollars spent.
 - Less equipment would be needed because it could be shared across campus.
- Clean buildings using a first, second and third shift.
 - Employees can clean more effectively on the second or third shifts where there are fewer students and faculty around. More cleaning can be done with fewer employees saving labor hours and money.
 - Day shift staffing can consist of "porter" type employees.
 - Alter cleaning frequencies so trash is removed every other day instead of daily, thereby saving labor hours and money.
- Use cross trained general maintenance "zone" workers.
 - This may increase productivity and reduce the amount of vehicles needed in our fleet as well as cost associated with maintaining the fleet.
 - One employee could be assigned for a group of buildings which would increase employee accountability and reduced travel time.
 - House all maintenance employees on campus and eliminate 1313, reducing travel time.

- Major problems could be handled by licensed contractors.
- Reduce energy cost by:
 - Lowering indoor temperatures in winter and raising in summer.
 - Turn off lights in vending machines.
 - Use timers on vending machines with cold drinks.
 - Remove bulbs inside building where possible based on pre-specified lighting safety requirements.
 - Use high efficiency bulbs and light sensors when and where possible.
 - Turn off air handlers when and where possible.
- Eliminate overtime hours by restructuring of shifts and days off across all Facilities departments.
- Utilize more temporary or student workers when and where possible.

Miscellaneous:

- How will the Recovery Act of 2009 impact our state aid? I thought some of the \$ was to reduce impact on state education, thus fewer state \$ cut.
- What is the projected date we would know if/when there will be furloughs, reduced hours, etc., and/or layoffs? By June or later?
- Please consider an anonymous survey of faculty/staff.
- Enrollment is a concern. Whenever a call is made to Admissions to ask questions, we are directed the Web site, or not provided with an answer.
- In addition, at Admissions events, their entire office eats, whether involved with events directly or not.