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March 31, 2017: Weekly Message from Interim President Curtis McCray

Curtis L. McCray
Wright State University - Main Campus

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March 31, 2017: Weekly message from Interim President Curtis McCray

Dear Campus Community,

Today is the end of March and the beginning of the last three months of this fiscal year, 91 days until we begin a new fiscal year and welcome the permanent president, Dr. Cheryl B. Schrader. Many people at the university have been meeting to suggest and to determine the means by which we can reduce expenditures for FY18, achieve a balanced budget with a small reserve, and maintain our time-honored commitment to an excellent education for our students. No office of the university remains unimpacted; no budget unit will enter the new fiscal year without reflecting the effect of what we are doing. This will not be an easy time and yet it is what we must do to protect this university and the educations of those students who will be coming to us year after year.

We are a strong university with a 50-year history of providing this region, Ohio, and beyond with the education it needs and deserves. We will not stop doing that. Embedded in our fabric are the people and disciplines, the courses and degrees that are a model of higher education. Not a day goes by that I do not read of or hear of yet another achievement of one of our students, our graduates, or our faculty. We have reason to be proud. We are not going away. After two weeks of helping the struggle to balance the budget, I am convinced that not only will we survive this hard period, but we will, in fact, prevail.

The determination that administrators who report to me have (and whose determination I share) is that we will have identified those places in the budget by the end of April where we can make changes that can be implemented in the three months ahead. To that end, we have been receiving suggestions from every angle of the institution, especially those groups that represent the multiple constituents of the university. I am not ready to list specifics; but the general categories we are examining and that have been recommended to us include these: fill no open positions, reduce administration, centralize and reconfigure several university services, control GTA and graduate fee waivers, be cautious with release time, limit stipends, limit travel, limit contractual obligations, end space remodeling, end bonuses, reduce all spending by function to 90 to 95 percent of state average, and many others.

Note that the Board of Trustees will not be announcing specific actions at the Finance Committee meeting on Friday, April 7. Those are still being evaluated. Specific information about actions to adjust budgets for FY18 will come in late April or early May.

I am personally committed to preserving what is so very good about this university, as I tried to intimate in my last letter. I reiterate that commitment now. Please continue to do your good work and we will rise from this problem stronger and better prepared to face our next 50 years.

Curtis McCray

Interim President

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