

College of Built Environments - College Council

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Faculty perspective on navigating through challenging budgeting times at UW

Dear College of Built Environments faculty,

As you may be aware from the [UW's Presidential message on May 13th, 2020](#), or discussion with your department chairs, UW is faced with financial challenges over the next academic year(s) due to the financial fallout from COVID-19. Budgets across all colleges will be affected, however the full extent is still unknown as it will depend on tuition income, state and federal support as well as creative actions by UW's administrators, which are not yet defined. The current estimates range from 5% to 15%.

The Dean approached the College Council with a request for creative input on mitigating budget decreases and developing opportunities for inclusive communication. College Council serves as your faculty representatives and we would like to solicit your opinion through your upcoming department meetings and through the all-College meeting on June 10th. As the [strategic plan](#) is currently underway it would be useful to brainstorm based on the two key themes that emerged through the planning process: **Equity/Social Justice (ESJ) and Health and Well-being (HWB)**.

1. Connecting strategic plan themes with a response to budgeting shortfall

1.1. How would ESJ be reflected with measures guiding cost saving decisions (e.g. fairness within the CBE community, equity in short and long run contributions, etc.)?

1.2. How would HWB be reflected with measures guiding cost saving decisions (e.g. testing/tracing/isolating – quick outbreak containment, behavior education, use of space, etc.)?

2. Approaches to align financial resources with our goals

2.1. In response to the current financial crisis, what are some guiding principles that can steer cost saving decisions (e.g. maintain program quality, maintain research support, make performance-based decisions, improve personal safety of faculty, staff and students, etc.)?

2.2. What criteria would you propose when assessing areas of possible budget cuts (e.g. minimize the number of under-enrolled courses per department, performance-based program assessment, adjusting faculty short-term responsibilities on administrative -service tasks/teaching etc.)?

2.3. What do you consider priorities when developing cost saving measures (e.g. student financial support-creating a student support fund, utilizing existing faculty, affiliates and/or lecturers, increase fundraising, increase enrollment, explore entrepreneurial opportunities, faculty, staff and student training on personal protection and frequent testing to contain possible future COVID-19 outbreaks at UW, etc.)?

3. Ways to communicate around financial decision-making processes

3.1. Would you prefer internal department discussions and/or a college meeting on cost saving measures over the summer?

3.2. As UW leadership and Dean's will have more knowledge in the following weeks/months concerning the extent of the budget cuts, how would you like to be involved in feedback on potential actions (e.g. townhall, survey, etc.)?