

Dear Colleagues,

The past few weeks have been especially challenging for Miami as we have identified the processes necessary to reduce our budget in the face of the extraordinarily difficult times in which we find ourselves. You should have recently received information from your dean/director/vice president about the full range of actions taken within your areas, actions that reflect exceptional foresight and sensitivity.

The most difficult part of this process was the necessity of eliminating positions. The incredible support provided by co-workers and colleagues across the university for those whose positions were eliminated, and the professionalism of those affected, demonstrate the very best of what the Miami community is all about.

As I write this letter, we are beginning to see some signs that the decline in the economy may be slowing. Still, by all accounts, we are in a deep and long recession, and further negative economic changes could occur rapidly. Thus it is imperative that we continue to do everything possible to reduce unnecessary expenses and make sound long-term decisions, to generate new ideas that will allow us to reach our goals more efficiently and effectively, and to identify new or improved sources of revenue. I urge all of us to contribute ideas and effort to these vital tasks. It is important that we explore additional options that will allow us to respond more quickly to sudden and unexpected changes in our economic situation.

We must continue to be very fiscally prudent, scrutinizing carefully all hiring requests and expenses and delaying construction projects as much as possible. I am also confirming that, in keeping with previous budget discussions, there will be no general salary increases for fiscal year 2009 – 2010 (promotion increases are not affected). This is consistent with the recommendations of the University Senate's Fiscal Priorities and Budget Planning Committee. This action is very disappointing, but it is necessary to avoid much deeper budget cuts at this time.

Cutting our budgets has been a painful and necessary process that we have approached from a long-term strategic point of view. Now we must focus even more on the heart of our mission, the extraordinary educational experience at Miami that leads to exceptional student success. This is what we do so well, as national rankings continue to confirm. Our stellar reputation for placing students in graduate programs, law school, and medical school, as well as the high regard for our graduates by employers, affirms the heart of the Miami Experience - producing graduates of uncommon quality who are exceptionally well prepared for their careers. Even in these challenging conditions, we must continue to strengthen our academic and co-curricular programs so that our students can achieve even greater success.

The difficult economy has not only affected Miami directly, it has also affected many of our current and prospective students and their families. It is extremely important that we, each of us, do everything possible to help prospective students, who will be visiting campus between now and May 1st, understand what an extraordinary opportunity Miami provides

for them. It is equally important that we do all that we can to help students who are here to remain here and progress through their academic programs.

Let me end by expressing deep appreciation for all that has been done to meet the budget reduction challenges openly, collaboratively, and intelligently, and by urging all of us to continue our efforts to meet the challenges ahead. As we face a very uncertain economic environment, we must remain focused on strengthening our financial foundations and advancing student success at Miami.

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