

## Town Hall – Questions from Campus

October 15, 2020

**It is great to see an increase in graduate students, but their fee structure looks different than that of undergraduate students. How will this fee discrepancy effect areas that rely on Campus Privilege Fees?**

On-campus graduate students pay the same campus privilege fee as undergraduate students. Students who take a mix of on campus and online courses pay the same campus fees as fully on-campus students. The challenge is that more graduate students are fully online, and fewer are full time, and that's where the fee differences show up. Areas primarily funded by campus privilege fees experience greater swings in funding with enrollment changes. Recent enrollment declines have had a greater impact in these areas in recent years.

**With the news of how KU is doing a buyout of employees meeting certain requirements, is that something PSU is considering?**

This has been discussed, and there are likely situations in which this might work on our campus. The challenge is that a buyout requires a larger up-front investment for the University, and the typical way to recoup that investment is to leave the position vacant for a long period of time or eliminate the position entirely. If the University chooses to use the buyout tool as part of our larger financial health strategy, know that it won't work for everyone or every position.

**I'm hearing that pay cuts are on the horizon at the beginning of the new calendar year. Is this something that is being discussed?**

No. Due to careful forecasting and planning, along with federal stimulus funding that replaced a \$1.7 million state general fund cut, we are in good financial shape for the remainder of the current fiscal year. Fiscal year 2022, which starts in July 2021, is less certain. We've been asked to model a plan that accommodates a 10% cut in state allocation, and accurate forecasting of enrollment trends is still on the horizon. We do not currently expect any federal stimulus dollars in FY22. If the state does not restore the \$1.7 million cut, and we must trim another 10%, we could see a \$5.5 million or larger budget cut.

**With a \$37 million budget, what are the major areas of expenditures that should be the target of efforts to control?**

80% of our general use budget is salaries and benefits. Any material reduction to the budget cannot be done without changes to positions. All areas of spending should be subject to review and careful evaluation as part of budget evaluation efforts.

**Do you foresee travel for PSU faculty and students resuming next semester? Typically we are involved in several competitions and conferences in the spring.**

Nothing has changed in terms of travel, and we don't anticipate being "back to normal" in the spring. As with everything impacted by the virus, decisions will be made in real time using the best available data. Travel requests should be discussed with deans or directors.

**With recent news that county hospitals are reaching capacity, and that Kansas seems to be breaking new COVID-19 numbers daily, it's possible that we'll be in a worse position in two weeks. Under these circumstances, why is Pitt State continuing with football games? No other DII school in Kansas is playing. Why are we?**

We are playing football because it's a highly-valued part of our fall at Pittsburg State University and in the community, and we want to instill a sense of normalcy in a safe way with our players, coaches, and fans. We worked closely with the Crawford County Health Department to devise a way to host home games in a low-risk way. That said, the decision to play was made before the recent surge, and like every other event during a pandemic, it is not 100% certain. We will watch this closely in the next two weeks and adjust if needed.