

Questions with written responses from Bob Huth (CFO), Noel Painter (Provost), Lua Hancock (VP CLaSS) or Joel Bauman (VP Enrollment Management), and additional commentary from Eric Kurlander (chair, Faculty Finance)

Susan Peppers-Bates and Megan O'Neill -- *I believe I heard Bob Huth suggest that in the worst-case scenario we would have "curricular and faculty sacrifices," not athletic or administrative ones?*

Bob Huth

The reality is that those non-academic program cuts would have already been taken in the prior scenarios.

Eric Kurlander

My understanding is that Bob agrees with the committee that there are a number of options we might pursue before making any "curricular and faculty sacrifices", including athletics and administrative/non-academic operating expenses. The Faculty Finance committee believes that these interventions could/should provide many of the cuts necessary in our middle scenario (8 million or so down). But should more significant cuts be necessary, per our worst-case scenario (15 million), then we agree with Bob that at least some to academics might be necessary.

Michael Eskenazi -- *Is there a contingency plan that you have produced or will produce similar to the one from the Faculty Finance Committee that we can see?*

Bob Huth

Yes, a document will be produced when the process is completed

Eric Kurlander

Bob has confirmed that he shares similar principles and would employ some combination of the same interventions outlined by the Faculty Finance Committee in addition to items not in the interventions outlined by Faculty Finance for the more egregious resolutions. The difference between our plan and the administrations appear to be: 1) Timing: we do not believe it makes sense to wait for final enrollment numbers in June/July to make the first wave of cuts/reallocations, when substantial cuts will be necessary under virtually any scenario and when many other institutions have already committed to a range of interventions; 2) Urgency: Given the disproportionate increases in non-academic staff and expenses since 2010, we believe that hiring freezes in non-academic and non-admissions/development-related areas are essential, should begin immediately, and should continue indefinitely, reallocating remaining funds/positions within those areas instead of adding new non-academic liabilities; 3) Priorities: We worry that non-academic areas of rapid growth will continue to be privileged, as they have been over the past decade, further weakening the academics and the long-term financial health of the university in the wake of any cuts. The interventions suggested in the proposal already add up to nearly 15 million without major cuts to academics

Tom Farrell -- *Is it fair to say that faculty program cuts only kick in the worst-case scenario?*

Bob Huth

It is true that the greater the amount that needs to be resolved, the more things will need to be considered by a budget prioritization group who is following a set of principles. The academic program will need to be protected to the greatest extent possible. Based on my review of the plan, there is not enough to resolve \$10 and \$15 million scenarios without doing other things. The reality is that the more that needs to be resolved, the more things need to be done

Eric Kurlander

The committee agrees there are additional options, not included in the plan (though perhaps with different areas of emphasis). The Faculty Finance Committee believes that this would need to be explored were the crisis worse than 15 million. Were we to use just a few million of credit/cash reserves, now would be the time to do it (Doug Lee convinced the Trustees to agree to something like a 9 million dollar draw from the endowment in 2001, on a one-time basis, when the established draw was only 5 or 6 million). The College of Law currently doesn't subsidize the university's 21 million athletic expenses, expenses that are justified as a national marketing tool (if the benefits fail to accrue 120 miles away, then we shouldn't be spending 14 million in operating expenses/auxiliary and nearly 7 million of scarce discount on athletic scholarships). Indeed, moving to DII or DIII could save as much as 15 – 17 million in expenses/scholarships. If we are determined to stay DI and the CoL paid its share of that 6 – 7 million in expenses and perhaps another 1 million or so to defray increases in AA and other university overhead, we would have 20+ million in "savings" for the Deland campus.

Joel Davis -- *Will faculty members of the Finance Committee be included in the group that President Libby is putting together?*

Noel Painter

Yes, a subset of the Faculty Finance Committee will be included in the group.

Eric Kurlander

Many universities we looked at have already involved Faculty Senate and other Faculty leadership bodies in their decision-making processes in response to COVID-19. Stetson's University Faculty and Senate By-Laws (University Faculty Bylaws 6.3 and Faculty Senate Bylaws 5.2.2) are also clear that Senate Exec is charged with nominating faculty for any committee/task force created by the President/Provost (University Faculty Bylaws 6.1) and that the Budget and Finance Committee is supposed to "discuss, review and make recommendations concerning the University's financial resources and budget" to the President and CfO on behalf of the faculty. Including the Senate Chair and Faculty Finance Committee (Chair) on the Budget Priorities Task Force is therefore important in ensuring appropriate faculty representation and trust in the process.

Melinda Hall and Steven Smallpage, Susan Peppers-Bates -- *Will criteria for cuts be known to faculty before cuts are made?*

Bob Huth

If by criteria you mean principles, process and the various dollar levels that need to be resolved, then yes.

Eric Kurlander

We need to recall that, short of financial exigency, major program level changes involving cuts in TT faculty and any wholesale elimination of programs must be co-determined by the requisite curricular and program review process, which ensures faculty oversight. We nonetheless believe that official faculty leadership bodies beyond the required curriculum committees and those faculty representatives directly involved in the Priorities Group should be included in this process, since even mid-level cuts in contingent faculty and other aspects of academic funding (e.g. research and operating budgets) should be developed in partnership with the faculty.

Emily Mieras -- *I'd like to have a more concrete sense of the date(s) by when we will know a clearer prognosis for next year. Do these dates correspond w/ Joel's date about recruitment?*

Bob Huth

Yes, I can commit to that.

Michael Eskenazi, Tony Abbott, Emily Mieras -- *It seems as though there is some ambiguity in relation to the finance committee contingency plan. Is this a starting point for the overall contingency plan that will be used? Will a different one be created? Will that different one be shared with us when it is created?*

Bob Huth

The plan will be considered, though not as the starting point. The plan going forward will be developed with consultation of others in the community and will have significant faculty participation.

Eric Kurlander

The Faculty Finance Committee hopes that this plan will provide a basis for our various interventions and look forward to working with the administration, per above, on revising the plan as the situation evolves and various interventions become operationalized.

Jason Evans -- *I'm curious about conversations for strategic investments for public health-oriented staff and capabilities, in coordination with local health agencies and relevant faculty experts, to better ensure safety of students, faculty, staff, and admin?*

Lua Hancock

We have made health decisions so far with input from faculty member Danielle DeVoney (an Environmental Toxicologist), the health care staff experts on campus, and input from health partners like AdventHealth. There are challenges of decision making given the reality of the situation without ability to provide a timeline. We have increased our contingency planning incorporating both liability and health concerns including work with small groups working on various components, recognizing the need to loop in faculty expertise into these teams. The Provost and I are working on team charges this week. Jason indicated that he will loop back with senate helping to communicate what is already happening and next steps.

Tara Schuwerk -- *Is it possible to overextend outreach to potential students? For example, admissions send their communication, Chairs are sending out individual emails, admissions is utilizing staff to hand-write personal notes. If a program were to also send a handwritten note - is that too much? Will potential students start to feel too much pressure? Just looking for some guidance overall so that outreach doesn't backfire.*

Joel Bauman

Great question. We are a best practice shop and very ambitious and unapologetically energetic in our strategies. Not every student is getting all of the above and basic communication research shows only after 7 efforts will someone begin to respond. So yes in very few cases but no in the vast majority. We survey the pool every year and test this out. Some students complain, many students praise us on the outreach and the vast majority are inured.

Tony Abbott -- *Will we be pushing important decisions to the Census date?*

Bob Huth

Agreed that this does not need to be pushed to census date. We should know better what we need to do by mid-June. If what we resolved at that point isn't sufficient, given what enrollment is in July/ August, that would be a "trigger" to resolve a larger problem. The intent is to have a plan in advance so that we can pull a "trigger" where needed.

Kirsten Work -- *The departments were supposed to come up with online recruiting plans. Can we have some guidance about how to talk to students that we are recruiting? If someone asks me, what will happen in the fall, what should I say?*

Joel Bauman

There has been a script developed to help with those conversations that has been provided to the Admissions Committee and Admissions Office. Admissions will send them to you. If other faculty are interested, please connect with Andrew Larsen, Chair of the Faculty Admissions Committee. In regard to what is happening in the Fall, Stetson is planning to open up, please see the information at <https://www.stetson.edu/other/covid-19/>