UA3/10/2 Changes to Personnel Actions

WKU President's Office - Caboni

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Dear Colleagues,

Thanks to the willingness of many in our community to provide their professional expertise, experience and creativity to help shape the next phase of WKU’s growth, two critical efforts now are underway: our strategic planning process and the work of the Budget Council to outline a comprehensive budget model which will strategically deploy the University’s scarce financial resources.

WKU is a great institution, but like all of higher education we face some significant challenges, including a structural imbalance of more than $10 Million in our university budget. Although the current year budget is balanced using one-time carry forward funds, that is a temporary fix. We also know that given trend lines in enrollment, we likely will be down in full-time students again this year, compounding the current problem. Add to that pressures from the state, including the public pension crisis, and we have significant financial concerns we must address now. It is imperative that that we deploy strategically every institutional resource, especially our human capital. This will ensure we are well positioned financially as we implement a new strategic plan and work to balance our budget.

To that end, I have asked Ann Mead, Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, to oversee an approval process for all personnel actions, beginning immediately. A Personnel Actions Approval Committee, comprised of representatives from the General Counsel’s office, Human Resources and the Office of the Provost, will review all requests to fill positions – both vacant and any newly created. Only those positions that meet critical needs, meet strict standards for strategic needs, result in cost savings or efficiencies or are deemed to fulfill essential services will be approved to proceed. This action includes all full-time and part-time faculty and staff. Grant funded positions are excluded. In addition, reclassifications, temporary rate increases, salary adjustments and stipends also will be put on hold for the foreseeable future. Those searches that are currently approved and underway will be permitted to continue. Human Resources will issue specific guidelines later today.

I know that this action will create short term discomfort for all of us across campus. However, the significant headwinds we face require difficult decisions. I’m asking each of you to make the conscious effort to think beyond your individual unit and consider what is best for the entire university and our collective future. I am committed to being transparent and working together to determine what are our shared aspirations and how we get there. To be successful, we must ensure that those areas on which we will focus have the necessary support to be successful.

Thank you for your continued good work. What you do each day makes a difference in the lives of our students, our community and indeed has national and global impact. We will make decisions going forward that strengthen the University, and we will do it together.

Best,

Timothy C. Caboni