Provost Notes to the Faculty Senate  
Regarding Budget Reversions  
September 25, 2009

As part of my remarks to the Faculty Senate on September 11, 2008 I shared information with you concerning expected revenue shortfalls and the potential for budget reversions for Radford University that may range from 5% to 15%. I also indicated that the University had been charged with developing and submitting plans for reductions of 5%, 10% and 15% to the Commonwealth by September 26, 2008.

Further, I shared with you some guidelines from the state that required us to consider actions that would result in long-term savings, reviewing all options, and targeting focused cuts rather than across-the-board reductions. Specific categories in which the state is expecting targeted reductions include

- reduced personnel costs,
- improved business practices and efficiencies,
- reduced discretionary spending, and
- reduction or elimination of current programs or services.

I also shared with you my intent to protect, to the extent possible, academic instruction, academic support and advising, and other essential services to our students and prospective students.

We have been working non-stop to develop sound principles to guide us as we developed preliminary reversion plans, and prepared those plans for submission.

- On Monday, September 15, I distributed the Budget Reduction Guidelines to the Deans and on Wednesday,
- September 17, I met with the Council of Deans to discuss those guidelines and expectations for identifying strategies to reduce expenditures and increase revenues and
- I asked for their completed plans for 5%, 10%, and 15% reduction plans no later than close of business on Friday, September 19.

Once the plans for reducing expenditures and enhancing revenues were received from each academic college and other administrative units within academic affairs, I, along with my leadership team, examined the collective strategies to identify the most effective measures for meeting our obligations to reduce the budget while protecting, to the extent possible, our core mission and functions.

It was and is my explicit goal in this process to ensure that reversions do not

- adversely affect our ability to provide the highest quality instruction and advising for our students,
- prevent us from recruiting and retaining sufficient numbers of high quality students, or
- diminish our ability to provide adequate services such as registration and record keeping, provision of financial aid, and compliance with accreditation standards and reporting mandates.
I will continue to do all that is possible to leave untouched certain key areas and functions from budget reversions, including

- direct instructional costs,
- admissions and recruitment activities,
- student advising,
- activities related to accreditation,
- assessment and mandated reporting,
- development and implementation of the Core Curriculum, and
- implementation of strategic new programs.

Further, I believe it would be short-sighted to erase gains made in improving the non-personal service budgets of academic programs and to stifle faculty development by imposing cuts that would eliminate faculty professional development.

On Monday, September 22, I submitted our preliminary plans to the budget office. The extent of reductions in each area will depend on the final, actual budget reversion that is required by the State.

In addition to strategies for reducing expenditures, our plans include strategies to increase revenues to offset some of the budget reversions. These strategies include:

- Differential tuition or fees for high demand and high cost programs
- Additional student fees for courses with higher direct costs
- Increase applicant fees for certain student populations

Just yesterday, I met with the President to review our plans for the entire institution that will be sent to Richmond tomorrow.

As you know, we will not know our final reduction target for some time, but we must plan for both short-term and long-term strategies to “do more with less.” In fact, with each passing day, the news seems to worsen.

Once we know what we are facing, the real work begins. We will need the best thinking, the courage, and the support of each of you to ensure we can weather this budget storm, while protecting the future for our students.