Our current budget challenges mean that we can no longer operate in the same way. With a double-digit base budget reduction, we can no longer fiscally support our current operation. Changes in the state and national economy suggest that this is not a short-term situation, and we cannot afford to replace lost state appropriations completely with student tuition dollars. To quote a former president of another university that faced this challenge, “we simply cannot afford to be what we have become” (Dickeson, 1999, p. 71).

The challenge we face today is not new to public higher education. Over the last two decades, other universities have confronted the same challenges. We can learn from their experiences and mistakes. One of the most useful guides from such experiences is *Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services: Reallocating Resources to Achieve Strategic Balance* by Robert C. Dickeson (1999). We will be using this text as a guide as we plan together for the future. In addition, we will be using the processes and committees that are consistent with our culture and traditions.

Even as we reduce budgets, we must strategically invest in our future. To do this, we must carefully review and prioritize all of our programs and services (both academic and administrative). This review will inform discussions and decisions regarding future investments. In addition, if we are not able to achieve the necessary base reductions through attrition and spending limits, the review will inform discussions and decisions about which programs or services to suspend, reduce, or reorganize. Following is a brief outline of the process.

**Focus of Reviews**
All programs and services will be reviewed. This will include all academic programs, instructional and student support programs, and administrative programs. Although this document uses illustrations from academic programs, we will also review administrative and support programs with criteria appropriate for their units.

**Criteria**
We will use the following criteria for instructional program review, which are described more fully in the text:

1. History, development, and expectations of the program
2. External demand for the program
3. Internal demand for the program
4. Quality of program inputs and processes
5. Quality of program outcomes
6. Size, scope, and productivity of the program
7. Revenue and other resources generated by the program
8. Costs and other expenses associated with the program
9. Impact, justification, and overall essentiality of the program
10. Opportunity analysis of the program

(Dickeson, 1999, p. 54)

Dickeson also provides criteria for administrative and instructional support services (see pp. 137-138). The divisions will be working to adapt these criteria as appropriate to their units. In addition, he provides suggestions for weighting of criteria in order to come up with overall rankings for each program on a five point scale that will guide future investment, or, potentially suggest possible cuts.

Process to Assure Input and Bargaining Unit Involvement

Although final decisions rest with the President in consultation with the Chancellor and where appropriate the Board of Trustees, it is important that everyone in our university community has the opportunity to review and provide input and feedback on their programs and prioritization. To that end, we will work with each of the divisions to create processes that provide for such review and input.

Academic programs will be reviewed first at the department level and then at the college level. The reviews will then roll up to the Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee, which consists of 5 Deans and 5 IFO appointees. This group will be convened by VP Midgarden.

In the other areas, reports will be developed at the unit level and then roll up to a divisional level committee with an equal number of directors or administrators and bargaining unit representatives. The following divisional groupings will be used.

- Dean Goodman’s areas (Library, Instructional Technology, Distance Learning, Continuing Studies, Instructional Media). Dean Goodman will convene this group.

- Academic and Student Affairs Support Areas (Records, ARO, Admissions, Financial Aid and Scholarships, Counseling and Career Services, International Programs, National Student Exchange, Orientation and Transitions, Data/Planning, Services to Students with Disabilities, Multicultural Student Affairs, and General Area Administration). VPs Wiese and Midgarden will jointly convene this group.

- Student Affairs – Revenue Fund and Auxiliary Services (Student Union and Activities, Housing and Residence Life, Bookstore, Hendrix Health Center, and the Wellness Center). VP Wiese will convene this group.

- Facilities and Administration (IT, Veterans Services, Physical Plant, Capital Planning and Construction, General Administrative Affairs, Business Office, Accounting, HR and Payroll, Security). VP Kirk will convene this group.

- Athletics. AD Peters will convene the Athletics group.

- Presidents Office, including any functions not reporting to other divisions (e.g., advancement, printing) and Alumni Foundation. This group will be convened by VP Justesen.

In the academic area, the same Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee will also advise on prioritization of faculty positions to be filled when resources become available. We plan similar uses of committees in other divisions to advise on long term investments.

Reviews and the division level prioritization of programs responses will be reviewed by the University Planning and Budget Committee (UPBC). The UPBC will recommend overall
prioritization of programs and services to the President. As noted earlier, this information may inform the president’s decisions on where to make budget cuts. In addition, it may inform future strategic planning.

It is our intent that the process for review of our programs and services will be done in a manner that is sensitive to others and respectful of the work performed by all involved. By working through the process to review programs and services, we will be positioned better to face the challenges of the coming years.

**Timeline**
The timeline will be a challenge. If we are not able to achieve the necessary base reduction through attrition, we will need to use the information from the review to guide program and service reduction. Given contractual deadlines, we will need the full process to be completed no later than July 1st. Following is the draft timeline.

- January 26 Review process finalized in all divisions.
- February 1-20 Academic programs receive data from Institutional Research.
- March 1 Divisional level review committees are in place.
- March 6 Initial program reports are completed by the originating unit. Academic programs are sent to the college level committees. Other division reports are sent directly to the divisional committees.
- April 7 Review of reports by college level committees, which include faculty appointed by the Faculty Association, and college level town meetings are completed.
- April 7 Non-instructional divisional committees complete town meetings.
- April 21 Reports and recommended prioritization are reviewed at the divisional level by committees and then forwarded to the University Planning and Budget Committee (UPBC) for review.
- April 23 Initial Meet and Confer with IFO Faculty Association regarding programs considered for reduction, suspension, elimination, or reorganization.
- April 28 UPBC completes reviews of all divisional programs and prioritization lists and recommends to the President those programs or services to be considered for reduction, suspension, elimination, or reorganization.
- April 28-May 5 Initial Meet and Confer with other bargaining units regarding programs or services considered for reduction, suspension, elimination, or reorganization.
- May 7 Final Meet and Confer with IFO regarding programs or services considered for reduction, suspension, elimination, or reorganization.
- May 12-20 Final meet and confer with other bargaining units regarding programs or services and positions considered for elimination.
- June Reviews and recommendations are discussed with the Chancellor and members of his staff.
July 1 If needed, layoff notices are sent.