

Question Time

There has been considerable discussion in official and unofficial meetings on campus of a significant, critical, and unexpected shortfall in the university's budget. The shortfall has triggered the suspension of academic searches, disrupted the strategic procedural decisions on position requests of at least one college, and the closing of a minor program out-of-line with university procedures. The issue is that numerous narratives have emerged about the scale of the shortfall (from \$1 million to \$10 million) as well as the cause of the shortfall (pressing facilities maintenance costs, expenses beyond budget for Athletics). Given that the shortfall has wrongly negatively influenced the academic mission of the university and narratives have spread that are full of inaccuracies, can the administration:

- Detail the shortfall relative to budget expectations discussed in the November 2023 Fort Wayne Senate meeting.
 - What is the size of the shortfall?
 - What are the specific causes of the unexpected shortfall?
 - Why were these unexpected?
- How have Athletics spending and unexpected building repairs contributed to this shortfall, and what were the respective dollar amounts involved?
- What dollar amount will Academic Affairs have to cover, and what is this amount reflected as an overall percentage of Academic Affairs' budget?
- In particular, the year-end cash balances, reserve balances, and CFI were indicated to be healthy in the Fall 2023 report to the Senate (see PowerPoint slide). Why are reserves not a source of covering the shortfall rather than dipping into the already too small \$200,000 of new funding toward Academic Affairs for new positions, when the university had promised to begin addressing the backfilling of academic positions that we have not rehired in recent years?

The primary mission of this comprehensive regional university is to provide a comprehensive education to this region's students and others that we can draw. We are diminishing our comprehensiveness without a sufficient understanding of the financial reasons for doing so.

M. Wolf