UNM Begins Budget Review Process

December 22, 2010 | By Karen Wentworth

University of New Mexico executive leadership convened a UNM Cost Containment Task Force consisting of representatives from the faculty, staff, students and UNM administration to help craft a UNM budget for FY 2011–2012. UNM's guiding principle in the budget process is to protect its academic and research mission and continue to provide its students with the educational excellence they deserve.

"The current recession continues. State revenues are down. As a result of the past two years of state cuts, what we anticipate in future cuts and in spite of the measures taken to date to manage those cuts, we must still absorb $28 million in recurring reductions to our bottom line. Now more than ever, it is important that we work together to achieve a fiscally sound budget which is in alignment with our guiding principles," said Dr. Roth.

The Cost Containment Task Force will help formulate the three-year strategic financial plan. This work will include a full review and assessment of the reports provided by the President's Strategic Advisory Team (PSAT), Deans' Council and Academic Affairs. Representatives from the Faculty Senate, Dean's Council, Staff Council, Associated Students of UNM (undergraduates), and Graduate and Professional Students Association are serving on the task force along with the executive vice presidents and representatives from UNM finance, budget, communication and human resources.

The UNM Board of Regents, who have the final budgetary authority, will consider the budget plan during their March 2011 meeting.

The various reports dealing with budgetary issues will be posted on the university website as they become available. "We encourage all comments and suggestions as this process moves forward. Nothing has been set in concrete and everything is on the table," Dr. Roth said. There will be periods of public comment following the posting of each of the reports.

“Thoughtful work has been done by a number of groups, such as the President’s Strategic Advisory Team, which has put forth a number of potential cost-cutting ideas,” said Dr. Roth.

He noted that President Schmidly appointed PSAT last spring and the group’s input was responsible for nearly $6 million in cost containment in the current FY11 budget.

“Now we’re embarking on round two, where the ideas from all of the groups will be reviewed,” said Dr. Roth. “We will do everything in our power to put forth a balanced budget which does not harm our overall academic mission. These are challenging times. But, together we can meet the challenge.”

The Cost Containment Task Force should have preliminary recommendations by early February.

The PSAT recommendations of potential cost-cutting strategies are now available for review at Budget Recommendations. The report from the Dean’s Council, which includes input from the Faculty Senate, and reports from Academic Affairs are scheduled to be completed after the first of the year.

If you wish to comment on the recommendations, please email UNM at budgetimpact@unm.edu

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