



Planning and Budgeting Brief

Date Prepared: January 15, 2009
Subject: 1-15-09 Summary of ideas submitted to “bgtideas@u.washington.edu”

In mid-December, in response to the current economic downturn, the Office of Planning and Budgeting established an email address (bgtideas@u.washington.edu) to collect ideas from the UW community about how the university could save money, reduce costs, improve efficiency or effectiveness, eliminate waste and/or increase revenues.

We have now received over 220 emails from students, faculty and staff. While most fall broadly into the category of either suggestion or concern, we also received a number of comments expressing appreciation for our solicitation of ideas from the community. In addition, many of the staff and faculty members who wrote indicated that they would be willing to take a pay cut or work fewer hours, if that would save jobs and keep others from being laid off.

While there are a variety of suggestions, small and large in scope, the following were the most frequently submitted:

- Reduce energy consumption through conservation.
- Move to an alternative work schedule (four-day and/or reduced hours).
- Allow or mandate unpaid leave.
- Cut salaries proportionately to minimize cuts for those least able to afford them.
- Reduce the pay of those with the very highest salaries.
- Close the university during holidays/breaks.
- Reduce or eliminate paper mailings.
- Eliminate redundancy and consolidate smaller departments and centers.
- Use technology more effectively.
- Focus on core academics and strengths.
- Further explore alternative learning delivery approaches (online classes, podcasts, etc.).

A number of emails expressed concerns rather than offering suggestions. The most frequently stated concerns include:

- Minimize or avoid tuition increases.
- Minimize or avoid lay-offs.

Finally, we have received a number of comments about the size of the athletic budget and calls to cut that budget. It is important to emphasize that the athletic budget is a self-sustaining budget, independent from the general university budget. Intercollegiate Athletics supports itself entirely through ticket sales, donations and other revenue generating activities. The football and basketball programs, as the largest generators of revenues, subsidize the remainder of the athletic programs. Intercollegiate Athletics is also responsible for its own capital budget.

We will continue to collect suggestions for savings and efficiencies via the bgtideas@u.washington.edu email account. We will also post updates and briefs to our website: <http://www.washington.edu/admin/pb/home/>.

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