




DATE: September 26, 2018

TO: Academic Deans and Chairs/Directors

FROM: Jon Harbor, Executive Vice President and Provost 

SUBJECT: Budget Targets for Instructional Staffing Plans: Strategy, Process, and Next Steps

*Overview: Today I am releasing unit instructional staffing budget targets to be achieved by 2021. They do not represent specific decisions about staffing and programs in every discipline within the University of Montana's rich academic portfolio. With their budget targets, each academic unit will now do internal planning to decide how to adjust their staffing over several years to meet their budget by June 30, 2021. This planning will focus on maintaining UM's ability to offer the programs and experiences that are most important to students who come to UM. Although staffing changes can be difficult, I expect that we will work together as a community, with student success at the center of our priorities.*

As a community, UM is implementing a process to develop recommendations for academic unit instructional staffing plans that will be attained by June 30, 2021.

Given the overall academic budget, which is driven by enrollment, our process is centered on instructional staffing budget targets. These budgets are used to develop instructional staffing plans that are designed with the goals of maintaining our ability to offer programs and support strategic priorities. At the same time, the total academic affairs instructional staffing budget allocations for tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track faculty will be reduced from \$38M (our expenditure in 2017-18) to \$33M. The timeline for attaining these budget targets and developing the instructional staffing plans associated with them represents changes over several years, because final staffing goals must be achieved before June 30, 2021 (prior to the start of fiscal year 2022.) Thus, the budget targets, and instructional staffing plans that units will develop, represent a multi-year transition of staffing. Some plans will include voluntary planned attrition.

**Why are we doing this?** As student enrollments increase or decrease, institutions must make appropriate adjustments in instructional faculty to ensure that their budgets remain

sustainable. As an institution UM has experienced decreased enrollment, and has been developing its approach to adjustments in instructional staffing for several years. We are now moving to the implementation phase.

**How are we doing this?** The design of the process to develop unit instructional staffing plans has involved considerable discussion and feedback involving a wide range of faculty and other stakeholder groups. The process is described in detail in [my campus communication of Sept. 14](#), and involves i) use of data on historic SCH/FTE ratios that are used to determine presumptive instructional staffing levels based on 2017-18 SCH which are then converted to equivalent 2017-18 instructional budgets, and ii) modification of these budgets, based on strategic priorities, with the total modified budget at \$33M. In most cases, the presumptive instructional staffing levels are considerably below 2017-18 staffing levels, because overall enrollments have declined significantly.

As described in [my campus communication of Sept. 14](#), an executive team made recommendations on strategic priorities that I then used to drive instructional budget modifications relative to presumptive instructional budgets. These recommendations were based on a wide range of data produced by academic units and the [APASP](#) and [UPC processes](#), as well as the priorities outlined in President Bodnar's [draft recommendations](#) released last spring. These included prioritizing strategic investments in programs with one or more of the following attributes:

- Central to the Communities of Excellence
- Has strong potential for student recruitment
- Large and growing numbers of majors at the undergraduate and/or graduate level
- Meets a critical or unique need in the state or region
- High levels of research/scholarship/creative activity and external support
- Central to the UM Core or General Education requirements
- Strong potential for growth as an online program
- Recognized as a Program of National Distinction

**In many cases, these investments result in a final instructional staffing budget for a unit that is still lower than the 2017-18 expenditure, but higher than the presumptive instructional budget.** Because these strategic investments are by program, and most academic units have multiple programs, some units will be directed to prioritize staffing for specific programs in their instructional staffing plans.

I submitted recommended instructional staffing budget targets to President Bodnar for review and, with his approval, am now providing these to the deans to share with the chairs and directors of academic units. Together, deans and chairs/directors will develop unit instructional staffing plans.

Units may have considerable flexibility in designing the plans for their units. Instructional staffing plans may include changes in numbers of various types of faculty, changes in other

financial support for faculty salaries (e.g., if other sources such as grants and philanthropy are designated to cover more of a faculty member's effort), changes in faculty teaching loads, changes in courses offered, and adjustments in programs offered. Any changes that have potential curricular implications (changes in courses, options, and programs) will go through our established process for review and recommendation, starting in late October.

### **Guidance for deans and chairs working on unit recommendations:**

- The unit spreadsheet provided to you by the Office of the Provost has 3 tabs.
  - The first tab shows your unit's actual 2017-18 general fund instructional budget usage. In some cases part of a faculty member's effort was supported by funds other than those allocated for instruction.
  - The second tab is a spreadsheet template that you need to complete to show how you recommend your unit reach its instructional staffing budget target by the end of FY21 (i.e., it will be your recommended instructional staffing plan at the start of fiscal year 22, or academic year 2021-22).
  - The third tab is a sample spreadsheet template, so you can see how this might look, and examples of the sorts of changes that units might include
- Please submit a concise narrative that provides any additional explanation along with the completed template. In some cases part of a faculty member's effort will be supported by other funds – if you are proposing a level of support from other funds that is higher than 2017-18 norms, please provide an explanation/justification in Column F (Notes).
- If you have several alternate recommendations (different ways of achieving the same budget target), you may submit more than one completed plan.
- If staffing changes are tied to academic program reorganizations, please explain how this will work in the narrative.
- In some cases planned attrition and the instructional staffing budget target will allow future hiring to meet programmatic needs. In this case, please include new hires of adjuncts, instructors, or faculty in your plan; however, please do not exceed your instructional staffing budget target.
- As you work through this process, **you are required to meet the terms agreed to in the [Collective Bargaining Agreement \(CBA\)](#)**. In particular, if your plan will require the termination of a lecturer, the non-renewal of a probationary faculty member (CBA 9.000 and subsections), or the termination of a tenured faculty member (CBA 18.500 and subsections) please work with me and the provost's office staff to ensure that your plan meets the CBA requirements.
- As you develop your instructional staffing plan, you should look at the actual instructional needs of the unit. Feedback from faculty, students, and other stakeholders was clear – we want to maintain as many of our programs as possible, and so must

make every effort to offer them as efficiently as possible rather than discontinue them. Ask questions like:

- Do we have more electives and/or requirements than are necessary? (could the program be run with a smaller number of higher enrollment electives/requirements, and/or electives/requirements offered in an alternating pattern rather than every year/semester), and
- Do we have more courses than needed that meet a core requirement? (could the core requirement be supported with a smaller number of higher enrollment courses).
- While developing instructional staffing plans, deans should review instructional teaching loads with chairs. Feedback from faculty, students, and other stakeholders was clear – we want to maintain as many of our programs as possible – and, all other things being equal, to achieve this is will require higher teaching loads for tenured and tenure-track faculty if we have fewer faculty. Please review [CBA 6.210](#), which makes clear that instructional workload is tied to meeting programmatic needs.
- Deans and chairs must take into account any officially noticed attrition as submitted by faculty via the Voluntary End of Employment Agreement. The Office of the Provost will provide information to deans as soon as possible after the Oct. 12 deadline that has been set for officially noticed attrition so that you may factor it into your staffing plans.
- Any staffing plans that include curricular or organizational changes that require review and recommendation by Faculty Senate or Board of Regents must separately include the appropriate forms and information for the review and recommendation process. To determine what forms or review mechanism are required, please visit the Office of the Provost [curriculum website](#) or contact Office of the Provost staff.

#### **Instructions for submitting instructional staffing plans:**

- The deadline for instructional staffing plans is 5 p.m. Oct. 26, 2018.
- Chairs should submit their plans, in the Excel format provided, to deans ahead of this deadline.
- Deans should use this naming convention for the documents: UNIT NAME\_FY21 and upload them to the box folder to which I provided a link today.
- Early submissions are encouraged.

In conclusion: I am aware that developing these instructional staffing plans will require a great deal of work on the part of deans and chairs. I am planning visits with every school/college in the coming weeks in order to answer questions and provide guidance on developing the plans. I encourage you to undertake this difficult task with the welfare of the institution as a whole in mind.

*As an alum told me this week, ... If nobody is totally happy we've probably done as good a job of decision making as humanly possible. I care about the University as a whole community and in the end, it is the education of the students that matters most. I only wish that people could step outside themselves and take a long term, big picture view of possible solutions. The more we can do that, the better the solution will be.*

Thank you in advance for the hard work and care that I know that developing these plans will require.