




**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON SYSTEM
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON**

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 2, 2011
TO: University of Houston Deans
FROM: John Antel, Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
RE: University of Houston FY 2012 Planning Guidelines



With six weeks remaining in the legislative session, the current versions of the appropriations bills maintain deep cuts for the University of Houston. The bill passed by the House reduces UH's appropriation by \$58.5 million over the biennium, while the bill passed by the Senate Finance Committee reduces our appropriation by \$44.2 million. Therefore, it is likely that we will have to implement most if not all of the cuts we have planned for over the past two months.

Looking ahead, the Board of Regents as you know has approved tuition increases of up to 7%. While it is unlikely that we would implement the maximum rate, a more modest increase of 4% to 5% is possible. While there is still a great deal of uncertainty, we need to begin discussions about how these new resources might be applied, since we must produce an FY12 plan and budget for the Board of Regents in August.

Given our time constraints, as well as the uncertainty of available resources, we will not implement a full-blown planning process this year. Instead, we ask that you develop a 2-5 page narrative that makes a case for your most compelling priorities, funding for which should be justified in terms of moving the university forward in achieving its goals. In past years, we have asked you to organize your priorities into three categories: (1) faculty positions (as part of a three-year hiring plan) that enhance research productivity or are needed for high demand programs, (2) initiatives that enhance student persistence and graduation, and (3) administrative support needs. You should use these categories again this year. In addition to your planning narrative, we will also forward to you an Excel workbook that contains forms for summarizing your proposed initiatives.

As you consider your priorities for next year, you should emphasize new initiatives that move your college forward. You should not propose a return of your planned reductions unless doing so is absolutely necessary. It is our expectation that the cuts you identified represent, for the most

part, improved efficiencies within your college. It is also true that reduced state appropriations have become the norm, so we must continue to find more effective ways of doing business.

The exception to this approach is delayed faculty hiring, which several colleges included among their reductions. If new resources do become available, we will consider moving forward strategically with faculty searches. To aid in this process, we are compiling for each college a list of recent faculty appointments (since August 2009) and positions that are currently vacant (both replacement and new lines), which we will forward to you when completed. This information will provide us with a baseline for determining how to move forward with faculty searches. Your faculty hiring plan should be developed in light of this report, identifying which positions constitute your highest priorities. The faculty planning forms we will provide will ask you to identify your priorities for the next three years, as well as the salary, benefits and start-up funds you will need for each position. In completing these forms and discussing faculty needs in your planning narrative, we also ask that you note which positions are part of research clusters that require multi-year/multi-position commitments.

The Board of Regents will approve FY12 tuition and fees in early June. Neither the regents nor President Khator will approve increases unless we provide a compelling reason for doing so. In short, we must demonstrate through our cuts that we are serious about operational efficiency, and we must present a set of proposed investments that justify increased student costs because they are critical to achieving the university's goals – in particular, student success and national competitiveness. If we are to move forward with your plans, they must meet this very high standard. In other words, your plans should include only your very highest priorities.

In order to be prepared for board review, we will hold planning hearings during the final week of May. Therefore, please submit your planning materials to Ed Hugetz by Friday, May 20. As always, in the interest of shared governance, please take appropriate steps to involve faculty, students, and staff in the development of your plans. If you have questions about this process, please contact me, Ed Hugetz or Craig Ness.