Friday, June 2, 2017

To the WSU Board of Trustees, Interim President Curtis McCray, and incoming President Cheryl Schrader:

We, the undersigned faculty, are writing to express our objection to the proposed FY18 budget announced on May 19. It calls for a $1.6 million increase in budgeted spending for intercollegiate athletics but cuts to every other major spending unit, including $9.5 million in cuts to the seven core colleges and $1 million in cuts to the library (not to mention $3.9 million additional cuts to BSoM and SoPP).

Indeed, when the Board of Trustees hired Dr. McCray as interim President, “maintaining [WSU’s] core athletics programs at a NCAA Division I level” appeared in the first sentence of the first item in the list of his duties specified in his contract.

Putting athletics on a par with academics and thus before the needs of our students is disgraceful and a gross strategic blunder! It continues the misplaced priorities that have characterized WSU spending in recent years and, along with gross mismanagement, led to the present fiscal crisis. Under normal circumstances, it would be rational to give intercollegiate athletics a realistic budget, in line with the overspending that annually has occurred. But, in this fiscal crisis, it is inexplicable—even absurd. Spending on intercollegiate athletics has typically totaled about $10 million per year; in contrast, ticket sales have generated about $300 thousand per year. Even if one includes donations and other sources, the revenue generated by athletics has been about $2 million per year—most of which is offset by the subsidies that the university must provide to the Nutter Center because athletic events generate such little revenue.

There is no evidence that intercollegiate athletics is of much interest to most of our students. After all, through their fees, they pay for two “free” tickets to each basketball game, but student attendance is chronically and woefully low. Likewise, all the empty seats at athletic events and the minuscule revenue generated by athletics demonstrate that there is little community support for our teams either.

Students come to Wright State looking for a quality education at an affordable price so that they can have rewarding careers rather than McJobs. Taxpayers expect and need the research of our faculty and students to benefit our communities and foster economic development. None of these objectives are advanced by increasing spending on intercollegiate athletics.

In closing, then, we call upon you to totally eliminate the increase budgeted for intercollegiate athletics. Instead, we propose that this $1.6 million be devoted to scholarships. That change in the proposed budget would help to stabilize enrollments and to restore our badly tarnished reputation in the community.
Hope Jennings
Huma Bashir
Ioana Pavel
Ion Juvina
Irena Joseph
J Bernstein
J Weinzimmer
Jackson Leung
James Carter
James Menart
James Schwartz
James Tipps
Jeannette Marchand
Jennifer Kaminski
Jerry Clark
Jerry Nelms
Jessica Barnett
Jill Lindsey
Jim Adamitis
John Conteh
John Dickinson
John Gallagher
John Haught
John Kurokawa
John Martin
Jonas Thoms
Jonathan Varhola
Joseph Cavanaugh
Josh Ash
Josh Francis
Joshua Stomel
Judson Murray
Judy Jagger-Mescher
Judy Ribak
Karen Lahm
Karen Meyer
Kathryn Meyer
Katie Hossler
Kefu Xue
Keke Chen
Kelly Battles
Kevin Duffy
Kim Vito
Kimberly Warrick
Kristine Scordo
Kuppuswamy Arumugam
Peggy Kelly
Penny Park
Pramod Kantha
Pratik Parikh
Qingbo Huang
Quan Zhong
Rachel Sturm
Raghavan Srinivasan
Rebecca Edwards
Rebecca Teed
Rick Volkers
Robert Ritzi
Robert Rubin
Ron Butcher
Rory Roberts
Roy Vice
Sarah Mcginley
Sarah Tebbens
Scott Bruce
Scott Geisel
Scott Watamaniuk
Sean Pollock
Seitz David
Sharon Heilmann
Sharon Jones
Shelley Jagow
Sheng Li
Shengrong Cai
Sheri Stover
Sherri Sutter
Shreya Bhandari
Shulin Ju
Sririsha Naidu
Stacey Hundley
Stefan Chinov
Stephanie Davis
Stephanie Dickey
Stephanie Triplett
Steven Higgins
Stuart Mcdowell
Subhashini Ganapathy
Susan Carrafiello
Suzanne Franco
Tanvi Banerjee
Tara Hill
Tarun Goswami