Frequently Asked Questions

Do you anticipate layoffs at UMass Dartmouth?

No, not at this time. We expect we will be able to manage right-sizing our budget through normal attrition.

Does that mean there will be no new hiring?

No. Faculty positions will continue to be filled as retirements occur according to the normal process run through the Provost’s office. Staff positions that have strategic importance and life safety implications will continue to be filled. What will be different is that positions will not automatically be filled upon a departure or retirement; there will be a process of vacancy management.

When and how will the hiring pause be lifted?

It is lifted now; however, as described above, we will not automatically fill vacancies but will work through the vacancy management process.

How significant a budget reduction are we talking about? How much money do we need to cut?

We are projecting an approximate $4 million revenue shortfall for FY 2019 which requires a corresponding expense adjustment.

How do we know that the data is accurate? We often hear about shortfalls in the budget and then end the year with a surplus.

One of the primary charges given to Interim Vice Chancellor Mike Barone – who has a background in forensic accounting – was to ensure the accuracy of the data. The rigor of the public/private partnership process we just completed gives us further confidence in the numbers. In addition, recent analysis indicates a trend over the past five years of optimistically high budgets that become adjusted downward during the year, a process that continued into this year. Reactive adjustments are counter-productive, so our goal is to become more proactive in the annual budget planning process.

Does this mean we aren’t getting our final 10% of our FY 19 budget?

We plan to make a decision on the final 10% in April 2019, after the third quarter results can be analyzed.

When will the new FY 19 budget be unveiled?
There will be a communication early in the new year about the FY19 budget process, and the Administration and Finance team will be meeting with deans and division heads to discuss their priorities.

Why are we building a new residential and dining complex if money is tight?

This project is a public/private partnership, which means that most of the money for the new buildings comes from our partners, Provident and Greystar. We also recognize that we need to keep enrollment moving in the right direction, and that students expect and deserve up-to-date residential facilities when choosing a college. This project will help us attract and retain students.

Why have costs risen so much over five years?

Some of it is unavoidable inflationary increases in health care costs and in goods and services. We also recognize a fundamental misalignment between the budget and the process for filling positions; jobs were created and filled without careful scrutiny on whether the same roles should continue unchanged. The Commonwealth also committed the UMass system to collective bargaining increases that were not fully funded by the state and had to be absorbed by the campuses.

Why can't we ask for increased state support?

We can and do ask, but there are many demands on the Commonwealth’s resources and in fact overall support for higher education has steadily declined. We need to be more entrepreneurial moving forward by increasing research funding, partnering with the private sector, securing philanthropic support and continuing to work closely with our legislative delegation.

If enrollment is a collective responsibility, how can we help?

We ask you to share the good news about UMass Dartmouth’s momentum with the college-going students in your life. We offer a private college educational experience at a public university value. We also ask you to give time and attention to current students, to help those struggling to stay in school and persist to degree completion.