



DATE: September 25, 2013
TO: President Judy Genshaft
FROM: The USF Council of Chairs
SUBJECT: Budget Cuts to Academic Affairs

As Chairs in Academic Affairs (Tampa), we write out of deep concern that the continuing budget cuts mandate will cause significant long-term harm to USF's aspirations to remain a nationally preeminent public research university, to meet the goals of the 2013-2018 USF Strategic Plan, and to maintain its current research and student profile. We would like to request a meeting as soon as possible with you and COO John Long to discuss our concerns, and to better understand why it is necessary for the primary research and tuition-generating units to incur 75% of the USF System's budget reduction in the current year.

We appreciate the fact that you decided to slow the process, so that cuts would be taken over three years. However, there remain unanswered questions; if we as Chairs are to participate effectively in this process, we need to understand the full context for the "new normal."

To date, we have not received a documented explanation of the need for the extent of the cuts to Academic Affairs, and we respectfully request such an explanation, including full details of needed cuts across the entire System. Second, we need to see and understand the full pattern of expenditures for the last five years for each funded unit across the System. Third, we would like to know projections for the second and third year of cuts for each of the System's funded units. Finally, in order to respond to the mandate to identify ways to increase revenue, we need to have full accounting of revenues generated by all entities, in addition to expenditures.

This current process, which comes on top of several years of cuts, is taking a significant toll on our colleagues, projecting an image of instability that is reducing confidence in the university and will undoubtedly have a negative impact on faculty retention and student success.

We chose to be chairs to advance our own departments' role in the university's central mission, to which we are deeply committed. We know that we must continue efforts to be more efficient, and we are ready to participate in any essential measures to achieve this. However, changes must be in the service of that mission and in an atmosphere of transparency and full disclosure. We thus request a meeting with you and Mr. Long to share our perspectives in more detail, and we would appreciate a response to this letter.

cc. Provost Ralph Wilcox; Collegiate Deans, USF, COO John Long.