



## THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

*Office of the President*  
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September 4, 2009

Dr. Jack Fiorito, President  
UFF-FSU Chapter  
244 RBB  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-1110

Dear Dr. Fiorito:

Chairman Jim Smith asked me to respond to your letter dated August 29, 2009. As you know the university was tasked with managing over \$82.8 million in budget cuts since October 2007. At the June 2009 Board meeting, the university had to cut its budget more than \$56.7 million due to legislative actions that affected our 2009-10 budget.

At its September 2008 meeting, in response to the revenue estimates and budget reductions the Board of Trustees recommended that a Budget Crisis Committee be formed. The committee is comprised of faculty members, a student member and staff members. This committee was tasked with recommending the best strategies for how to cut the E&G budget. The Budget Crisis Committee met regularly to share information and discuss alternatives. All material was posted on a university web site and anyone could offer comments, as many faculty, staff and students did. A town hall meeting was held to inform the campus and community and to receive input on the plan.

Our Trustees approved a 3-year financial plan at its June meeting. This plan maintains the academic integrity of FSU; protects FSU's financial integrity; ensures students' academic options; ensures student, faculty, staff safety; provides flexibility; prepares FSU for adverse consequences; recognizes worth and dignity of all students, faculty and staff; and takes full advantage of federal stimulus funds which allows maximum notice to employees.

I restate all of the above to provide a context for the budget process as directed by the Trustees. The budget crisis committee was formed to review all of the options available to handle the crisis. Non-reappointments and layoffs of faculty and staff were not the only solution, but part of the overall action deemed necessary. Your request to rescind the faculty layoffs will create a revenue hole somewhere else in the budget causing the 3-year financial plan to be out-of-balance. The hole would need to be filled by reducing some other portion of the budget.

The UFF has filed a grievance with the FSU administration stating its concerns, which is working its way through the appropriate process. There appears to be differing opinions between the UFF and the FSU administration regarding interpretation of the provisions of the agreement. The grievance process is the appropriate venue for in-unit

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faculty members and the union to address concerns regarding the appropriate application of the collective bargaining agreement.

We certainly understand the UFF's concerns and its duty to speak for and represent the faculty members within its bargaining unit to the best of its ability. Our hope is that over the upcoming two years we are able to provide assistance to the impacted faculty and staff members in finding jobs elsewhere or, hopefully in some cases, here at FSU. This situation is unfortunate and painful for all of us.

I believe your efforts should be redirected. FSU has been very responsible in the crisis. Rather than criticize these actions through a Board of Trustees request, I would suggest the UFF join me in supporting the September 3, 2009 report by the Office of Economic and Demographic Research for inclusion in the Board of Governor's LBR. In that report they recommend:

1. That in fiscal year 2011-2012, the Federal Stimulus funds be restored from general revenue.
2. That new enrollment funding be made available from general revenue beginning in 2010-2011 and continuing on into the future.
3. That other issues funded by general revenue of importance to universities be supported.
4. Work with appropriate groups to identify new funding sources so that budgets are not balanced on the backs of students. Any tuition hikes should be accompanied by new general revenue.

These recommendations were presented to the Joint Legislative Budget Commission on September 3, 2009, and we urge you to contact members of the Board of Governors as well as the Governor and the Florida Legislature to support these recommended appropriations.

In closing, let me remind you that we are doing everything we can to fund affected faculty for two full years, assuming Stimulus money is available next year.

Sincerely,

T.K. Wetherell  
President

cc: FSU Board of Trustees  
Chancellor  
SUS Presidents