

Dear Dean Diehl,

We appreciate the efforts made by your office to quickly implement the recommendations made by CTBAC earlier in the semester. Releasing information directly to students has increased the quality and quantity of discussions about the College of Liberal Arts budget and ways we can save money while insuring students feel the least number of negative effects.

Since our last recommendations, CTBAC has worked tirelessly to collect student input primarily through social media, a student survey, an open meeting and a town hall forum. We have found that students value all of the courses, research, outreach efforts, resources, and facilities currently offered by the College of Liberal Arts. They abhor the idea of budget cuts when they can see that faculty and staff could already use more funding. However, most students understand the situation we are in and recognize the need to scale back. Undergraduate and graduate students from over 30 departments and centers took part in our survey and answered questions about the largest areas of waste they see in the college and the most valuable resources provided to them. By percentage the largest areas of waste students see in the college are: utility expenses, paper usage, the salaries of upper administration, the construction of a new building, and some of the required classes in the liberal arts degree plan. Students indicated the resources they value the most are: advising, career services, faculty and professors, TAs, and funding for graduate research programs.

Based on the input we received from students and research we performed on our own, CTBAC has created four recommendations for this round of cuts.

Our first recommendation is to preserve the existence of all departments and centers in the college. Students have spoken strongly in support of different cultural studies centers, including the John L Warfield Center for African and African-American Studies, the Center for Mexican American Studies, and the Center for Women's and Gender Studies. We recommend against making any budget cuts that would endanger the core missions of these and other cultural studies centers. Additionally, President Powers has listed the Warfield Center for African and African-American Studies as well as the Center for Mexican American Studies as university priorities. We recommend if cuts are to be made to these centers under the assumption that funding will be provided by the university's central administration or another source, such funding should be confirmed beforehand.

Our second recommendation is to continue prioritizing teaching and research over outreach. The vast majority of undergraduate and graduate students agree that funds for community outreach efforts and paid guest speakers should be cut until the university's finances improve. CoLA students say that their highest priorities are those resources that directly lead to getting a degree from UT in a timely fashion and maintaining the quality of that degree.

Undergraduates most value quality teaching. Graduate students most value funding (in the form of TA- and AI-ships, research fellowships, and travel grants), faculty research, teaching experience, and professionalization efforts. Many graduate students suggest decreasing the number of graduate students admitted to each program in the future in order to maximize the resources devoted to each individual.

Our third recommendation is to seriously consider decreasing the amount of merit increases given in the coming year to tenured faculty and staff alike. Each 1% merit increase

costs the college an estimated \$875,000. CTBAC understands the importance of maintaining the faculty we have to remain an institution of top quality. This is why we do not recommend cutting completely or setting a cap on the amount given, but we do believe everyone should share the burden in these tough times. CTBAC acknowledges that President Powers sets the university's salary policy; nonetheless, we recommend your office negotiate for a more budget-friendly merit increase policy that strikes a better balance between retaining quality faculty and protecting existing student interests.

Our fourth recommendation is to encourage and incentivize departments and centers to efficiently use their resources. Students suggest reducing utility costs by turning off the lights in our buildings at night and using less air conditioning. Likewise, they suggest decreasing printing costs by posting course documents online and eliminating free printing services where they are currently available. CTBAC recognizes that utilities are paid for by the university rather than the college; thus, we encourage your office to begin conversations with President Powers about moving towards a responsibility-centered budget model, which would provide incentives for academic units to use resources more efficiently.

We strongly urge you to take these recommendations into consideration before making a decision. We understand these cuts stem from a decrease in funding from the state legislature, but please implement them in a way that does not create permanent rather than temporary distress.

We appreciate your willingness to take student input into account while making these difficult decisions. We look forward to working with your office in the coming weeks to help implement these recommendations. In the meantime, we have begun formulating a plan for

gathering student input pertaining to our next round of recommendations, regarding which we will be in contact with you soon.

Sincerely,

Liberal Arts College Tuition and Budget Advisory Committee