

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER**  
**The College of Medicine**

---

Dear Colleagues,

December 19, 2009

On Monday COM met with the Chancellor to evaluate our first pass proposals to reach budget reduction targets. These proposals are both revenue enhancements and budget reductions at the College level. Among other items they included a proposed increase in tuition and class size. Our proposals are now subject to evaluation by the UT System and the Chancellor to determine if they are feasible. If deemed feasible for implementation, they will undergo further evaluation plus vetting with faculty. UT System and campus wide decisions, such as the implementation of a furlough, are still under considered.

On Wednesday I met with the Chairs to continue preparation for departmental cuts. At this point I have asked all departments and COM Administration to provide a prioritized list of cuts that amount to 15% of this year's orange or state budget. Chairs will be consulting with their faculty on how this reduction should be achieved. With this list in hand, and upon UT System reductions and UTHSC cuts being announced, COM will be able to move to meet our budget. It is my hope and belief that the reductions required will be less than 15% after system wide and campus wide reductions. However, at this point we continue to plan for the worst case.

I would also like to share that faculty suggestions have been helpful with regard to identifying strategies COM may use to meet its budget. Faculty responses have been thoughtful, indicative of a high level of dedication to your colleagues, and it is clear that faculty recognize the severity of the problem. Current faculty suggestions include a revenue generating Masters program in one of our departments, further partnering with St Jude in select faculty positions, and refinement in the idea of an appeal to alumni. Please note this represents only a partial list of things that caught our attention and are being pursued. Thank you for joining with me in identifying reasonable solutions in a difficult situation.

Concerns and questions have also been raised that I would like to address. First, COM will not and cannot terminate select, tenured faculty. Tenured faculty may only be terminated if we discontinue a department, division, or unit. (Discontinuance was discussed in my last column, and policy regarding discontinuance is found in our Faculty Handbook 7.1.3.) Further, I fully agree that terminating productive tenure-track faculty would be counterproductive to growth. Our growth will slow, but strategic growth plans will continue, and our productive tenure-track faculty are key to that growth.

Finally, questions have been raised as to how COM can even consider recruitment of new faculty at this time. Positions that do not require orange dollars (or negligible orange dollars) and are underwritten by other third party funding sources (such as hospital partners) will go forward if they make financial and mission sense. An example of this is Obstetrics where we must increase faculty to meet our commitments. Our partners have committed resources, and it makes financial and mission sense to proceed. Our commitments to grow with our partners providing financial growth packages is essential. These positions still require UT system approval. However, to not hire these individuals would demonstrate a lack of business acumen necessary to see us through these and any future cuts.

In summary, at all levels in COM we are deep into planning as to how to assume our portion of the reduction. Please continue to send suggestions, concerns, or comments to the e-mail address below or speak with your Chair or DFAC representative. The more minds we have on this the better, and communication minimizes misunderstanding.

**Steve J Schwab, MD**  
Executive Dean, College of Medicine

--

The e-mail address to send in concerns, and make budget-cutting suggestions to Dr Schwab is [COM@utmem.edu](mailto:COM@utmem.edu).