

Dear Colleagues,

I am deeply grateful to the members of the Administrative Review and Restructuring Work Group for their effort and commitment to the challenging task placed in front of them last November. The group was ably led by Dr. Craig Bazzani and Dr. Avijit Ghosh and I wish to express my special appreciation to them and to each of the members of the work group. The aim was – and remains – the identification of avenues to improve service while reducing costs. Doing that will not be easy, but events of the last year and the fiscal and political landscape that lies ahead make it even more crucial than when we began.

The real challenge, however, is one of execution. Good ideas and recommendations are useless sitting on the shelf, gathering dust alongside other well-intentioned efforts in the past. The work group presents forty-three recommendations across organizational and functional areas which need more study and refinement, but they also require action.

In May, I brought to the Board of Trustees the work group's proposal that the positions of Vice President for Academic Affairs and Vice President for Technology and Economic Development be consolidated and the Board approved the recommendation. Additional steps, including needed changes in the General Rules, await arrival of President Michael Hogan in July. This initial step, however, is intended to signal a much broader opportunity to improve functioning by reducing the number of senior executive positions at all levels, reducing layers of management, and capturing the synergies to improve performance.

Another key recommendation of the work group is to craft stronger partnerships between the Foundation, Alumni Association and other externally facing "University advancement and development" functions. This recommendation has the support of the respective boards and has never been more important and urgent given the difficult economic and political times we are experiencing.

We can and must capture savings in the areas Information Technology and Procurement across the entire University. Examples include consolidation of data centers, e-mail and calendaring services and a centrally-led procurement model which maximizes strategic purchases for high-usage supplies and services.

As the work group observed, talented, dedicated people are the University's most precious asset. Still, there is no one point in the University at which human resource policies are monitored and managed. The consequence is an outdated, rule-driven system of personnel policies and decisions. We must be smarter and do better. While the work group did not hire outside consultants, as we move into the implementation phase, such assistance may be necessary. The need for improved human resource policies and systems presents a case in point.

A parallel effort of academic program review has been occurring on each campus. The Chancellors are leading a review of academic priorities, structures, processes, and policies. I

make special note these efforts since academic transformation may be even more challenging than the administrative reform, but it carries even greater long term significance.

None of these steps will be easy. Change will not occur overnight but it must occur promptly. The University must achieve the savings and improvements now. As I leave the presidency, President Hogan has asked me to accept personal responsibility for guiding these efforts and I have agreed to do so. I will form a small implementation team to facilitate review and consultation and will advise President Hogan and the Chancellors regarding next steps. I will also meet with the University Senates Conference and others, including the Board of Trustees, to seek their support and advice.

Above all, the University must control its destiny and safeguard its future. Each of us can and must contribute to this transformation. The work group's report is posted at uillinois.edu/arr/. Your ideas and suggestions are needed and welcome.

It has been my privilege to serve as your President for the past six months. More than you will ever know, I thank you for your confidence and support. I look forward to being your colleague in the months and years ahead. For all you contribute to the University of Illinois, I am deeply grateful.

Stanley O. Ikenberry