Response by President Sandeen to the University Layoff Committee report.
March 13, 2025
(President's responses embedded in blue.)

UCL's Call to Action

We urge the Administration to:

1. Provide immediate clarification on the recent information the UCL received regarding President Sandeen's authorization from the CSU Chancellor's Office to proceed with a layoff notice to the CFA as well as to issue layoff notices to affected employees (e.g., Are layoffs imminent? Is this just standard procedure in preparation for *possible* playoffs?).
Section 38 of the CBA requires notice of possible layoffs. The term "layoff" includes reducing any amount of the workload of 1.0 unconditional lecturers. Given the reduction in reassigned time for tenured and tenure-track (TT) faculty, more TT faculty teaching will be higher loads than before, and given the reduction in course sections due to lower enrollment, we anticipate at least reducing some workloads following our analysis of course enrollments, future demand, and changes to general education requirements. We are obligated to follow the CBA and maintain confidentiality of individual personnel actions.

2. Issue a formal response to this memo addressing faculty layoff concerns and clearly demonstrating the necessity of layoffs if they are to proceed.
We have provided course enrollment data. In addition, the CBA requires justification and "meet and confer" procedures for layoffs. We will continue to abide by contract terms.

3. Commit to transparency by publicly sharing budget justifications for any faculty reductions, including a comprehensive and detailed breakdown of alternative cost-saving measures considered and implemented prior to faculty layoffs.
We have provided numerous means of transparency through reports and presentations. See slide 3 from the President's Budget Town Hall webinar (PBTH), March 6, 2025. Cost savings measures began in 2022-23 with the elimination of unfilled administrative positions and many other methods in the intervening years. See PBTH, March 6, 2025, slide 10. Other budget-related information includes COBRA and UBAC reports.

4. Ensure compliance with shared governance and CSU CBA requirements in all layoff decisions. The Administration should:
a. Adhere to CBA Article 38.6, which details alternative cost-saving measures that must be pursued in good faith before layoffs. This occurs during the meet and confer process.
b. Provide documented evidence of good-faith efforts to implement as many of these measures as possible. This occurs during the meet and confer process.
c. Engage in meaningful consultation with faculty and the Academic Senate before making any final determinations. We have done this with the ULC, an Academic Senate committee, even though it is not required by the CBA. We expect the ULC to communicate with the full Academic Senate as needed.

5. Prioritize instructional integrity by exploring alternative cost-saving measures before reducing faculty positions. These measures should include:
a. Administrative, staff, and administrator (including MPP) hiring freezes and

reductions: We have implemented a hiring chill. Some positions are essential to our operations and cannot be left vacant for an extended period of time.
i. Faculty reductions should not be implemented disproportionally compared to non-instructional positions.
See PBTH, March 6, 2025, slide 10. Over a three-year period, administrative functions have taken greater reductions than instruction.
b. Reallocation of non-academic expenditures:
i. Budget reductions should be equitably distributed across the university rather than disproportionately affecting instructional faculty.
See PBTH, March 6, 2025, slide 10. Faculty numbers and workloads have been affected by enrollment and course demand.

c. A thorough and transparent review of University spending:
i. The Administration should share a comprehensive assessment of university expenditures, particularly in proportional comparison to instructional spending (i.e., per capita analysis and percentage of total university spending).
Please see PBTH, March 6, 2025, slide 11.
ii. The Administration should provide clear justification for the growth in athletics expenditures over recent years, particularly in light of the university's financial challenges.
We are sponsoring an external audit of our athletics department.
d. Full transparency regarding new campus housing projects:
i. The Administration should disclose financial details, projected costs, insurance costs, funding sources, as well as long-term financial and environmental impacts for new campus dormitories plans.
ii. Justification must be provided as to why this project is prioritized at a time when instructional and student support resources are experiencing significant cuts.
The housing project was placed on the CSU project list a couple years ago when special state funding was available for affordable student housing projects. Now that the funding no longer exists, we will remove the project from the list. We have no intention of moving forward with the project at this time. We have received no funding from any source for that project.
e. Evaluation of consultant and external service contracts:
i. The Administration should conduct an audit of external consulting fees and third-party contracts to determine whether these expenditures can be reduced or eliminated before proceeding with faculty layoffs.
We limit our use of consultants; any consulting contracts are also subject to the university procurement process. We have been provided some consulting work, mostly in the area of enrollment management, paid by the Chancellor's Office. Search consultants, in particular, are used for certain leadership positions to ensure a robust and broad applicant pool.

6. Provide clear, updated, and accurate financial data on faculty layoff decisions (and other cost cutting measures), including:
a. The specific budget shortfalls driving the decision and how these shortfalls compare to previous financial planning.
We project a $23 million structural deficit for FY2025-26 due to reductions in tuition/fee revenue, state allocation, and the Chancellor's Office reallocation program as well as unfunded mandatory costs increases like utilities, health benefits, and contractual salary increases. See PBTH, March 6, 2025, slides

9 and 17. Structural deficits have existed each year as far back at FY2021-22. Cost-cutting has occurred continuously beginning in FY2022-23, see PBTH, March 6, 2025, slide 10.

b. A breakdown of projected savings from layoffs and an analysis of their long-term financial and academic impact.

Per our Guiding Principles for Budget Reductions, we support student success by ensuring adequate course sections that meet current demand. We also will provide adequate support services (advising, tutoring, health and counseling, basic needs). These services are funded through non-instructional portions of the operating budget.

We will provide a report of savings from faculty reductions, including lecturer non-renewals, after close of the 2024-25 fiscal year.

c. A justification for why non-faculty budget reductions have not been sufficient to avoid faculty layoffs.

Instruction is the largest component of the budget. Many other parts of our operating budget include mandatory expenses that cannot be reduced, see PBTH, March 6, 2025, slide 9. Support and success of our students would be damaged by completely eliminating non-faculty support services to maintain faculty positions when enrollment and course sections have decreased.

d. An accounting of all campus cost-cutting measures.

These have been reported in numerous reports and documents. Please see, for example, the WSCUC Self-Study, Standard 3, August 2024 and the President's Budget Town Hall, March 6, 2025.

7. Engage in good-faith dialogue with faculty representatives to explore creative alternatives to layoffs, including:

a. Voluntary workload reductions or phased retirements as cost-saving measures.

We offered a Voluntary Separation Incentive Program in spring 2024. Only six faculty participated resulting in minimal savings.

b. Internal budget reallocation strategies that prioritize instructional needs.

c. Collaboration with faculty and departments to develop solutions that align with student success and academic integrity.

We do both B and C regularly and will continue to do so. The Focused Program Review Advisory Task Force (spring 2025) will include 9 faculty members, including COBRA and CAPR representatives..