As we head into the summer months when we take a breath and prepare for the 2014-15 academic year, I want to take the opportunity to update everyone on the budget process. I know both faculty and staff have had questions; while there are many details we still don’t know, I’ll share with you the information that we do have.

There are two important decisions coming up that will impact our budget; the state budget – which will likely be approved by the end of this month; and our tuition – which will be set by the Board of Governors (BOG) at their meetings July 7 and 8 in Harrisburg.

Based on what we know now regarding the State budget deficit, it appears that the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education (PASSHE), which includes Millersville University, will not receive an increase in state funding. We are not even certain that PASSHE will receive the same funding it received last year. (It is important to note that flat funding doesn’t meet the rate of inflation, which is currently 2.8% for higher education.) While PASSHE is also developing a new formula for the allocation of state funds, that formula has not yet been approved. Our vice president of administration and finance, Roger Bruszewski, serves on that task force, so Millersville’s interests are well represented as a new model is created.

While we don’t know at what percentage the BOG will set tuition, we do know that for the past 10 years the average tuition increase has been 3.72%, and we don’t anticipate a tuition rate above that average. Millersville will implement two new pilot programs for differential tuition; classes given in downtown Philadelphia at the Center City site and for high cost STEM – science, technology, engineering and math programs.

It is too early to estimate what the exact impact will be on Millersville’s budget, but we are preparing for a scenario based on a several million dollar gap between our projected expenses and expected income.

Fortunately, there is good news to report. Our fall freshmen enrollment targets are slightly above our goals. We anticipate welcoming 1,300 new freshmen this fall, and out-of-state deposits are up 40% over this time last year.

I plan to send another budget update to campus in mid-July. Right now, I appreciate everyone’s willingness to roll up their sleeves and help tackle the budget situation. Together, we will become a stronger University.

Sincerely,

John M. Anderson, Ph.D.
President