

Dear colleagues and friends,

As you are all keenly aware, we have many new challenges due to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, and we are faced with difficult decisions, both personally and professionally.

For the UW System, the unbudgeted costs and disruption to revenue of COVID-19 present significant financial challenges to all our universities. As I noted in my April 13 memo, the preliminary cost estimates for the spring semester alone are \$168 million across the System. It's almost hard to believe. And those numbers continue to change and grow. We are all hoping for a speedy end to this crisis, but the truth is, no-one knows how and when that will actually happen.

In the meantime, we are all doing what we can to preserve our future as a university and to ensure that we can continue to deliver on our primary mission, our commitment to teaching and learning. Unfortunately, we will have to reduce our current workforce and operational costs to do that.

This is a painful but necessary reality. And it is difficult news to share. You and your colleagues across the UW System are the very lifeblood of who we are and what we do. I am so proud of your dedication to our mission in the face of unprecedented challenges. It is my top priority to protect you, your job, and your benefits as best we can.

At the institutional level, when it comes to charting a path to reduce costs, Chancellors will have the flexibility to make their own decisions on how to best meet the needs of their campus community. Circumstances differ, so we know those plans will vary.

For my System Administration colleagues, I want you to hear from me what we are planning.

Starting in May, we will be instituting a one-day furlough per month for all UWSA employees – and that includes UW-Shared Services and UW Extended Campus – to run through June 2021. That is, for a period of 14 months. Supervisors will be working with employees to come up with a plan to implement these furloughs with the least disruption.

At the same time, we will continue to adjust our policies and day-to-day practices on the operational side to maximize our financial abilities to meet this crisis.

If conditions change, we may have to take additional action – but for now, this will be our plan.

Please continue to go to our COVID-19 website for updates and resources, including a new FAQ about furloughs and how they relate to leave and other employee benefits.

I hope you'll take a moment to view my video message linked below. Thank you again for all that you do. I am proud to work alongside you. We will get through this together. Be safe, be kind, and stay engaged.

Thanks,

Ray