

## **College of Human Ecology Task Force Executive Summary**

Through careful planning, selective program elimination, and strategic decisions to fund its facility projects out of operating budget rather than debt, the College of Human Ecology is well situated to absorb the significant budget cuts and continue its innovation in education, research and outreach.

### **Sizing the 15% Reduction and Balanced Budgets**

The College's unrestricted budget (not counting externally sponsored funds and direct university charges (CAM, financial aid, accessory instruction) is between \$30-35 million. A 15% budget reduction leads to between a 4.5 and 5.2 million dollar budget reduction which translates into 24% of available unrestricted funds. Moreover, during the last 5 years, CHE has had to make significant changes to its academic and operating structure because of its unique facility challenges and rapidly increasing central costs. The combined costs of CAM, financial aid, accessory instruction and central budget recovery have risen from \$12.5 million in 2004 to \$20.8 million in 2010, a percentage increase of 65.8%. In addition, over the last five years the college has carved approximately \$9 million dollars out of its operating budgets (rather than debt service or use of reserves) to prepare for the renovation of its 1933 building and its support of the Human Ecology Building. Yet despite these challenges, the College has maintained balanced budgets in all years and Human Ecology has successfully planned a 2010 budget that is balanced and absorbs the university budget cuts. The College has also planned for another cut for 2011 and has developed planning scenarios that lead to balanced budgets without use of reserves.

### **Strategic Decisions Have Positioned the College to Support and Invest in its Five Primary Units**

The ability to balance our budgets and fund our facilities without debt was made possible by major changes made in the college over recent years including: consolidation of academic departments from six to five, elimination of the social work program, consolidation and integration of admissions, counseling, and career services into a single Office of Admissions, Student and Career Development, elimination of the media and technology services unit, closure of the early childhood center, and closure of the Institute for Policy Research. The most recent decisions include the elimination of a stand-alone Undergraduate Leadership Program, a reorganization of outreach so that it is more integrated into a faculty- led translational research model, replacing Study Abroad with Exchange Programs to the extent possible and reorganization of the Capital Semester in Albany Program. Finally, the college has been quick to develop mission relevant revenue enhancing programs (in just the last year the college has developed two new masters programs and a post-baccalaureate health studies program).

The Task Force considered whether the five units within the college should be further consolidated. Analysis of our budgets and cross-department comparisons reveals several insights. First, each unit is making clear contributions, and there is no unit that appears to have disproportionate resources relative to the combined metrics analyzed (dollars spent per undergraduate, dollars spent per credit hour taught, dollars spent per graduate student, etc.). Moreover, CHE faculty compare very favorably with faculty from other colleges when

examining teaching, advising and research output. Credit hours taught per faculty, number of students in CHE per faculty, number of credits taught to students in other colleges per faculty, and externally funded research dollars per faculty compare well with faculty from other colleges.

### **The College Will Continue to Invest in Cross-College and University Initiatives**

The College of Human Ecology has been a key player in generating and promoting cross-college collaboration. We will preserve these programs and continue to develop new collaborations. Some prominent examples include the Tissue Engineering Program, Nutritional Genomics, Cornell Population Program, Human Development, Psychology and the Law program, fMRI and Neuroscience Center, Global Health Research and Education, and Major Translational Research Centers with Weill Medical College.

### **The College Will Reorganize its Leadership and Outreach to Further the Integration of Undergraduate Education, Research and Outreach**

The College will no longer offer a leadership certificate program but instead faculty and staff will integrate leadership education through existing courses, outreach and extension experiences, and the Capital and Urban Semester Programs. This will dovetail well with the current reorganization of the CHE extension mission - whereby the College is moving to a translational research model thereby fully integrating research and outreach in a way that brings federal research dollars to the effort. Our two newest Ph.D programs around design and human behavior are further examples of integration of education and research.

### **Maintain Research Administration Close to the Faculty**

Pre and post award grants management takes place primarily in the academic departments. Given the level of funding that has been generated (over \$200,000 per faculty per annum) we believe that having research administration as close to the faculty as possible has contributed to this success and seek to invest in this structure.

### **Support Health Related Curriculum**

The high interest in health careers among current and prospective HE students is expected to continue. Human Ecology programs provide an excellent setting for preparation for advanced study in health careers. Given the large number of pre-med students in CHE as well as other units we believe that cross college teams should be responsible for monitoring enrollment demands for the large service courses and that a plan for assuring that these courses have adequate resources to meet enrollment demands be put in place.

### **Administrative Management and Support Services**

Human Ecology has centralized all of its core administrative functions (IT, HR, Facilities and Business Services). This consolidation allows the academic units to focus on program and direct faculty services, while allowing the benefits of scaled services in the university business functions. Overall the cost of administrative business support services in the college represents less than 7 percent of the college's annual expenditures.