DATE: June 27, 2017

TO: Academic Deans/Directors

FROM: Linda A. Barrett
Director, Budget and Financial Planning

SUBJECT: FY2018 Unrestricted Budget Allocation

Returns Due to Budget & Financial Planning Office by Tuesday, July 11, 2017

Thank you for your patience this year as we experienced a delay in providing the Fund 100 budget files to all colleges/areas. For many reasons beyond our control, this was a complex budget development year that required additional time to develop and calibrate a workable budget. Further, as you know, we do not currently have a budget system and the work that is done to provide you with the budget files uses various Peoplesoft queries, reports, data from financials and HR and complex excel files, with excel pushed to its limits. A new budget system has been purchased to allow colleges and departments to access a web based method to complete their budgets, easy access, current up-to-date information and increased security. We are in the process of engaging an implementation partner, and we plan to ask many offices across the campus to participate in the implementation process.

In accordance with the FY2018 Budget Allocation process, senior management recently approved the FY2018 allocation. It appears that the University will receive an annual increase of $1.9M in General State Appropriation which is $2.7M less than requested. This results in a potential shortfall of $2.7M which may be able to be addressed at the mid-year budget cycle. The earliest we will have an indication if we are successful in resolving the shortfall will be December 2017 when all revenue and expense projections are reviewed and updated.

Depending upon the outcome of the FY2018 Mid-Year Review and if the University is allowed to request a tuition increase in FY2019, as we plan for FY2019, it could become necessary to explore thoughtful and strategic base reductions to ensure a balanced budget for FY2019.

In summary, there are many moving parts and numerous discussions that are anticipated during the next twelve months on these issues. Please be reassured that every effort will be made to provide funding at an appropriate level to ensure student success and to effectively carry out the academic, research, public service and economic development missions of the institution. As always, we appreciate your continued efforts, contributions, and patience as we move forward together.

Specific information related to the FY2018 Allocation is provided below.

The freshmen enrollment is on target and together with continuing, transfer, and graduate enrollment, provides the majority of revenue in the unrestricted budget.

The yield of the freshmen class and the retention of students is the result of efforts from many areas, including your colleges and departments. Your commitment is very much appreciated. Please continue efforts in the Deans’ offices to encourage returning students to register for the fall semester and to return to complete their degree programs.
For the eighth year, budget hearings were held and each college/unit was provided the opportunity to present their challenges, opportunities, primary budget priorities, requests for FY2018 as well as FY2018 faculty positions, and the strategic emphases of the college. They were also provided the opportunity to share their future vision of their college and the University. I had the opportunity to participate in the hearings and at the completion of all hearings, I joined the Provost and his staff to review all related information.

The information in the attached packet reflects decisions by the Provost relative to funding for your college. Your bottom line budget for FY2018 as approved by the Provost is reflected in this packet. In addition, you will see the estimated fringe benefits for your college/unit. This allows you to see the estimated total Fund 100 resources dedicated to your college/unit.

The FY2018 Allocation establishes the projection for each area and includes adjustments. An example of an adjustment is: reversals of all one-time only budget allocations, such as start-up transfers from the Provost’s Office.

The FY2018 projected expenditure does not automatically project filled and vacant positions beyond the FY 2017 Mid-Year level. It is important that you review the file provided to you and determine the exact amount you must budget for each filled and vacant position. You may also access payroll distribution data. Please verify all salaries as the amounts provided are estimated. Please refer to the separate budget and technical guidelines for more information.

Please be assured that neither the Provost nor the Budget & Financial Planning Office has made a decision to project or not to project expenditures relative to a specific position or a portion of a specific position. Rather, as referenced above, all positions are projected at the FY 2017 budget level with the responsibility for the level of funding required in FY2018 resting with the Dean/Director. This is consistent with the current process of filling positions. As noted on the Request to Fill Form (RF-1):

Dean/Director’s signature (email from requesting office acceptable in lieu of signature) authorizes the filling of the position, certifies position FTE and funding exist in the existing budget, and indicates the Dean/Director’s responsibility to fully fund this position in the next fiscal year(s) regardless of the level of funding required for the position in the current fiscal year.

It is also important to remember that any position funds you may have transferred to other categories currently remain in those categories in the FY2018 projected expenditures you receive. (i.e., if you transferred vacancy dollars to operating because a position was filled for six months in FY 2017, and the position will be filled for twelve months in FY 2018, you must reallocate the dollars from operating back to the position line.)

In accordance with the budget principles established within Academic Affairs, the Provost is continuing the process whereby new vacancy dollars related to faculty will be captured for reallocation by the Provost. These funds will be allocated based on criteria developed by the Provost. These criteria include consistency with strategic priorities, unit productivity, cost effectiveness, and innovation as discussed in the Council of Deans meetings.

Consistent with the FY 2018 process, one-time-only allocations related to the curriculum delivery to the freshman class will be processed by the Provost’s Office this summer and shortly after the start of the fall semester when student need for seats have been determined and seats have been added.
If your returns reflect unfunded vacancies for which there is a current search, please notify Human Resources and Affirmative Action that you have elected to cancel that search.

Please refer to the technical guidelines which can be found by accessing the following link: http://web.uri.edu/budget/resources/

You must fund all filled and committed position lines in your returns. You must also fund commitments made to any other personnel, operating, and student aid or capital lines. You may reallocate among account codes and departments except where noted (i.e. course fee). If you reallocate to fund a position that was not funded in FY 2018, you must also provide a budget transfer for the associated fringe benefits. In order to expedite the process after returns are received by the Budget & Financial Planning Office, if known commitments are not funded, the Analyst will contact your fiscal staff to resolve the issue in a timely fashion. If the issue cannot be resolved quickly, the Budget Analyst will reallocate funds to cover the commitments and your fiscal staff can elect to re-allocate at a later date.

Fund 104 includes State Appropriation designated for a specific purpose by the Executive branch. Currently there are three accounts in this category. Endeavor Support $500,000, Coastal Resiliency $100,000 and Jason $75,000.

Please refer to the general budget guidelines for the process and information related to course fee budgets and budgets for fee areas.

The Faculty Development Funds will be distributed to the colleges by the Provost’s Office after the start of the fiscal year.

All Graduate Assistant positions should be budgeted in account code 5252. Graduate Research Assistant positions should be budgeted in account code 5253.

Startup and other transfers from the Provost’s Office are not reflected in your FY2018 projections. These transfers were reversed before calculating the FY2018 Projections. Startup dollars and any other Provost transfers will be distributed by the Provost after July 1, 2017.

FY2018 Allocations for new match dollars, which are budgeted in Fund 110, will be distributed by the Vice President for Research & Economic Development after July 1, 2017.

The returned budget should reflect your plan for the fiscal year. This requires planning your annual budget expenses, including multi-year encumbrances, by the appropriate account code during the Allocation process. This also reduces the number of budget transfers required during the year. Please plan and budget accordingly during the Allocation process. Please do not request budget transfers if there is sufficient budget at the ORG level.

Your returns (due in the Budget & Financial Planning Office by Tuesday, July 11, 2017) must reflect the total budget as authorized by the Provost, which is reflected on the files sent to you by our office. If it does not, the Budget & Financial Planning Office will be forced to adjust (in the Deans’ Office if possible) budget returns that exceed the authorized amount.

There is a final review tab that must be completed by all areas. If not completed, we will not be able to accept your return.
The allocation package for your area has been e-mailed to you. It is important that complete and accurate data be returned in the designated format to the Budget & Financial Planning Office no later than Tuesday, July 11, 2017 to ensure that the data can be entered into the University’s financial system as soon as possible in the new fiscal year.

Please feel free to contact your Budget Analyst if you have any questions concerning the completion of the budget forms. A separate letter from the Provost may reflect specific college information not contained in this memorandum.

I will be available to any unit that would like to review the detail backup of the steps taken to arrive at the tentative allocation for your unit and/or to discuss any questions you may have concerning the allocation. Please email me at lindab@uri.edu to schedule a meeting as soon as possible.

It is important that all areas utilize the Excel spreadsheets provided. They must be returned to the Budget & Financial Planning Office in the same format. Please e-mail your return to budget_cycle_returns@etal.uri.edu by Tuesday, July 11, 2017.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

cc: Donald H. DeHayes, Abigail Rider, Michelle Curreri, Matt Bodah, Dean Libutti, Laura Beauvais, Ann Morrissey, Cheryl Hinkson, Colleen Robillard