



# **Tabor College Budgeting Decisions for 2019-2020 Academic Year**

*Frequently Asked Questions and Answers*

## **BIG PICTURE**

### **What do you mean by a preferred future?**

Our preferred future includes a sustainable business model where each year revenue exceeds expenses, a growing scholarship endowment, a clear theological identity, a continued focus on upgrading facilities, an expansion of academic programs, and a strategic plan that advances our vision statement. A significant part of this is increased enrollment in performing arts programs and in academic programs. The strategic plan that is being developed will provide more specifics.

### **How did this happen?**

For the past six years during the Signature Campaign, giving to the Annual Fund decreased each year. The final push of the Grand Finale to build the Shari Flaming Center for the Arts continued to significantly decrease giving to the Annual Fund. In addition, in the past two years, we increased our payroll by almost \$700,000 while our enrollment remained flat with a slight decrease. We were faced with a projected \$1.8 million shortfall for the 2019-20 academic year.

### **Who made these decisions?**

The administration proposed all budget adjustments to the Board of Directors. The Finance Committee of the board was apprised of the details, including the actual personnel being affected. In Executive Session, the budget adjustments were presented and discussed by the entire Board. The Board came out of Executive Session and approved the budget as presented.

### **Will the administration give the names of those who have been laid off?**

As a matter of policy the names of people affected are not announced publicly or in print. This is out of respect for each individual and the pain that they are experiencing during this time.

### **Why was athletics not cut?**

It was reduced programmatically but not with personnel. There may be other reductions yet to come in athletics.

### **How much debt does Tabor have?**

Tabor has about \$6 million in long-term debt. The money that was borrowed at the end of the last fiscal year has been repaid. Operational debt from this year is yet to be determined due to the positive response by our constituents to the TaborNOW! Campaign. The budget adjustments were made to avoid having to borrow for operations going forward.

### **How will tuition change?**

An increase of \$550 per semester for tuition and \$125 for room. Meal plan rates are not changing. This is a modest percentage increase in line with what has been the case nearly every year. Tabor leadership tries to be as sensitive as possible to the financial stress on students.

### **How will these changes affect the Hillsboro community?**

Whenever someone leaves the community, there is grieving at the loss. We expect people to find new vocational opportunities.

### **Do these actions constitute a mission drift?**

No. Rather we believe that it helps us expand our mission reach and give us a financial margin to further fulfill our mission.

### **When you say Tabor is in a strong financial position, what do you mean?**

Our Composite Financial Index (CFI) is what the U.S. Department of Education looks at to determine the viability and strength of an institution. Our CFI is 2.81 out of a possible 3.0. All our financial ratios are strong and above the norm. This is the benchmark across all colleges and universities in the country.

## **DECISION AND COMMUNICATION PROCESS**

### **How were individual employees identified for release or reassigned?**

The primary reason was budget reduction. In addition, we considered enrollment (recruiting and retaining) impact and revenue impact. Additional factors were considered based upon various data sets and conversations with appropriate individuals.

### **Why did you cut all the people with tenure?**

We use the phrase continuing employment rather than tenure and it is only available for faculty. Multiple employees who are not faculty were affected. The idea that we cut only or mostly faculty who had continuing employment is inaccurate. We have reduced the workforce. We have followed the faculty-approved policy manual in doing so. One faculty member with continuing employment status will not receive a Notice of Appointment for next year. The role for that position has been reorganized and redefined. Two other faculty with continuing employment status were offered other positions at the college. The rest of the employees who were affected did not have continuing employment status.

### **How can firing people be considered Christ-like?**

Providing leadership of a Christian college is a stewardship that has been placed in the hands of administrators. Being Christ-like is being a good steward of what He has entrusted to us. We intentionally practiced the golden rule as we delivered the difficult message to those affected by the reductions. We treated people the way we would want to be treated when receiving hard news. We grieve for those affected. We claim the promise of Scripture that God takes everything that happens in the lives of those who love Jesus and works it together for good.

### **Why has there been so much secrecy and the administration not told us more about the reasons behind the decisions?**

We have been as transparent as possible and appropriate. Out of respect for the people involved, and as a matter of policy regarding personnel, we have not shared information that we believe would be harmful.

### **Why is no one in administration listening to us?**

The response from our constituency has been divided on affirming our decisions and being upset with our decisions. The numbers have been almost equal. So triaging the voices is part of our responsibility as we further the mission. Another way to say this is while the voices are important, they are not the basis for decisions. Instead, decisions are primarily rooted in mission, vision and values.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAMMING**

### **Will my ability to graduate on time be affected?**

Absolutely not. None of the changes will affect the path students are on. If there is an issue of this nature, Tabor will make the needed arrangements and adjustments so that the students can complete their degree in the traditional time. Tabor graduates earn their degree in four years or less 83% of the time. This is the best rate in the state of Kansas and we will continue striving to serve students well along these lines.

### **What is happening with teacher education?**

We are investing in the education program and expanding it as a way to increase enrollment. We will offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees. The education faculty will teach in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. The HLC requires that our faculty have doctorates to teach in the Master's program.

### **We now have no elementary education professors. Who is going to teach those classes?**

The reorganizing of the education department leaves us with two open positions that will be filled as soon as we find qualified candidates that are able to teach in both undergraduate and graduate programs as required by the HLC. The need for elementary education professors and advisors will be met with the hiring of these two persons.

### **My advisor is being let go. What happens to me?**

A new advisor will be assigned to you.

### **Why don't we have a management professor in the business department?**

The management professor position is still open and we are searching for qualified candidates for the position.

### **Will the curriculum changes affect our accreditation status?**

No. The HLC accredits institutions as a whole and does not speak into what programming to offer. The reorganization of our academic departments and curriculum into the School of Liberal Arts, the School of Professional Studies and the School of Graduate Studies does not affect accreditation. All academic programs will continue to meet professional accreditation standards, including KSDE.

## **PERFORMING ARTS**

### **If you want to grow the performing arts programs, why cut back music?**

We do not view it as cutting back music. We are reorganizing it for growth. The past 10 years participation in the performing arts programs has remained flat between 80-100 students. We consider that unacceptable. We are reorganizing and developing strategies with the goal to increase the total number of students involved in the performing arts by 150 students.

### **You say you are supporting the arts. How are your actions consistent with this statement?**

We are reorganizing the music department to enable enrollment growth to happen. In addition to an already strong concert choir, we envision multiple choral groups and ensembles to thrive giving more students an opportunity to be involved in music. Some of these groups are already being formed. This approach necessitates reconfiguring the choir director role to be an administrative position with faculty status enhancing the co-curricular nature of musical ensembles.

### **Are you cutting the choir?**

No. We are reconfiguring the role of the director as a co-curricular position with faculty status.

### **Who is taking over the choir?**

We expect to hire a new choral director before the end of March.

### **What happens to my performing arts scholarship?**

You will keep the current scholarship that you have.

### **What will happen to the singing of Messiah? I heard it will be discontinued.**

Messiah will continue to be sung each December. Alumni will be invited back to sing as in the past.

### **How can it make sense to let the person go who took the choir to Carnegie Hall?**

The choir going to Carnegie was a once-in-a-lifetime experience provided by the college and its donors for the students. It had no bearing on any of the decisions.

### **Was the new center for the arts the cause of the problem?**

No. The new building is the center of the performing arts vision for Tabor. We are determined to expand the number of ensembles available for students. One of the reasons we have taken these steps is an effort to maximize the potential of the Shari Flaming Center for the Arts.

## **TABOR COLLEGE WICHITA**

### **Can you describe the future vision for what has been called Tabor College Wichita?**

All the programs at TCW were already online. So moving them to another location has no impact on the student experience. We expect that these programs will grow with online delivery and also produce a margin due to relatively little overhead facility expense. Expanded graduate programs is part of the future.

### **I heard Tabor Wichita is closing... is that true?**

Actually, we are relocating operations, services and personnel to Hillsboro. All programs will continue to be offered. This will be a seamless transition for students. The new offices will be located in the old MB Foundation building.

### **What happens to the TCW Reflection Ridge location?**

Tabor leadership is working with the property management company on the transition.

### **What's going to happen to the MB Southern District office in Wichita?**

The leadership of the Southern District will make a determination on their next location.