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Dear Colleagues,

Our newest school, the School of Animal and Comparative Biomedical Sciences was launched on March 29. This significant event, included a long-horned steer called “Longstreet” that gave many people a ride, and three high profile invited speakers (Mara Aspinall, CEO and president of Ventana Medical Systems; Andrew Maccabe, executive director of the American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges; and Bob Moran, CEO and chairman of PetSmart). I’d like to extend my thanks, again, to everyone who made the event a success and recognize again the vision of the faculty and staff from the former departments of Animal Sciences and Veterinary Science & Microbiology. There is great support from, and excitement in, the university and the community and this is something on which we need to capitalize.

I want to clarify something that I wasn’t aware until recently was a source of confusion—there is no hierarchy amongst the associate deans, there is no vice dean and the associate deans are a team of equals.

Also good news, centrally (and as you already know) CALS salary lines are not in deficit. However, as you know, that doesn’t mean we don’t have considerable financial, structural and staffing strains throughout our system. Comparing FY13 with FY08, as measured either in total appropriations or appropriations per dollar of personal Arizona income, the cuts have been -42.0% and -41.5%, respectively. Arizona has taken bigger proportional cuts to higher education than any other state. The outcome is that, compared with 2008, we can afford only 80% of the teaching/research personnel and only 60% in Cooperative Extension, including county, center, and campus based personnel. (If you wonder why we can afford fewer Cooperative Extension personnel, it’s because the tuition increases paid by Arizona’s families can legally be used to buffer the impact of the cuts in teaching/research but not in Cooperative Extension).

The ‘07-‘09 recession was the worst in three generations; the recovery has been extremely slow for everyone and no one working today has worked through the issues we now are. The state now pays about 16% of the cost to run the UA, but 13 states have lower absolute investment than this. As we move forward, we need to remember what we’ve achieved already and that we are on track to achieve what we need to for ourselves and our stakeholders. However, as we do so, I am most aware of, and concerned about, burnout, morale and stress in all of CALS’ employees. There is no question that despite the recession we have much greater performance demands on us than ever before, and so to meet these demands, and keep everyone happy and healthy, we need to examine seriously what we continue to do, and how we do it. We simply can’t take almost half our budget away and keep doing everything today the way we’ve done it in the past. We are not alone in facing our challenges, but please never lose sight of two things: *we can do some things temporarily to take us beyond a specific situation; nothing we do today cannot in the future be done differently—especially if we prioritize generating new financial resources today.*

Optimal physical, cyber and human infrastructure within CALS can help us greatly do things more effectively and efficiently and with less stress on everyone concerned and generate revenue. Because we have some serious infrastructure issues, I have focused in this financial year, and will do to some extent in FY14 also, on fixing the most significant issues so that our own, our students, and our other stakeholders’ lives are better. But we also need to be innovative in our infrastructure design and implementation.

So what are our next steps? During March the Executive Council met with each of the Academic Unit Heads for schools and departments individually to do the annual unit reviews. The E.C. very much needs as thorough an understanding as we can get of your unit, your challenges and your plans. We must make decisions on objective data in comparable formats among units, and not on subjective opinion or advocacy. This comprehensive process was scheduled for three hours for each unit and none finished early. Three hours really isn't long compared with the tens of thousands of hours' work annually in even CALS' smallest academic units. In addition to information focused on the Arizona Board of Regents' metrics for us as part of performance based funding, your unit's business office and unit head prepared a three-year budget model and financial management plan. All of the county Cooperative Extension units are now going through a very similar review process with Associate Dean and Director Silvertooth.

Our unit annual reviews are mandated by the Arizona Board of Regents, but that shouldn't be the only reason they are done. A lot of work went into preparing them and we should take advantage of it—so we will. The annual review presentations and the budget models will be available on your unit websites by May 1. You can see what was presented, where your unit is financially, and compare with other units. Why? For the same reason that budget transparency is so important in our public institution—so we can work together to find innovative solutions that will allow us to be more efficient and effective. Please email me, discuss within your units, contact your unit head and/or the associate dean and/or Faculty Consultative Group members if you have constructive ideas. None of us has the monopoly on good ideas.

Now that we have a clear and comparative view of our academic units, the unit heads are working with me and the associate deans to identify objectively how we invest the state permanent salary money that we do have for FY14 (about \$340,000 college-wide). Cooperative Extension has initiated a *Strategic Hiring Priorities Evaluation* that will start with a committee representing all college units to develop a draft plan that will be further refined at a CALS administrative meeting in May. Together we must identify the most critical and most exceptional needs for this investment. This means there may not be resources to fund important and excellent needs. Funding must also be consistent with the university strategic direction articulated by President Hart in her inaugural speech and letters: "The UA will emphasize research in the areas of biomedical science and biotechnology; environmental science, technology and policy; optical and information science and technology; and space sciences. These are areas that have high potential for external grants and contracts."

Once the money is spent, though, there is no more and the unit heads will have no choice but to use their leadership skills to take other, authorized and transparent, management steps to ensure that we fulfill our missions (see previous "Dear Colleagues" letters). Our associate deans will also work with the unit heads in this process. Again your voice is an essential component of our shared governance.

By June 30 (in time for the new financial year) we need to know where we will invest the college's permanent funds. This is a lot of work because we have a complex and diverse statewide system and we have some very important years ahead. But if we can set up the strongest foundation we can this year, through both investment and changes in our management, we can make impactful investments in FY15.

In addition to unit head management, I am to continually consider how the college can most effectively and efficiently run as a whole. This is especially important now. In the new *responsibility (aka revenue) centered management* (RCM) process, unrecognized, unnecessary and unaccounted for costs will have a significant down side—we will have to pay for them and they are hundreds of thousands of dollars. While I, and the rest of the E.C., have no preconceived ideas about what CALS will look like administratively in the future, we are committed to delivering the diversity of valuable degrees we do now and respecting all of our discipline areas; at the same time, we are completely open to considering innovative administrative structures. The FCG continues to formulate recommendations to advise the E.C. and the unit heads on ways by which CALS academic units can cooperate and innovate to enhance the effective and efficient delivery of education, research and extension against the backdrop of aging faculty demographics, imminent faculty retirements and limited resources to hire new faculty. If you

have good ideas, please let them know. They are your shared governance voice. As we move through this process, we need to remember that change is not an indictment on the past, but simply recognition that our environment or ecosystem has changed and we can now best work in a different way. Biologically our ability to change through our behaviors, and not be limited by our anatomy and physiology, makes us the most adaptable species on earth. When we make any changes we will focus first on what is most important—our employees foremost. Our students and our other stakeholders will benefit most if we do.

As I have said throughout my short two years here, my top priority is to focus on reinvesting in our people. President Hart clearly shares this view and I want to finish with the good news that CALS will be given recurring funds for merit-based pay raises effective in FY14. I want to thank Dr. Hart for doing so in this letter. CALS will soon receive its proportional share of the \$9.1M to be distributed UA-wide, along with detailed instructions about its distribution. As soon as I have the details, I will let everyone know.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shane". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "S".

Shane