

## **MSU Faculty, Staff, and Students:**

As many of you know the Commonwealth of Kentucky has been experiencing a multitude of budget pressures, both within their general budget, and as a result of increased pension cost for employees. Never before has the Commonwealth of Kentucky seen a new higher education funding formula, skyrocketing pension costs, and a looming state budget cut.....all within a 12 month period of time! This, unfortunately, is a triple hit to MSU and most all other universities within Kentucky. For instance, the new state funding formula has reduced our state funding this year, our new pension costs that we must pay to the respective systems are slated to cost us over \$3 million new dollars annually, and a possible state budget cut could cost us many more millions of dollars by mid next summer.....again, all in a 12 month period of time. It is important to note that most all Kentucky universities are grappling with the same issues as we are, so we are not in a silo by ourselves.

To respond to this triple pressure at Morehead State University, we have been methodically looking at all units on our campus to see if we can provide savings and efficiencies, but with the goal of maintaining as many of the services for our students that we can. Our pledge has been to stick to our mission of providing a quality educational environment to our students, and we will continue to do that, but we are being forced to look at all the functions of our university.

Recently, there has been some campus and area discussion about the possible implications of budget reductions on our health and counseling services, and some misinformation that the services would be closing. We would like to relay to our campus that these services to our students **are not closing**, and we will continue to offer health and counseling services to our students. Presently, and within our review of all campus functions, we have been evaluating whether our health services should remain in Allie Young Hall, or be transitioned over to the CHER building to be close to our other health-oriented programs and units that our campus offers. Within the CHER building we already house the Department of Nursing, the Department of Kinesiology, Health, and Imaging Sciences, as well as the University of Kentucky medical students and St. Claire Healthcare's clinic.

Part of the evaluation of the unit includes exploring entering into a partnership with one or more of the health functions within the CHER building to assist us with our health services. Should we enter into a partnership, it would entail us having health providers on our payroll, and then using the additional services of other health providers in a joint partnership to service our students health-related needs all in one place. We are still exploring all of our options. Additionally, and as another option, we have several of our staff, including the director of health services, evaluating other options that could provide us with the efficiency that we may need to meet the growing pressure on our budgets.

We know that there is a significant amount of misinformation that is being relayed around this discussion – but, again, we are not discontinuing health services for our students. During this process we have been in discussion with the leadership of our three main constituency groups (Faculty Senate, Staff Congress, and Student Government Association) and will remain engaged in conversations with them around this topic in our model of shared governance.

Conclusively, and to dispel a myth, MSU will continue to offer health and counseling services to our students.

Many thanks,

Jay Morgan  
President