Welcome, and thank you for joining us today.

October 1st will mark a full year serving as your interim chancellor. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to interact with so many of our students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends, and community members. This slide takes a look at the many meetings and conversations I have had, broken out by group or purpose. As you’ll see, more than half of my time has been spent with students, faculty and staff. These conversations have contributed greatly to the central focus on the strategic operation of our campus.
I come away from these conversations with several observations:

Uniformly, we all take great pride in SIU Carbondale. There is a clear, shared commitment to its success. And there is concern about what the future holds ... and in how we get there.

MISSION STATEMENT

SIU embraces a unique tradition of access and opportunity, inclusive excellence, innovation in research and creativity, and outstanding teaching focused on nurturing student success. As a nationally ranked public research university and regional economic catalyst, we create and exchange knowledge to shape future leaders, improve our communities, and transform lives.

Let me begin the focus on our future here, with our mission statement. It speaks to our tradition of inclusive excellence, to innovation in research and creativity, to outstanding teaching, and to student success. It speaks to our role shaping future leaders, improving communities, and transforming lives.
VALUES

- We are proud of our status as a nationally ranked public research university.
- We emphasize student achievement and success because achievement and success are essential if we are to shape future leaders and transform lives.
- We celebrate our unique tradition of access, opportunity, and inclusive excellence.
- We pride ourselves on innovation in research and creative activity, and outstanding teaching.
- We understand our role as a regional and economic leader and catalyst for economic development.

And here is a look at what we value as an institution. Our values reinforce those areas that define our mission as a public research institution. They emphasize student achievement and success, access and opportunity, teaching and research, and economic impact.

As we think about the future of SIU, we must ask ourselves this question: Are these the mission and values we should continue to embrace?

I believe the answer is a strong “yes.” Our current mission reflects the best of what SIU is today and will continue to be in the future – it distinguishes us.

However, a commitment to our mission does not mean that we will always look as we are today. We will continue to evolve – just as we have over the last nearly 150 years. Even as we evolve however, we will maintain our focus as a national – not regional -- doctoral research university committed to student success.
The second question I put before us today, then, is this: What must we do -- together -- to fulfill and recommit to our mission and values in challenging times?

I’m confident everyone in this room knows our challenges, which are most evident in our budget and enrollment.

The budget picture continues to be a large question mark. We are in our second year without a full state appropriation. Two “stop-gap” funding measures -- one last year and one this year -- totaled $83 million dollars for the Carbondale campus.

Like most institutions in the state, we chose to use both stop-gap measures to cover last year’s funding gap. Even with this funding, we ended last fiscal year with $18 million less – an 18 percent decrease in our state appropriation over the previous year. This graph looks at the last 10 years of appropriations. It shows that to date, we have received no state appropriations applied this year. And there is no resolution to the state budget impasse in sight.
As you know, we began this year with a $21 million permanent reduction of our state-supported budgets to help account for both the state budget impasse and the anticipated enrollment decline. We accomplished this reduction largely through the elimination of vacant non-grant positions and reductions in operational expenses.

Unfortunately, we needed to eliminate some positions through layoffs and the non-renewal of contracts. Details are provided in my July 5 campus memo posted on the chancellor’s website. I should note that of the seven employees who received layoff notices, two are now in other positions at SIU and two elected to retire.

We face continued uncertainty about state appropriations, and we cannot predict the outcome. We need to be prepared for the possibility that we will receive a significantly reduced level of state funding for the current year. This means that we may face additional budget cuts yet this year.

**$21 MILLION REDUCTION BY AREA**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Reduction (rounded)</th>
<th>% of Area Budget</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Reduction (rounded)</th>
<th>% of Area Budget</th>
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<tr>
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<td>10.64</td>
<td>Campus-wide</td>
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<td>15.93</td>
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**CONTINUED STEPS TO SAVE**

- Freeze most positions
- Freeze most travel
- Limit equipment and supply purchases
- Continue vice chancellor review of purchases over $5,000
Therefore, it remains critically important that we continue to conserve every dollar, state or non-state. Every dollar we save now is a dollar that will help us minimize future cuts and associated damage to the people of SIU.

- The majority of vacant positions will remain unfilled.
- We must curtail travel that is not essential to daily operations.
- And we must use operational budgets frugally.

Should we need to make further cuts beyond the permanent reduction already made, they will likely be one-time rather than permanent. This will allow us to define and take the strategic steps necessary to ensure that we can fulfill our mission for years to come.

Related to our budget challenges is enrollment management. While we believe that some aspects of our significant decline this year are related to perceptions and realities associated with the state’s budget challenges, we cannot lay the issue fully at the state’s door.

Enrollment declines, although not as drastic as this year’s, have occurred over time. This means we must look inwardly at all of our programs and practices.

In short, we must align ourselves with new fiscal and “market” realities. We must own things within our power through concrete action. We must take control of our own destiny. We must start now ... and we must do it together. It is time.
We are planning to take a number of steps in the following areas, each of which I will address separately, although many are interrelated:

- Enrollment management
- The academic experience
- The student experience
- Diversity and inclusivity
- Regional engagement, and
- Financial stability

I will also offer some additional thoughts to close.

Let’s start with enrollment management, which President Dunn and our trustees have described as “job one,” and I fully agree.
We will not fix overnight something that has developed over years, but we can take steps now to make progress.

Here are the two-year goals we have set for fall 2018: increasing new freshman and transfer student enrollment by at least 10 percent each, increasing graduate enrollment by 10 percent, and increasing retention of first-time freshmen to 70 percent, up from this year’s rate of 64.3 percent.

We’ve already taken a number of steps in the right direction.

As you know, we have had significant turnover in the admissions office over the past several years. This has contributed in part to our new student enrollment challenges in spite of the very hard work of the staff remaining.
• Under the new leadership of Terri Harfst as interim director, we are working vigorously to recruit a strong fall 2017 freshman class.
• We now have a fully deployed admissions staff.
• We have expanded the number of students we contact and are making contact earlier.
• We are planning visits to every Illinois high school and community college, as well as targeted visits in border states.

We have continued to implement selected strategies in our retention plan.

• We are more intentional and proactive in our academic advising. We have just launched “Degree Works,” an online tool that better enables advisors and students to track progress toward degree.
• We’ve implemented an early warning system for freshmen, and revamped and improved our programs for provisional students beyond the first year.
• We have implemented communication initiatives to help students understand the value of taking 15 credit hours a semester to graduate in four years.

Let’s look at what else can do, starting with the enrollment of new students.

The admissions office is currently working with deans to establish enrollment goals by college for fall 2017. We want the goals to be realistic but ambitious. Without clear goals, it is impossible to have a shared focus and evaluate progress.

We will also be working with deans to identify programs that have the potential to attract more students. We must market them and provide resources accordingly. University Communications and Marketing has set aside funds to assist those designated programs with marketing.

By identifying high-demand programs, we can make better decisions about resources in general. Here is an example of success: by adding one non-tenure-track faculty member, we were able to enroll an additional 25 new students in automotive technology this year.
To address competitive affordability – and in consultation with student government -- we will recommend to the Board of Trustees that we do not increase total mandatory student fees for one more year. Some individual fees may increase or decrease, but our goal is to have no increase to the bottom line since SIU’s fees have historically been higher than some of our peers.

Currently, our combined tuition and fees rank in the middle of the state’s public universities, and we are the most affordable among Illinois doctoral research universities. I think that’s a good place to be in a competitive marketplace.

In addition, I am asking the financial aid office to review our scholarship award process to ensure that we are appropriately aligning resources with student talent and need. It is important that we take a more critical look at our strategy in order to be competitive and make the best use of available resources.

I also note that the admissions office and academic units cannot be the only ambassadors recruiting new students. I am charging the alumni services office to develop a plan to engage alumni in the student recruitment and mentoring effort. That is not to say that there is nothing happening now -- including a new, collaborative initiative with admissions asking every alumnum to recruit new five students. But we need a strategic, comprehensive plan. My hope is that this plan will be developed and implemented by the end of the fall semester if not sooner.

We will also implement a voluntary program to help our own faculty and staff be ambassadors for SIU. Many people are deeply engaged in their specific work on behalf of the university but are less aware of the strengths and traditions outside of their areas. Every conversation is an opportunity to tell our positive story, and we hope a better understanding of that story will spread exponentially. I have asked University Communications and Marketing to move this initiative forward as part of increased outreach with both our internal and external communities.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TRANSFER</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Increase on-the-ground recruitment</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Accelerate transfer articulation process</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Explore tuition differential for international students</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>GRADUATE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identify high-demand programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Program based marketing</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Fee-paying students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accelerate acceptance process</td>
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<td>• Revisit prerequisites</td>
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To take steps to increase transfer enrollment, the admissions office is increasing on-the-ground recruitment across the state.

A significant challenge in growing transfer enrollment is the process of developing articulation agreements with individual community colleges. We are starting discussions about how we can address this challenge both in the registrar’s office, which oversees these agreements, and in the academic units, which must review and move them forward. Speed must be a priority. I am asking the provost to come forward by the end of October with recommendations based on input from enrollment management and academic units.

Finally, we must continue our long tradition of serving international students in a changing and competitive marketplace. Other institutions in the state have a significantly lower differential in tuition for international vs. in-state students. I have asked the office of institutional research to prepare a report that will guide a possible change that we may take to the Board of Trustees during this academic year.

Looking at graduate enrollment, we need to review our recruitment efforts. I believe we have been relying too heavily on graduate assistantships as our primary recruitment tool. Graduate assistantships are important both to students and the university, but we have a culture of thinking that they are a requirement to be able to recruit. I think we must change this culture, especially in strong, high-demand programs that we can market to paying students.

We also need to identify and address barriers that slow down the acceptance of qualified applicants. It varies unit by unit, but we must do everything we can to streamline and advance the process.

We must also revisit prerequisites, especially for doctoral programs, to make sure we are comparable with competing institutions and eliminating barriers wherever possible. I have asked Provost Ford to work with deans, including the dean of the graduate school, on these efforts for implementation in fall of 2018.

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**ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT: RETENTION**

- Update retention plan
- Enhance the academic and student experience
About two years ago, faculty and staff across the university developed what was supposed to be a rolling, two-year retention plan. Many aspects of the plan were implemented and are in place today, such as improved advisement, improved services for at-risk students, and the early alert system.

The original plan was for 2014 to 2016, and the intent was to update it annually. However, aspects of the plan have been dormant. It is time to review and update it so we have a clear, shared vision of our retention goals and how we will achieve them. I will work with the provost to appoint a group to update the plan during the current academic year.

Retention also requires us to look broadly at the academic and student experience, because positive experiences will lead to positive retention. This doesn’t mean that every student should get an “A” in every class, but that we must knock down barriers to persistence and increase student engagement.

I will talk about both the academic and student experience next. First, let me pause the conversation on enrollment management with this note: enrollment management at all levels is a shared effort that must be driven by goals and by data. I hope these will be the focus of every related conversation going forward.

Let me turn now to the academic experience.
We need to be very aggressive evaluating academic programs and exploring multiple delivery methods. We also need to continue to focus on supporting both student and faculty research and maintaining our Carnegie status.

The launch of the fermentation science degree and institute are a great example of developing a program that addresses economic needs, attracts students and incorporates research. The closing of the master’s programs in law -- while fulfilling our commitment that currently enrolled students can complete their degrees -- is an equally good example of eliminating programs with low enrollment. These are the kinds of steps we must take so we can identify resources to reinvest in programs that will help us attract students.

On the research front, we have opened the McClafferty annex to house research facilities for fermentation science, fisheries and other areas.

In addition, last year we increased external research funding to $76.5 million – an increase from $63.1 million the previous year -- in spite of a number of barriers at the state and federal levels.
Let’s talk about what we should do next, starting with program prioritization.

I cannot say strongly enough that we must take immediate steps to evaluate programs and begin to initiate change. Frankly, if we do not do it ourselves, it will be done for us by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.

Here again, we must grasp the opportunity to control our own destiny. I hear too frequently that we can’t save money because change takes too long, or we can’t make change because we have to teach programs out. But if we never start, we will never make progress.

The Faculty Senate and Graduate Council’s program prioritization task force has launched the process with its report, which will serve as a starting point. I have asked Provost Ford to work with all deans to develop a preliminary plan by December 31.

I will also ask our academic leadership to identify opportunities to expand enrollment and credit hour generation by enhancing the delivery of programs.

We continue to see growth in online enrollment, a sign of the times as students look for more flexibility in earning degrees. I’m very pleased to report that this fall, with the addition of English 101 and 102, and Communication Studies 101, our entire core curriculum is now available online. We can now offer some of our degrees fully online. I commend the faculty members who have made this possible.

The next steps are to expand the selection and scheduling of online courses each semester. This will assist students and advisors in planning degree programs.

Turning to summer and intersession, we have followed multiple models but continue to struggle with enrollment, as do a number of other institutions. Last year was the third year of a pilot funding model. It is now time to assess its effectiveness and determine what tweaks need to be made.

In addition, our on-campus offerings are not as friendly as they could be to non-traditional students, and I am eager to receive recommendations on ways we can better serve the
academic needs of adult learners. The expansion of online degree programs is, of course, one strategy, but we also need to look at on-campus course scheduling throughout the day.

I have asked the provost to move the expansion of online programs forward and to work with the deans to develop recommendations regarding summer enrollment and course scheduling in time to make changes for summer and fall 2017.

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**THE ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE: RESEARCH**

- Increase interdisciplinary research
- Continue investment in student research

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Research is core part of our mission as a doctoral research university. It is critically important as we maintain our Carnegie status as a “higher research active” institution. While the state budget has stalled funding for most state-supported research, we are seeing success in federally funded research, especially interdisciplinary and multi-institutional efforts.

We are encouraging faculty to continue to build collaboration across disciplines to seek grant funding whenever possible. And we want to continue to look at technology transfer, or the commercialization of intellectual property. Next month, the SIU system will host a technology and innovation expo in Chicago to build visibility for these efforts.

We must also continue to invest in student-supported and student-driven research as part of our distinctive academic mission. While we have had to cut some student research programs due to budget constraints, we are still investing more than $700,000 annually in student research. We must do what we can to preserve this funding going forward. The ability for students to gain research and creative experiences early in their undergraduate careers sets us apart from other institutions and is a point of pride.

I have asked Interim Vice Chancellor for Research Jim Garvey to continue to work with faculty on external funding and the student research experience. I have not set specific goals here given the volatility of the funding environment, but we should expect to see growth in funding year-to-year, depending on fluctuations in state and federal research funding.
From the academic experience, let’s turn to the student experience.

SIU is known for the quality of its student life and the beauty of the campus and region. Students here can always find something to keep them interested and engaged outside of the classroom.

We know, however, that because there is a direct relationship between engagement and retention, we must do everything we can to evaluate and enhance the student experience through increased engagement.

And we must measure progress in multiple ways. For example, we have formalized a transcript of student activities to measure ways our students are engaged, and we will be able to track overall engagement of students over time.
We have already taken a number of steps.

- We have relocated the Multicultural Resource Center to Grinnell Hall in order to better serve students.
- We have enhanced our transit services for students with disabilities.
- And we have appointed Jeff McGoy in Student Affairs as student ombudsperson to give students a clear point of contact for any concerns and issues.

All three of these efforts are a direct result of student input.

To supplement the work of the ombudsperson, we have created a website to help students identify pathways to address concerns about financial or academic issues and personal or safety concerns. This site is also a resource for faculty and staff who work with students.

To build pride and connection, we have launched a Saluki Spirit Campaign with the help of the committee shown here, and we have reconfigured the third floor of the Student Center as multi-use space for Registered Student Organizations, including our undergraduate and graduate student governments.

And we have started a student food pantry to assist any student. I thank all of you who came today to contribute non-perishable items for the pantry. It is open for tours today in the basement of the Student Center immediately after my remarks. I encourage you to visit.
An important part of the student experience is the removal of barriers that can create frustration and impede success. We absolutely need policies and procedures to guide our work to ensure consistency, fairness and compliance, but we must make sure that our policies are not putting unnecessary barriers in front of our students.

I am asking both student affairs and academic affairs to review all policies and procedures affecting students to identify possible changes. For example, we have already streamlined our emergency aid assistance procedures to eliminate barriers to access.

I can’t say today what further changes will be made without a thorough review that incorporates input from students themselves, but this is an important step to take during the current academic year.

We also remain attuned to campus safety. We know we are as safe as any other campus, but we will continue make the safety of our students - as well as our faculty, staff and guests – a priority.

We will assess student perceptions and views of safety and gender-based violence by conducting a campus climate survey this year. While this is a requirement of federal law, it is also the right thing to do. This year’s survey will also be a baseline to track progress.

I should note here that we have a new confidential advisor on campus dedicated to providing victim-centered support to SIU students who have experienced gender-based violence. Rebecca Gonnering is based in the Wellness and Health Promotion Services office in the Student Health Center.
I would like to see the Student Center become a true heart of student engagement on our campus. We need to continue to attract students by adding new services – including additional food vendors and on-site banking.

And much like the new first-floor hub promoting collaboration on innovation and sustainability, I am asking the student affairs staff, led by Interim Vice Chancellor Lori Stettler, to work with faculty to identify additional opportunities to use student center space to engage students in academic initiatives.

If you talk with alumni, you know that a factor to staying engaged with campus after graduation is the connections with traditions as a student. We are currently working to preserve long-standing traditions such as watermelon fest, refresh traditions like homecoming with new events such as movies after the game and an enhanced tailgate area, and add new traditions, such as Dawg Days at Touch of Nature.

These ongoing projects involve many people across campus, and I welcome your ideas as we move forward.
Another area that affects student engagement – and the engagement of everyone on campus – is diversity and inclusion.

In my May 3 email to campus, I shared a number of first steps to ensure that our campus is welcoming and open to all. The steps were the result of significant input from students, faculty, staff and alumni. The steps are a launch-pad to a more comprehensive effort that will develop from a campus-wide diversity plan. We have made much progress during the summer, with much more to come.
Appointments to the campus-wide diversity council, which will have the critically important responsibility of developing a diversity plan, are almost completed. The council will hold its first meeting on Oct. 3. I’m pleased to report that Professor Phil Howze in Library Affairs has kindly agreed to serve as the council’s chair.

We have significantly expanded student programming to facilitate open conversation about diversity and inclusive excellence. The deans are taking similar steps at the college level. We held a retreat on diversity and inclusive excellence with the senior administrative team this summer. We have enhanced faculty and staff training opportunities and will continue to expand them.

We are ensuring that job descriptions advertising for upper administrative positions require cultural competency. Further, a group looking at human resources broadly has explored ways to streamline the hiring process so we do not lose good candidates.

Our new interim associate chancellor of diversity will have responsibility for a number of other initiatives, including mandatory training for search committees and a climate survey focusing on diversity and inclusive excellence. I will announce this interim appointment by the end of the week. Shortly afterwards, we will launch a national search to permanently fill the position.

I will be posting a full update on each of the initiatives announced last spring on the chancellor’s web site by the end of this week, and I anticipate that all of these steps will be implemented in the current academic year. As I have noted before, inclusive excellence is built into our mission and must be incorporated into all that we do.
We have talked about many important internal initiatives. Let’s talk now about our community.

I said at the outset that part of our mission is to be a regional and economic leader and catalyst. We know that enrollment has an impact on the community, but this effort is about more than enrollment. It’s about sharing expertise, communicating clearly, and working collaboratively. We understand that Carbondale is a college town and that we are in it together, thus we have a shared interest in each other’s success.

This picture, by the way, is a “For the Community” website that outlines the many ways community members can benefit from having a public doctoral research university in their own back yard. This is one of many related initiatives implemented to date.
We have also continued to build strong relationships with Carbondale Chamber of Commerce and City Government officials, including Mayor Mike Henry, who is with us today.

We also value our relationship with John A. Logan College. We are offering our first SIU course on the Logan campus this semester. This is a commitment to the relationship as well as a step in the recruitment of community college students who have finished their associate degrees.

And we have reinforced our commitment to the region through SIU Day at the DuQuoin State Fair.

One reason we have so many stops and starts in our regional relationships is that we have not had an individual fully dedicated to community outreach and engagement. We need someone on point to making sure we are working internally to engage faculty and staff in the community and externally to build SIU’s relationships in the region. Further, I have heard from community members that there is a lack of clarity about who should contact whom for what. As a result many of our existing efforts are disconnected and uncoordinated. I am preparing to make an internal personnel reassignment within the next two weeks to help us stay focused on and guide these efforts.

This individual will help do the following:

- Engage chambers of commerce and communities regionally, even beyond Carbondale.
- Create a community speakers bureau to share faculty and staff expertise.
- Identify and leverage existing relationships of faculty, staff, retirees and alumni in their communities. I note here that we are very grateful for the continued engagement of our retirees, emeritus faculty and alumni with the community as well as the university.
- Ensure that we are also leveraging our most attractive public resources, including the arts and athletics, to serve our greater region. This will complement the excellent work...
already being done in economic development through the Southern Illinois Small Business Development Center on campus.

Let me turn now to financial stability, an area that is difficult to manage and predict in the face of state budget uncertainties.

As I noted earlier, we must continue to minimize spending for the immediate future until we have greater clarity of our fiscal position for this year.

I have already discussed the $21 million permanent cut at the beginning of this fiscal year. We have also taken a number of smaller, practical steps, such as implementing a new cell phone policy to save funds. My point: every dollar counts.
Even as we take immediate steps to address current issues, we must take a longer-term look at efficiencies and cost control, and identify new opportunities to grow revenue where possible. Longer term, we can’t continue to cut our way out of budget challenges.

Let me talk first about efficiencies. We must review our administrative costs, including both academic and non-academic administrative structures. When we speak of administrative costs, we are talking both personnel as well as the operating expenses.

We have already done a lot. Our ratio of administrators to students and administrators to all staff are among the lowest in the state, meaning that we are lean compared to other universities. And of the $21 million reduction made at the beginning of this academic year, more than $5 million is in administrative costs.

That said, I will be asking the vice chancellors to make an additional 5 percent in administrative cost reductions over the next year.

It is also time to make strategic decisions about the organization of colleges and departments to reduce administrative costs, knowing that savings will not necessarily be immediate. I ask the provost to come forward -- following appropriate consultation -- with recommendations related to the academic administrative structure.

I have personally spent a great deal of time looking at our non-academic administrative structure, and I understand that there will be recommendations forthcoming from the Committee on Non-Academic Program Review.

The committee is also looking at the other items on this list – shared services, contracting, printing costs and business processes. I look forward to receiving its recommendations in October.
As you know, we are already a very lean university. Additional steps to trim expenses will be challenging but necessary.

**FINANCIAL STABILITY: REVENUE**

- Grow enrollment strategically
  - Recruitment and retention
  - Academic program prioritization
- Implement advertising and sponsorship policy
- Expand scholarships through fundraising

On the revenue side, we have already talked about the most important strategies: growing enrollment through enhanced recruitment and retention initiatives ... and prioritization of academic programs that will attract students, including fee-paying students.

Some other initiatives:

We are working on a policy that will clarify a number of issues and enhance the ability of some units to accept sponsorship and advertising. I expect this campus policy to be vetted and implemented during the spring semester. Further, we will expand our scholarships through a fundraising plan being developed under the leadership of Vice Chancellor Jim Salmo.

**MOVING FORWARD**

- Enrollment management
- The academic experience
- The student experience
- Diversity and inclusion
- Regional engagement
- Financial stability
- Additional thoughts
I’ve now covered the key areas I outlined earlier. I would like to turn briefly to offer additional thoughts on a few other subjects.

In spite of the budget challenges we face today, we must continue to think about our campus over the long-term.

Housing is a significant factor in our enrollment, and we must take steps to ensure that our student housing is competitive and up-to-date. We need to move forward to remove Southern Hills, which is an eyesore, and to replace the Towers with more modern and attractive housing. Specifically, the Board of Trustees has requested that a plan to replace the Towers be taken forward for discussion at its December meeting. Any plan will take some time to implement, but we must get started.

In addition to Southern Hills, we have plans to tear down the unsightly blue barracks on east campus.

We must also take a look at the entryways to campus. The coal plant and the strip are not necessarily welcoming, and we need to look at long-term possibilities, in partnership with the community as appropriate. We appreciate the city’s efforts to address the strip and downtown revitalization. We need to let people know they are arriving at the most beautiful campus in the state.

A look at housing and space raises the question about our optimal enrollment and footprint. It’s a question frequently asked and difficult to answer. It would be irresponsible to simply guess at a number. I believe we can arrive at a best estimate with an analysis of the competitive marketplace and demographic trends aligned with what we know about our programs, space and mission. My goal is to have this effort launched in the spring.
Before I conclude, I would like to talk about our most valuable resource, our faculty and staff. You are all working hard in the face of challenges, and I am deeply grateful.

I want to provide a few updates on faculty/staff-related activities. First, we have had a group exploring the streamlining of human resource processes. Many of its recommendations will become reality through the implementation of Hire Touch, an online system that will eliminate a great deal of the physical paperwork, as well as some of the steps in the process. Implementation will take place later this fall.

We are also looking at the number of “interim” titles of administrators and plan to launch national searches this fall for at least two senior positions that report directly to the chancellor – the vice chancellor for student affairs and vice chancellor for research.

I believe professional development is important, although it has suffered across campus due to budget challenges. I am currently considering strategies to take advantage of our internal expertise to develop a series of workshops on a variety of topics beginning this spring. We will start by asking our constituency groups about their professional development needs.

I also welcome the many efforts to build teamwork and collegiality that are happening organically across campus. A terrific example is the efforts of grounds department and the rest of Plant and Service Operations to collect items for the student food pantry. We can’t dictate collegiality, of course, but I welcome all you do to create a supportive work environment, regardless of your role.

Finally, the provost and I are planning to again visit all of the colleges -- a “tour” we conducted last fall -- to engage faculty in conversations about many of the initiatives announced today as well as others that may be raised.
We have so much to be proud of at SIU. Here are just a few points of pride about our students and former students:

- The Debate Team has advanced to the champions of the National Parliamentary Debate Association six time in nine years, winning four.
- The Flying Salukis have finished in the top three of the national collegiate aviation championships for six consecutive years.
- Our engineering students consistently place among the winners in the Human Exploration Rover Challenge – known to many as the “Moonbuggy” competition.
- alt.news 26:46, the television magazine program produced by College of Mass Communication and Media Arts students, has earned more than 30 regional professional Emmys from the National Academy of Television Arts.
- Austin Weigle, a senior plant biology major, was an honorable mention for a prestigious Barry Goldwater Scholarship.
- 2016 graduate Deanna Price finished 8th in the women’s hammer throw at the Rio Olympics. She was one of two U.S. women who were the first to finish in the top eight of the event in 16 years.

**POINTS OF PRIDE: STUDENTS**

- Debate team: National Parliamentary Debate Assoc.
- Flying Salukis: National Collegiate Aviation Championships
- Engineering: Human Exploration Rover Challenge
- alt.news 26:46: National Academy of Television Arts
- Senior Austin Weigle: Goldwater Scholarship honorable mention
- Alumnus Deanna Price: Olympian
Our faculty are recognized in Illinois, nationally and internationally. Here are just a few of the many examples I could share.

- Marcus Odom, Accountancy, earned the 2016 Outstanding Educator award from the Illinois CPA Society.
- Sosanya Jones, Educational Administration and Higher Education, has been chosen as the Illinois Education Research Council 2016-17 faculty research fellow.
- Joseph Schafer, chair of Criminology and Criminal Justice, was named to the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies.
- The album “Blue 13,” featuring compositions written by professor emeritus Frank Stemper and performed Junghwa Lee, School of Music, was ranked among the top ten albums of last year by the Global Music Awards.
- The novel “See How Small” by Scott Blackwood, English, was included on NPR’s Book Concierge Guide to Great Reads.
- Susan Thompson Hingle, Medicine, has been named chair-elect of the Board of Regents of the American College of Physicians.
We also have many nationally recognized programs. Again, here are just a few:

- Accreditation by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business International puts the College of Business in the top 5 percent internationally.
- The SIU School of Law has been recognized by National Jurist magazine as one of the “Best Schools for Practical Training.”
- The Rehabilitation Institute is ranked fourth in the country by U.S. News and World Report.
- We have earned recognition from Forbes magazine as one of “America’s Most Entrepreneurial Universities.”
- “Diverse: Issues in Higher Education” ranked SIU in the Top 100 Undergraduate Degree Producers in 29 undergraduate categories.
- And we continue to be recognized by multiple organizations for our services to students.

POINTS OF PRIDE: SIU

- More than $3.7 million in STEM grants
- Innovation and Prosperity University
- Community Engagement Classification
There are a few more university points of pride I would like to mention.

- We have been particularly successful in attracting funding from the National Science Foundation for projects related to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, or STEM. Much of this funding directly benefits students. The three most recent grants total $3.7 million.
- We can also take pride that SIU has earned national recognition for its regional economic development work from The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities. Our designation as an Innovation and Economic Prosperity University is valid for 10 years.
- And we have also earned the Community Engagement Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in recognition for our commitment to service and outreach.

SIU has many, many more great stories to tell, and I welcome your help telling them. We also have many opportunities ahead that will shine a light on the university, its programs and people, and its history.

This spring, we will join a national effort called the Big Event, the largest, one-day student community service project in our history.

Of course, SIU is already gaining international attention as a top viewing spot for the 2017 total solar eclipse. NASA will base its webcast coverage from Saluki Stadium, giving us an opportunity to showcase the university and its programs.

And we will soon begin planning for the 150th anniversary of the university’s founding in 1869, which takes place in 2019. This will give us an additional opportunity to focus both on our distinguished history and promising future.
Speaking of the future, I share this beautiful photo of Campus Lake because it is symbolic of our path. Just in case you haven’t driven or walked by it lately, it doesn’t look anything like this now as we take steps to improve the health of the lake.

When the work is done, the lake may not look – or smell -- exactly the same. But it will still be Campus Lake, a point of pride for SIU.

I view our future similarly. We have a history and mission to be proud of. We are taking steps to address our challenges – even though the steps are difficult and sometimes messy. We will be a strong -- if somewhat different university -- on the other side.

However, change will require a willingness to make difficult decisions. To make sacrifices. To think in new ways. It will take the shared commitment of everyone who cares about this university. I am optimistic that we will -- like Campus Lake -- survive and thrive.

Over our history, we have overcome many challenges because of the outstanding work of our faculty and staff. I know that you are going above and beyond with limited reward to fill in the gaps caused by vacancies and to make sure that we are still here to serve our students. Your belief in SIU is the foundation for my optimism.

Thank you to all of the students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends and community members who are committed to our future. Again, you are the reason we are here today and will be here for many years to come.

I said at the beginning of these remarks that we distinguish ourselves from other institutions.

- We stand out not only because we are a national, public doctoral research university ...
- Not only because of the quality of our teaching and research ...
- Not only because of our long-standing commitment to access and inclusion ...
• Not only because of our caring commitment to students ...  
• Not only because of our outstanding student life experiences ...  
• Not only because of the opportunities our students have to engage in research as freshmen ...  
• Not only because we have a beautiful campus adjacent to a national forest ...  
• And not only because of the commitment of our faculty, staff and supporters.

We distinguish ourselves because of the combination of all of these characteristics, the most important of which is the people who make up SIU.

I am proud of this university, and I thank you for all you do.

Thank you for coming today.