On 18 March 2009, Dean Paul D’Anieri presented to the College faculty a plan for a possible 10% budget cut. As required by the President, the plan included tiers of cuts and vertical cuts of major departments in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The plan called for the possible merger of Communication Sciences and Disorders with the Department of Communicative Disorders of the College of Public Health and Health Professions.

In making its recommendations this year, the Council continues to be guided by the principles enunciated in last year’s Recommendations of the Faculty Council and the Finance Committee Regarding Alternatives in the $6M Budget Reduction. The two significant principles for the current situation are as follows:

(1) Laying off tenure-track faculty is an unprecedented and unwarranted action that results in a loss to the University’s national and international reputation. This action also casts doubt on the trust and credibility of the University’s commitment to its programs, faculty, and students.

(2) Structural changes are best made for academic reasons.

The first principle is now understood to include tenured faculty in its scope and import.

In its role as elected faculty advising the Dean, the Council met on 19 March 2009 to discuss the plan put forward the day before. On Monday, 23 March 2009, the Council met with the chairs and some faculty of the three departments most affected by the possible proposed cuts (Geology, Communication Sciences and Disorders, and Religion). On Thursday, 26 March 2009, the Council met with the Dean to discuss the plan and possible revisions. The Council agreed that the attrition in Tiers 1 thru 5 were significant losses to the College (approximately $4.2M), but still left the College positioned for future development and respected the two significant principles above.

Moving CSD out of the College in Tier 6 disturbed some members of the Council, because the academic reasons for such a structural change are only now being set forth. The Council recommends that all the College and University procedures be followed in determining the move and/or merger of Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Tier 7 includes three faculty layoffs (tenured or tenure-track), and the Council recommends against those layoffs.

Finally, because Tiers 8, 9, and 10 call for major layoffs in tenured and tenure-track faculty in excellent departments of the College, the Faculty Council cannot support such actions. The Council states that the actions in Tiers 8, 9, and 10 will irreparably harm the ability of the College to function as a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. The losses in these departments will impair the education of our undergraduate and graduate students. There will be, as well, the loss of the significant research and scholarship of each department, and the support through instrumentation and teaching provided by these departments to other units of the University will be irreparably harmed. The Council recommends against the actions in Tiers 8, 9, and 10.

The Council encourages the Dean, and is working with him, to continue efforts to identify less destructive means of reaching a 10% cut.