

Dear Colleagues,

As we approach the end of the fall semester and calendar year, we write to share the status of several planning, operational, and budget matters.

Strategic Planning and New Initiatives

First, we are grateful to the many faculty, librarians, and staff across campus who are working on key initiatives to support the implementation of the **strategic plan** and **integrated strategic enrollment plan**. These campus-wide initiatives include a critical focus in the near-term on fortifying our enrollment and student retention efforts and evolving our curriculum. Our medium-term focus is on generating additional net revenue streams, strengthening our community, investing in our people, and telling our story widely and more robustly to ensure USF thrives.

Among the highlights of this work:

- The undergraduate admissions team in SEM is bolstering print, digital, and in-person recruiting strategies by increasing lead generation, enhancing social media presence, developing guaranteed transfer pathways, and expanding in international markets with early yield efforts.
- The collaborative enrollment team, which brings together SEM, OMC, ITS, and graduate program directors and recruiters, meets weekly to explore creative marketing and promotional strategies. These include more competitive scholarships, creative initiatives like Double Dons and 4+1 pathways to recruit and retain students for bachelor's and master's degrees at USF.
- Faculty, librarians, and staff across departments and programs, CASA advisers, and the Student Success, Retention, and Equity Task Force are working to strengthen retention efforts by identifying and enhancing high-impact practices such as internships, research opportunities with faculty members, and global experiences.
- The Strategic Plan Advisory Council (SPAC) has worked closely with the provost to build a dashboard of priorities for the first year of implementation of our strategic plan, identifying lead champions and measurable outcomes for each goal. The **dashboard is now posted** and will be updated in real time so our community can track progress.

Transforming USF's Campus

The USF Strategic Plan also calls for us to "reimagine Jesuit education to accelerate the achievement of a more just and sustainable world" through potentially transformative investments in the arts and sciences.

Following are updates on progress in key areas:

Masonic East: USF is moving forward with an exciting vision for interdisciplinary teaching and research in life sciences and health equity. Led by the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and the School of Nursing and Health Professions (SONHP), the integrated vision will transform the spaces in which students and faculty learn, teach, create, research, and engage the community. SONHP will move its teaching, learning, and research activities from Cowell Hall to Masonic East, which **will be known as the Health and Life Sciences Campus**, as well as establish a new simulation lab on site. CAS will move its biology and biotechnology programs and research laboratories, establish a new neuroscience program, and provide instructional teaching space for kinesiology and computational space for general instruction in Masonic East.

We have received several philanthropic gifts and have plans to raise substantially more to finance the purchase and renovation of the property, and achieve our vision for advancing health equity and science innovation for the greater good. Architectural plans are underway to create innovative educational spaces that will enhance our ability to recruit and retain students by supporting experiential learning; maximizing interdisciplinary collaborations; allowing for large-scale, collaborative grants; and expanding our capacity for research activities. The approximately 80,000-square-foot campus will also alleviate pressure on other parts of campus so we can better support all faculty, students, and staff. Renovation work will be completed in several phases, with a goal of moving the first programs to the new campus in the fall of 2025 if permitting and philanthropic support allows.

Investing in the Arts: With the generous support of USF alumnus and benefactor Gordon Getty '56, we are slated to complete the first of two phases of renovations for Presentation Theater in January 2024, revitalizing the historic performance and event space and restoring the beautiful neo-gothic theater to its 1930s splendor. The next phase involves modernizing the theater into a multi-purpose space that will allow students and faculty to develop performance, presentation, technical, and leadership skills in the arts and serve as a hub for arts and culture at USF.

The renovation of the theater is just one component of the development of the **Ann Getty Institute of Art and Design**, with initial funding from the **\$15 million gift** from the Ann and Gordon Getty Foundation for the Arts. The institute will significantly increase visual and performing arts programming, enhance performance spaces at USF, and allow for greater community engagement in the arts. The location of the Ann Getty Institute is under discussion as part of the Institutional Master Plan process and we hope to identify the location by this spring.

Budget Update

As reported to you in September, based on fall census figures and the forecast of the Office of Planning and Budget (OPB), the university's annual net tuition revenue is approximately \$8.3 million less than budgeted. We also noted in the same report that our enrollment status has an impact on university housing revenue, which we expect will be approximately \$2 million less than budgeted. OPB expects that a combination of university operating reserves and miscellaneous cost savings will largely cover this gap in the immediate term.

However, because last year's budget gap of \$39 million was restored with one-time (not base) cuts across the university, and compensation increases for employees will be approximately \$7 million in the year ahead, we are facing a serious shortfall. We are keeping a close eye on enrollment trends but will likely need to make some difficult decisions regarding projects, investments, and expenditures in the weeks and months ahead.

Divisions have submitted budget assist proposals to OPB, and the University Budget Advisory Council (UBAC) and the President's Cabinet will be reviewing these proposals, which involve increases for both discretionary and non-discretionary/contracted projects and initiatives. Given our budget constraints, we expect very few discretionary proposals to be approved, and those that are approved for the next fiscal year will prioritize student academic support, health, safety, and well-being.

We extend our gratitude for your commitment to advancing USF's mission, vision, and values in your work every day — especially during these challenging financial times. Thank you for prioritizing our students. Your work together with colleagues across campus and with our alumni, benefactors, and friends helps ensure our students succeed at USF and in their lives beyond the Hilltop.

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, we hope you are able to spend restful and relaxing time with loved ones.

Sincerely,






Paul J. Fitzgerald, S.J.
President


Eileen Fung
Interim Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

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