

January 13, 2010

Earlier today Chancellor McKinney distributed a memorandum outlining several organizational changes that are taking place at Texas A&M University and the A&M System as part of the Shared Services Initiative. Since I became interim president of this great institution last June, we have been working diligently to reduce administrative overhead, maximize cost efficiencies and maintain the tremendous value of a Texas A&M education, for which we are recognized nationally.

As anticipated by our Board of Regents last summer, the country's economic slowdown has started to impact the state of Texas. The preliminary forecasts for the state's budget in the next Legislative Session are cause for concern, and we must continue making financial preparations for upcoming fiscal years. If you recall, we have already instituted a process of reallocating divisional funds in preparation for fiscal year 2011, and the realization of savings identified through the Shared Services Initiative is a significant second step.

Organizational changes of this nature typically generate many questions from throughout the university community. When we first began a dialogue about shared services, I pledged to protect our core missions of teaching, research and service; secure greater support for the Academic Master Plan as we continue our march toward Vision 2020; and protect the educational experience of our students. I am pleased to say that we have been successful in all three areas.

Today is the beginning of a process - a process in which we will work with our colleagues across the A&M System to realize additional efficiencies, share best practices and leverage the strength and size of our operations. The sharing of services only enhances Texas A&M University's status as the flagship institution of the A&M System.

Again, it will take all of us working together - at Texas A&M University and the A&M System - as we enter what could be challenging budgetary times for our institution. If you look throughout our university's 133-year history, we have always responded to adversity and emerged even stronger. By effectively managing our precious resources and marshalling the creativity of Aggies, we can not only address potential financial concerns, but also discover new ways to fulfill our mission even better. And I am confident we can do so without impacting Texas A&M's momentum toward recognition as one of the nation's very best universities.

Thank you for your selfless service and for your contributions in making Texas A&M a truly special place.

Sincerely,
R. Bowen Loftin '71
Interim President, Texas A&M University