

# President's Communiqué

Dr. Ken Kitts

September 11, 2020

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**Colleagues: Please see below for important updates from the University of North Alabama:**

**Budget for FY 21:** Vice President Evan Thornton and his staff have completed work on the budget for FY

21. We have been fortunate in that enrollment had the same growth as in FY 20. We have been able to

bring in additional funding to higher education, as has happened elsewhere. This is a challenge we are facing significantly across the country, and that has translated into a significant loss of international students this fall. The loss of those international students, coupled with an increased budget for our coronavirus response and recovery, has left us with a \$3.9 million deficit for the fiscal year that begins on October 1. The good news is that we are able to offset this deficit through travel savings (expenditures on business and athletic events), holding vacant positions open, and applying savings from FY 20. As the year unfolds, we should be able to manage this challenge.

The information reported above is in the Office of the President. I bring that up to let you know firsthand the difficulty of moving through the year with a key budget constraint, but this is the type of shared sacrifice that will allow us to continue to support our existing personnel or critical operations. On a related note, a recent report indicates that UNA spends less per-student on administrative expenses than other institutions. That's a great commentary on our priorities as an institution. The pandemic has stopped us from keeping commitments to fully fund our academic programs, as well as traditional first-time, full-time freshmen. However, our decrease in freshmen (currently down 10% from last year) has not been reported elsewhere. Moreover, the diversified "smart growth" strategy we implemented years ago is paying huge dividends this fall, as we have been able to maintain our enrollment in categories with big gains in others – notably growth in our online programs. We are far enough along in the fall semester to confirm that we will meet our enrollment credit hour production by the time fall census arrives. Those numbers are good again – final headcount should be in the 8,400 range – and we are pleased that our institutions both in and out of state.

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