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***Committee of Eleven***

July 16, 2020

Dear Regent DuVal and Members of the Arizona Board of Regents,

The Committee of Eleven at the University of Arizona appreciates your commitment to our university and your service on the Arizona Board of Regents. As an elected body representing the interests of faculty in diverse colleges and disciplines, we wish to respond to your recent opinion piece in the Arizona Daily Star to clarify the intent and recent action by the Faculty of the University of Arizona—both the General Faculty and the Faculty Senate—who voted decisively to recommend delaying implementation of President Robbins’ proposed furlough/pay reduction program until September. We are encouraged by President Robbins’ decision for some delay in implementation of the program to provide time for study and revision in collaboration with shared governance bodies and the General Faculty.

Shared governance is a fundamental component of the life of the university by statute. It contributes to finding optimum solutions by bringing in diverse perspectives and experiences. One major challenge with the university budgetary process has been the absence of timely consultation with the existing shared governance mechanisms in the decision-making process. That is why the faculty has taken extraordinary measures to make sure that we are informed and consulted before critical decisions are made. We have genuine concern that premature implementation of the current plan could not only disproportionately affect many already vulnerable employees suffering from the fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic but also irreparably harm the core mission of the University and its student learning environment. Like you, we are committed to our students and our community and are invested in the advancement of diversity and inclusion and expanded access to opportunity on our campus. The faculty-recommended “pause” would allow a more careful and collaborative analysis of complex and divergent budgetary information including updated enrollment projections as well as thoughtful consideration and meaningful dialogue between the senior leadership team and faculty and staff representatives about possible alternative plans and measures.

Through collaborative efforts and shared governance, we are confident that we can work together to find reasonable and equitable solutions that protect our workforce. This was the intent behind the General Faculty vote to delay—not eliminate—the furlough/pay reduction plan. The intent is certainly not to pass the fiscal burden onto the students and their families or to further jeopardize jobs at the university but rather to find solutions that protect some of the most vulnerable employees at the University of Arizona, do not compromise our core mission as a land-grant university, and avoid a negative and uncontrollable ripple effect within the larger Tucson community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We look forward to working with the university administration to cultivate an environment of transparency and trust through this process. We would also welcome the opportunity to discuss our perspective with you in greater detail and invite you, individually and/or as a group, to attend a special session of Committee of Eleven to be held at your convenience.

Sincerely,  
[Committee of Eleven](#)

