
Financial Overview

The following is an all-funds (internal and external University resources), multiyear financial schedule depicting annual operating and capital budgets and related impact on liquidity over the period FY17 to FY25 at the University of Delaware. This range of years begins when President Dennis Assanis joined the University and continues to the current year. Although much of the source data has already been available publicly in other institutional documents, including the University's [audited financial statements](#) and the [IRS Form 990](#)¹, we continue to promote clarity by combining data from multiple sources into a financial summary².

While a one-page schedule is convenient, we recognize additional detail is helpful in certain key areas, including research, capital projects, and deferred maintenance. Supplemental schedules providing this information have been created.

Modified Cash Operating Budget

The University develops its operating budget (lines 20-53) on a modified cash sources and uses basis. This budget is approved annually by the Board of Trustees. The operating revenues that are generated fund the related operating expenses. To the extent operating revenues exceed operating expenses, this surplus is available to fund capital expenses in accordance with the capital plan and as approved through the capital budget. To the extent expenses exceed revenues in a fiscal year, the University must utilize existing operating investments (line 6)

The FY25 budget, approved in spring 2024, was based on total operating revenue of \$1.3 billion, assuming an incoming freshman class of 4,300 students and a 4% tuition rate increase. This budget projected a gap of \$20 million to \$54 million, due primarily to the \$36 million projected increases in benefits costs, including \$24 million for the health insurance premium increase and \$6.5 million for retirement benefits.

The expected FY25 budget shortfall was later revised to \$20 million to \$45 million. Factors in this adjustment include further cost mitigation of \$10 million to \$20 million in partnership with the academic sector, additional state funding of \$2.8 million, and removal of the estimated \$14 million impact from the proposed Fair Labor Standards Act (now struck down). On the other hand, a higher-than-anticipated melt rate resulted in an incoming class of 4,075 in fall 2024. The remaining budget gap may be further

¹ On an annual basis, the University files a Form 990 with the IRS. Form 990 is intended to provide the government and interested members of the public with a snapshot of the organization's activities for that year. Differences between Form 990 Part I, line 19, Revenue less Expenses are attributable primarily to the IRS including as revenue realized gains in the pooled portfolio and revenue for endowment and capital. In the GAAP financial statements, these items are excluded from the Change in Net Assets from Operations as they are not eligible to be used to support operations. The pooled portfolio supports operations via the annual endowment distribution that is approved by the Board of Trustees. In any given year through reallocation of investments, the pooled portfolio could experience significant gains, however these gains are reinvested in new investments.

² This summary is not meant to replace any of the source documents. It should also be noted there will always be differences in numbers between sources for valid reasons, including different methodologies of national agencies to whom we report.

eased by the use of unit reserves where applicable, savings from strategic administrative realignments, and the reduction of central institutional support towards athletics and recreational services.

In anticipation of continued increases in health care costs, the University is exploring alternative benefits options that may offer more control over increases. Further, a prior review of our claims history indicated that our experience may be better than the experience within the overall state plan, which may allow for savings.

The University is also increasing budget transparency at the unit level to enable faculty participation and input into unit-level decision-making, updating base allocations to the colleges, providing growth incentive funds to enable the launch of new initiatives and programs, and strategically expanding pathways to a UD education. Faculty hiring will be aligned with enrollment targets, instruction needs, and research projects.

The FY25 budgeted tuition discount rate is 31.2%, compared to 33.5% in FY24. Tuition discount rates continue to trend higher nationally. For example, average institutional tuition discount rates are increasing among National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO) institutions for both first-time undergraduates and all undergraduates.

Operating expenses include *Total Salaries & Wages* of \$618 million (line 44) in the FY25 budget, which includes faculty, professionals, and staff³, as well as graduate student and S-contract salaries. Since FY17, faculty salaries have grown by \$37 million, and professionals and staff salaries have grown by \$128 million; growth is associated with increased headcount, salary increases and market conditions. As the financial schedule depicts all-funds growth, the growth of professionals and staff has been across all internal and external University resources.

Supplies, Materials and Other expenses (line 48) have grown due to inflation and a significant increase in sponsored research, which has an offsetting increase in sponsored revenue. It is important to note that the FY20 and FY21 expenses were intentionally reduced to partially mitigate COVID-related revenue losses, but also because events and other expenses were eliminated due to remote operations and a shuttered campus.

Capital Budget: Funding New Buildings and Addressing Deferred Maintenance

Annually a capital budget, consisting of new projects, renovations, and deferred maintenance, is developed by the Administration and approved by the Board of Trustees. Capital expenditures are funded by bond proceeds, federal awards, State bond appropriation, gifts for capital, reserves set aside for future capital needs, and operating surpluses. The accumulated operating surpluses, if they existed, as well as the bond issuance, were targeted to fund the strategic plan that included major capital projects (line 66), such as the Building X / McKinly Lab replacement and enabling capital projects, the completion of fitting out leased University space at the FinTech Innovation Hub on STAR Campus, and deferred maintenance projects. Beginning FY18, the University initiated a plan to improve the Facilities Condition Index (FCI) of our existing buildings. However, due to the pandemic and as part of COVID

³ Employee categories are per FLSA definitions: Professional employees are exempt and are not eligible for overtime pay; this group includes a wide variety of titles: postdocs, academic advisors, development officers, administrators. Staff employees are non-exempt and are eligible for overtime pay.

mitigation, deferred maintenance was reduced. In addition to the continued deferred maintenance renovation from accumulated State funds, construction of Building X is expected to continue progressing, as well as the infrastructure that supports the labs/buildings on the east side of campus. Building X is funded by the third and final tranche of State and Local Fiscal Recovery Fund, as well as bond proceeds.

In the foreseeable future, UD will continue to pursue new capital projects, but these will be funded through a variety of sources including State bond appropriation, philanthropic support, federal awards, and external funding received through public-private partnerships.

The Endowment and the Pooled Portfolio: Ensuring Stability for the Next 275 Years

As found in the audited financial statements for fiscal year ending June 30, 2024, the University endowment consists of approximately 1,400 individual funds totaling about \$1.8 billion (line 11), which were established for a variety of purposes and are intended to provide perpetual funding to support the University's educational goals. The Endowment is comprised of approximately \$1.4 billion in donor-restricted funds that must be utilized in accordance with donor intent and \$463 million in board-designated funds that may be used for purposes of the University, as determined by the Board of Trustees. The ongoing generosity of our alumni and friends has helped to ensure the long-term financial health of the University through the establishment of endowed gifts, and the University has an obligation to ensure those gifts support the University for many years to come. A strong endowment allows the University to fund initiatives that will have a lasting impact on the student experience and the overall institution.

In recent years, the Endowment's role in supporting the University has become more important because the State of Delaware's portion of overall funding has remained flat at about 10%-11% of resources, while our commitment to access and student financial aid has increased. This support from the Endowment is likely to become even more important in the coming years given the challenges facing higher education today.

To ensure that Endowment funds are available in perpetuity, the University's Board of Trustees, Investment Visiting Committee, and Administration have a shared mission to maximize the Endowment's total return consistent with the University's prudent investment risk constraints and preserving real value for future generations. This mission requires an expected long-term return that exceeds the inflation-adjusted annual spending rate. The target spending rate for the Endowment is 4% to 5% of the three-year average market value as determined annually by the University's Board of Trustees. In short, the spending rate plus the inflation rate cannot exceed portfolio returns without eroding the financial strength of the University⁴.

⁴ *Of the many inputs that the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees considers each year when setting the endowment payout rate, the long-term expected return on the endowment portfolio is the most important. Performance over shorter time periods are not considered in setting the endowment payout rate due to the volatility of the financial markets. Over the last 28 years, the endowment has achieved a return of 0.06% above annual distributions to the University and the Commonfund Higher Education Price Index. This means that over the last 28 years, the Finance Committee has done an excellent job managing the payout rate relative to inflation and endowment performance.*

Over the past 20 years, the University has taken approximately \$200 million in unrestricted operating funds and invested them with the Endowment funds to create the Pooled Investment Portfolio. The University has not made additional operating fund investments into the pooled investment portfolio since fiscal year 2015. The combined Endowment and Pooled Investment Portfolio equaled \$2.1 billion at the end of FY24 (lines 5 & 11).

It is important to note that because a majority of accounts in the Endowment are restricted to a specific purpose (e.g., scholarship, faculty chair, department research, etc.), any increase in the payout rate is required to be distributed to that specific purpose. Restricted funds cannot be used to support the general operating budget.
