

## An Open Letter to the University of Tulsa Board of Trustees

We, the undersigned faculty of the University of Tulsa, are writing to express our opposition to the True Commitment Plan. The recent announcement of the Plan has met with much public criticism, and has generated an unprecedented crisis on campus. If not stopped immediately, realization of the Plan will cause permanent damage to the University of Tulsa.

To get a clear sense of the many reasons we oppose and resolutely resist implementation of the Plan, see <https://www.tuplan.org/>

We, the undersigned faculty, have tried to raise our concerns with President Clancy and Provost Levit. Yet at every turn, we have been shut out of any meaningful discussion regarding the proposal. The administration claims to be abiding by the principles of shared governance and the University Mission but their actions demonstrate just the opposite. The TU Plan is utterly hostile to faculty, staff, students and alumni—the true heart and soul of the University of Tulsa.

We are not resistant to change but we object to changes that are poorly reasoned, inadequately supported by authentic, reliable data, and imposed in contravention of established norms of faculty governance, academic freedom, and respect for the processes of shared governance which guide the various accrediting bodies which evaluate us, including the HLC.

The process was neither “transparent,” nor “faculty driven.” It was undertaken behind closed doors and under top secret conditions which required members on the Provost’s Program Review Committee (PPRC) to sign non-disclosure agreements. The Plan and the process by which it was developed in fact violates every governing idea and institutional practice held dear by those of us who are the University of Tulsa.

We ask that the Board require the President to take the following actions:

- Announce that, given substantial opposition to the TU Plan by faculty, staff, students, alumni and the community at large, implementation be halted immediately.
- Require that the President and the Provost commit to an honest, open and fully transparent processes of evaluating all campus operations in dialogue with elected faculty representatives.
- Insist that the President and the Provost make all University programming and budget data available to the entire campus community for scrutiny, discussion and planning.

Of the Board we request the following:

- That the Board immediately conduct an anonymous survey of all University faculty in regard to the proposed True Commitment Plan. This is the only way to obtain reliable feedback.

- That the President and the Provost abandon the use of zero-based budgeting for any academic units because such a practice is inconsistent with recognition that “some commitments are truly continuing ones.” See EAB <https://docplayer.net/13921262-The-use-of-zero-based-budgeting-in-higher-education.html>
- That the Board bring in an outside auditing firm, one with no conflict of interest, no connections to any current board member or to the city of Tulsa, to complete an objective, open report on all University operations—especially including athletics, which represents an exceptional operating deficit in its current iteration as well as all current administrative salaries—and then to make this comprehensive study available to the campus community at large as a solid and unbiased information base on which to proceed in a more constructive and collaborative manner.

As faculty, we insist that the academic mission is *the* core mission of the University and we implore you to instruct the President and Provost to halt the True Commitment Plan in order to save the University of Tulsa.

Respectfully,  
Concerned Faculty of the University of Tulsa