



Dear colleagues,

Five months ago, as a newly appointed president, I promised to lead The University of Akron with open communication and transparency. Fostering this sense of support and valuing each of your voices has been my goal since day one as we seek to reshape our culture, grow comprehensively and, ultimately, ensure our future. It is my hope that I have demonstrated that commitment thus far.

I am seeking to achieve, with you, a significant positive transformation of our beloved University of Akron. We are developing our [vision](#) for this renovation in the coming months, but we cannot wait to begin necessary changes. The data and feedback are clear on two major issues—we need to do more for the people who work to deliver our mission, and we need to do more for our students who invest their future with us.

To prioritize growth and best fulfill our student-centered commitments, we will need to adjust our workforce across some units to maximize our impact and mission. Simultaneously, we recognize that our financial resources are limited and have been further reduced over the past decade. I thank you for many years of doing more with less, continuing to deliver our mission despite our shared financial reality. Unfortunately, we continue to have growing expenses and inflation putting pressure on

our ability to make it all work in the traditional ways. Although we have seen recent increases in the University's overall revenue, past declines in enrollment are impacting our state subsidy. Additionally, post-COVID expenses have increased financial strain.

To propel the institution, we must engage in cost reductions at all levels to stabilize and ultimately refine UA for the future. In that spirit, I began by reducing the annual expenditures of the Office of the President by more than \$800,000. I am grateful to the entire University enterprise for reductions in operating expenses and staffing to meet the demands of the current budget.

To become an even greater university, there is still more to do. We must pivot out of some of our past operational practices toward a more focused and effective mode of meeting our mission. In the coming years, we will incrementally reduce the number of positions so we can better invest in our people and chart strategic growth moving forward. This will be a challenging but necessary change.

To continue our preliminary visioning work, I have asked Provost Wiencek to assess expenditures v. revenue in the academic areas. You will hear more details as he meets with department heads next week. This process will include recommendations that I will ultimately put before the Board of Trustees for approval early in the spring semester.

As president, I strongly value empathy and understand that the information in this communication may be upsetting for many. Please know that I share your displeasure and concern about the impacts of these necessary actions. Students are also receiving communication on this topic. I vow to the community a process characterized by transparency and efficiency—for the good of our students, the good of the institution and for the good of each colleague.

With sincerity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "R. J." followed by a period. The letters are stylized and connected.

President R.J. Nemer
The University of Akron