

***UD President Dennis Assanis***  
***Delaware Office of Management and Budget public hearing***  
***Nov. 13, 2023***

Good morning, Director Cade and other members of the Office of Management and Budget. I'm sorry I cannot be with you in person today, but I appreciate this opportunity to join you online to discuss the University of Delaware's budget appropriation requests for FY25.

I'd like to begin with our operating request.

This year, as in previous years, our request is focused on ensuring that an excellent UD education remains affordable and accessible to Delaware's students. This is one of our most important missions — one that we share with the state — and we appreciate the state's ongoing support in helping us to achieve this goal.

Our operating request has two parts. The first is for the First State Promise program. Through this program, UD aims to cover tuition and fees for Delaware undergraduate students from families with incomes of \$75,000 or less and with modest assets. Above that level, students may receive partial tuition aid. And students from the neediest families also receive aid for room and board.

First State Promise supports about a third of our full-time Delaware students on the Newark Campus.

Also, about two-thirds of students who receive First State Promise funding also qualify for federal Pell grants, which are for the lowest-income students.

This means that First State Promise is successfully reaching the Delaware students and families who need it most.

And we need your support to continue this critical assistance.

UD is requesting a \$4.2 million increase in our FY25 operating appropriation for First State Promise. This would help us cover transfer students, as well as increased costs associated with students' greater financial need.

It would also move the state toward a more equitable investment with UD in the total cost of the program.

Without state support, we would not be able to help as many Delawareans. This would be detrimental for not only those students but for the future of our entire state.

The second part of our operating request concerns our joint engineering degree programs with Delaware State University. This partnership provides a flexible, seamless

pathway for students to start their studies at DSU and then earn a bachelor's or master's degree from UD, or to earn a bachelor's degree from each institution, depending on their needs.

By the end of this academic year, we will have students enrolled in at least four dual-degree engineering programs. Three more programs are currently in development.

This effort will help build the engineering workforce that is in high demand in Delaware.

We are grateful for the state's previous support of this program, and we are requesting your investment of \$1.9 million in FY25 so we can continue to expand it to benefit more students.

Another important way that the University of Delaware contributes to our state's economic and social wellbeing now and in the future is by providing modern academic facilities for our students. So, this brings me to our capital appropriation request.

We are grateful for the state's investment in UD's capital needs over the years. With your support, for example, we renovated a portion of Drake Hall and added chemistry labs to serve more students in the STEM disciplines.

However, our capital needs are extensive; UD has more than 450 buildings throughout the state. And our deferred maintenance backlog remains stubbornly high; it is currently about \$500 million.

Renovations and upgrades are needed to the HVAC systems, electrical systems, fire alarms, fire suppressant systems and more in Spencer Lab, Colburn Lab, McDowell Hall, Smith Hall, the remainder of Drake and several other buildings. In addition, we need to upgrade utility infrastructure and other systems that support our campus operations.

Therefore, we are requesting \$30 million in capital funding in FY25 to help address these and other needs.

As you know, inflation and our commitment to pay prevailing wages on all capital projects continues to increase the cost of this work.

In conclusion, I believe you'll see that our operating and capital appropriation requests for FY25 are aligned with our shared goal of providing the educational, research and workforce development opportunities that Delawareans need now and for the future.

Thank you for your time this morning. We'll be happy to answer any questions you may have.

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