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Wednesday, April 15, 2015

Dear President Scarborough,

The Akron chapter of the American Association of University Professors has commissioned an analysis of The University's fiscal position from 2002-2014. The analysis uses publicly available data that The University of Akron compiles for auditing agencies and the general public.

This evaluation was carried out so that we could better understand the fiscal challenges that the University faces. Financial problems have often been mentioned when explaining, for example, why no new faculty can be hired. Surprisingly, the analysis we received paints a much rosier picture of the financial health of The University of Akron than has been reported to us and the public by current and former university administrators. In fact, the analysis states that The University of Akron has been well in the black for 11 of the past 13 years, including the most recent fiscal year for which we have full data (FY14). UA's campus community certainly has not gotten this impression from the administration reports, and for most of the past 5 years the academic units have actually been required to cut expenditures, even though 2011 appears to have been one of the most "profitable" years in UA's modern history.

The Akron-AAUP has requested to meet with members of your administration in order to reconcile these different views of UA's finances. Unfortunately, they turned us down. Thus, we are presenting this report directly to you along with this open letter to the Bargaining Unit Faculty with a request for clarification of how these data can be squared with the recent discussions of fiscal problems at The University of Akron.

We hope that you can, and will, help us to understand the true fiscal health of our university. Working together as engaged and informed partners is the best path to serving our students and our community.

Sincerely,

Stephen C. Weeks
on behalf of the Akron AAUP Executive Committee