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# the Collegian

VOLUME 99, ISSUE 8      ASHLAND UNIVERSITY      JANUARY 24, 2020  
WWW.AU-LIVE.COM



**ZACH READ**  
Managing Editor

As Ashland University celebrated Christmas and rang in the New Year, the newly imposed spending and hiring freeze was in full effect. The spending and non-essential hiring freeze, instituted by AU President Carlos Campo and the Executive Leadership Team, went into immediate effect on November 26, 2019, after a \$1.6 million dollar budget shortfall was projected for the year. “Coming out of our meeting in October we realized we needed to tighten our belts a little bit so that’s when the spending freeze went into

**Swanson scores two movies available on Amazon video**

**GRACIE WILSON**  
Assitant Editor

Professor of music at Ashland University, Dr. Stefan Swanson, scores for films outside of the classroom and has recently had his music released in two films streaming on Amazon Video: Hard Laughter and Escaping Fed. Swanson started his career at AU in the fall of 2018, but his interest in film scoring started long before. “I’ve been writing music since I was seven or eight and I got into film scoring when Jurassic Park came out,” Swanson said. Ever since his initial interest in scoring, Swanson has written music for close to 70 films in the past 15 years of his career. His recent accomplishments of scoring for feature length films on Amazon Video allowed Swanson the opportunity to write in a variety of genres and utilize his talents to add to the film. “These two films are kind of a mix,” Swanson said. “One has a rock bend to it, and one has an electronic and classical bend.”

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place,” Campo said. Campo said the plan is to keep the spending freeze in place until May 31, the end of the fiscal year. By doing so, the freeze would continue to affect hiring searches, travel, professional development and training and student/faculty conferences. The exception of the budget freeze is travel for student recruitment, athletic teams and fundraising. The budget freeze comes three months after Campo and the Executive Leadership Team cut the budgets of various departments, such as athletics. “I think that many of the faculty were hopeful that would be the end of it, that when we finally did have a finished budget in late fall that it would be the one to take us through the year,” Dr. Diane Bonfiglio, president of faculty senate said. “I do know that many faculty were caught off guard by this... we were not expecting for a freeze to come out this point in the year.” Every year, various departments take students to conferences that

enhance their learning and growth as a professional in their respective fields. Bonfiglio said that she knew the psychology, criminal justice, chemistry and biology programs all had trips planned for the spring semester to take students to professional conferences that are now in jeopardy. She added that these conferences were beneficial for faculty to mentor the students on these trips and for both faculty and students to network and connect with others. “We know, for example, that spending on athletics travel continued, and many of us believed strongly that a similar exception to the budget freeze/spending freeze should have been made for student travel for conferences and academic activities,” Bonfiglio said. Campo said the primary reason the spending freeze was instituted was because of the decline of student enrollment in the fall. In Fall 2019, it was reported that there were 534 freshman enrolled, a significant drop off from 602

students in 2018. Campo said that each year’s budget is based off of the previous year’s enrollment, so it was evident there was going to be a budget shortfall after an 11.3 percent drop in freshman enrollment. Marc Pasteris, AU vice president and chief financial officer, said that anywhere from 80 to 85 percent of the gross revenue of the university comes from tuition. When the enrollment rate is down for the year, part of that projected revenue is lost. Annually, the bottom line for the budget of AU is anywhere from \$100 million to \$105 million. In this \$100 million, Campo said that 60 percent of the budget is used for salaries of employees while he said it roughly costs \$265,000 a day to keep the institution running. “It’s an expensive enterprise,” Campo said. “We’re not a business because businesses are profit motivated, but we have had to employ more business related tactics than ever before.” Due to the low enrollment issue, the university announced on Nov.

15, 2019 a tuition freeze for incoming freshmen in Fall 2020 to try and increase the freshman enrollment for Fall 2020. However, by that time the tuition rate, with no fees or room and board included, was already sitting at \$22,000. This is more than the current cost for returning students and new transfer students for the 2020-2021 school year (\$21,480) and the previous cost for that category from the current school year (\$20,950). Looking into the future for 2021, Campo did not directly allude to more budget cuts, but rather said, “We are going to have to continue to be really efficient in 2021.” “The students have an administration that deeply cares about them, that wants to provide the best education,” Pasteris said. “We want to see what is best for our students and have a successful university that everyone is proud of.”

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## New space to open for veterans

**AVAERIE FITZGERALD**  
AU-Live Managing Editor

Construction is underway for a new building on campus named, The Jack W. Liebert Military and Veterans Resource Center, which is being funded through a donation that Deborah Liebert Karl, Ashland University alumna, made back in 2017 of one-million dollars in addition to just under one-million dollars from the state of Ohio. The project is estimated to be finished on April 1, with a ribbon cutting ceremony May 7. The faculty will be moving in to the new building in mid-April. Work began about eight months ago with the moving of old files from the Brethren Church National Offices. The veterans building will be added on to the original Brethren’s space. Dr. Carlos Campo, president of AU, expressed his excitement for the new veterans building, speaking on the importance for the university and the students associated. “We really feel like that is a national model that’s part of our long-term plan,” Campo said. “By hav-

ing it at a location that is separate, but central, it will be very convenient, so military and their families can come and they basically can get everything they need done in one location.”



Construction on the new veterans building has begun.

AU is planning on bringing in around 600 veteran students by 2024, according to Campo. The current amount of students is 257 veteran and military-connected

students. “We’re really looking to fuel that growth,” Campo said. The primary components of the new building are focused on student aid, academic advising and counseling. The purpose of the building is to ease the transition from active military service to campus life. With proper resources and a space to feel

comfortable and to convene, the goal is to make a comfortable adjustment for those who have served in the military and are adjusting to civilian life. Randy Spade, director of Veteran Services at AU, said, “It’s a comprehensive center, so all of the student services for our student veterans and military connected students will be in one place. From the veterans center, we’ll be able to offer better support services to those students from one place, both their recreational spaces and our office spaces.” For spouses and dependents of United States veterans, they will have an opportunity to share in that military connected culture as well. “The bottom floor of the center has study spaces, for both individual and group, it’s got a common area, a full kitchen and a gaming lounge,” Spade said. “Since a lot of our veteran students aren’t residential students we wanted to make sure they had their own space on campus, so they felt more involved in the campus community.”

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