This series of Admin Group meetings had to do with budget considerations for the current fiscal year after word from the University administration that the library budget must be cut by 1.35 percent since the Libraries are regarded as an administrative unit and not an academic unit.

After a great deal of thought, including a formal meeting with department heads, who put forward several thoughtful ideas for reducing the budget (http://libinfo.uark.edu/webdocs/committees/admingroup/CostSavingSuggestions2010.pdf), it was decided that the following measures would be taken to provide the 1.35 percent. The following announcement was sent to all library personnel:

The bad news about the current round of budget cuts is that the Libraries are considered in the higher-cut bracket of “administrative, non-academic” because we do not generate tuition revenue; the good news is the materials budget was excluded from the base. With the materials budget protected, that leaves us with only salaries and maintenance funds to be cut. The Libraries’ 1.35% portion of assigned cuts is $83,874.04.

During the past few years, as positions have become vacant we have evaluated each position and have decided to hold some of these vacant (with work being re-distributed among existing positions). The resulting salary savings are sufficient to cover our current budget reduction. As you have read, the University has chosen to implement a hiring freeze on all unfilled positions. At such time as the University lifts the freeze we will re-evaluate our options for filling positions that were not among those we were intentionally holding vacant.

Despite the chancellor’s urging restraint in travel requests, we believe that we were frugal at the start of the year in our allocations so we will continue to honor those allocations. We do ask, however, that travelers continue to exercise frugality and if any allocations are not fully expended by the end-of-the-year that would be wonderful.

As you are aware, the FY2011 budget is still very uncertain. Just in case further reductions become necessary, either this fiscal year or next, over the next few weeks the directors, after discussions with their departments, will continue to identify potential areas that could be cut. We appreciate the input that was recently provided by department heads; in the near future I will be having further discussions with department heads about budgetary issues.

Dean Allen informed the Admin Group that she would also like to consider budget-cutting measures that could very well be required next fiscal year, as well. She requested another meeting of the department heads for those considerations and to discuss what programs, services, and collections we cannot afford to cut from the budget.