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UVI President Raises Alarm on Faculty Turnover, Seeks \$2.7M Budget Boost

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UVI President Dr. David Hall. By. V.I. LEGISLATURE

In a recent appearance before the 35th Legislature's Committee on Budget, Finance, and Appropriations, Dr. David Hall, president of the University of the Virgin Islands emphatically laid out the institution's fiscal needs for 2024. Among his chief concerns was the inability of UVI to offer competitive compensation to its academic professionals, which has led to unacceptable faculty turnover rates.

Mr. Hall highlighted that unionized teachers recently secured three years of guaranteed increases through collective bargaining. Comparatively, he stated, "Our faculty union is requesting similar treatment, yet we are not in a position to provide it." Given this, he urged lawmakers to approve an

additional appropriation of \$1.3 million beyond the executive branch's proposed budget. In addition, Mr. Hall requested \$1.4 million to mitigate the university's ongoing operational deficit, exacerbated by hurricanes, the pandemic, and rising insurance costs.

Beyond these pressing challenges, the UVI president provided an exhaustive review of the university's strategic growth, achievements, and future aspirations. He celebrated the [recent accreditation](#) of a master's program in social work, the creation of new academic degrees, and UVI's online program being ranked third-best among HBCUs by Forbes. Other notable developments included the opening of Wild Sage, a restaurant by UVI's Culinary Arts program, a \$29 million loan for a new nursing facility, and the commencement of a biomedical facility.

Mr. Hall also interacted richly with committee members, addressing queries about previously appropriated funds and the status of various university projects. Notably, he informed Senator Marvin Blyden about the ongoing construction of the medical school facilities, emphasizing the need for additional funding to secure accreditation.

The accreditation agency's concern is around reserve funding, estimated to be between \$10 to \$20 million. Mr. Hall explained, "Since they won't give us a number, all we can do is look at what they've approved in the past." He expressed confidence that they can meet the target but emphasized the need for potential private sector contributors to become more engaged.

Concerning the multi-purpose sports facility and the reconstruction of UVI's Reichold Center, Mr. Hall cited prolonged application processes with federal partners as the primary reason for delays.

One long-standing issue broached by Senator Novelle Francis pertained to former UVI employees awaiting outstanding payments from settlements going back to the 1990s. Dr. Hall affirmed that while the matter is pending legal settlements, the university remains committed to ensuring that these individuals are compensated.

Concluding his testimony, Mr. Hall expressed gratitude to lawmakers, emphasizing the vital importance of their continued partnership. He left with an optimistic note, stating, "I look forward to spending my final year working closely with each of you, addressing the challenges that remain and completing the final chapter of this presidency in a way that makes all of us proud." Mr. Hall's tenure as UVI President [ends on July 31, 2024](#).