Minutes, Budget Committee of Academic Senate

Meeting of November 12, 2007 (as approved, November 26, 2007)


Absent: Linea Rydstedt.

Invited Guests: Nancy Barrett, Provost; John L. Davis, Vice President for Finance & Facilities Management; Jerry Herron, Director of Honors Program.

*Liaison

1. The meeting convened at 11:01 a.m. The agenda and the minutes for the meeting of September 21, 2007, were approved without objection.

2. Report by Chair. The chair gave a brief report on the various funds available to the University that were not allocated in the FY 2008 General Fund Budget. The gist of that report was embodied in a memo to the committee.

3. Honors College Proposal. The chair presented the report of the subcommittee appointed to study the proposal to convert the Honors Program into an Honors College. Dr. Jerry Herron answered questions from members. The committee was assured that the conversion would not require any additional funding. In particular, the Provost indicated that she did not anticipate any significant increase in administrative salaries. After discussion, the following motion was made, seconded, and adopted by voice vote, with some opposition:

   Based on our understanding that changing from an Honors Program to an Honors College would be essentially a name change not requiring any significant additional spending, the Budget Committee believes that there is no budgetary reason to oppose the change.

   The committee agreed that the Honors College subcommittee would revise its report in light of the discussion at the meeting and circulate for comments. It would then make suggested revisions and would submit the final report to the Policy Committee as a report of the committee. [Note: The final report, as submitted to the Policy Committee, is posted on the committee website.]

4. Unallocated Funds. The committee discussed the large amount of unallocated funds that the University has received, due to several factors including enrollment revenues significantly above the estimate and State funding significantly above the estimate. Estimates of the amounts of unallocated funds were included in a memo prepared by the chair for the committee. [Note: That memo was revised in light of
the discussion at the meeting and submitted to the Policy Committee. It is also posted on the committee website.]

One member asked about the amount of year-end balances typically enjoyed by the Administration. Budget Director Rob Kohrman agreed to provide the committee with those figures for the past five years. The chair inquired about the typical year-end balances held in units that are typically subject to a 25% tax. This information is important in estimating the amount of the high year-end balances in the units for FY 2007 that was created by the June spending freeze. Mr. Kohrman agreed to provide these figures for the past five years.

5. **Budget Committees in Departmentalized Colleges.** The chair discussed the possibility of the committee developing a proposal for the formation of college-wide budget committees in the departmentalized colleges. Currently, only the non-departmentalized colleges have college-wide budget committees. He suggested that the existence of a formalized method of faculty consultation at the college level would have been helpful when the budget cuts were being decided this past summer. He expressed the hope that the Provost would support the proposal. The Provost indicated that she was prepared to bring a proposal developed by the committee for discussion at the Council of Deans.

The chair indicated that he would like to form a subcommittee to develop a proposal for a college-wide budget committee (or some equivalent) in each of the departmentalized colleges and asked volunteers to email him with their willingness to serve. [Note: The subcommittee on college-wide budget committee is William Volz (convener), Charles Parrish, Frederic Pearson, Linea Rydstedt, Michael McIntyre (ex officio).]

6. **Survey on Budget Cuts.** Prof. Woodyard gave a report on his proposal, adopted in principle at the September 12, 2007, meeting, for doing a survey of chairs and deans on the impact of the budget cuts on their units. After discussion, a decision was made to appoint a subcommittee to review the draft questionnaire prepared by Prof. Woodyard, to prepare a final questionnaire, and to address the logistical problems that will arise in constructing the survey. Volunteers were asked to email the chair. [Note: The budget-cut survey subcommittee is James Woodyard (convener), Allen Batteau, Richard Elling, and Lothar Spang.]

7. **Adjournment.** The committee adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Michael J. McIntyre