Minutes for Faculty Senate Budget and Planning Committee

Monday September 11, 2017


The draft agenda was discussed and two additional items were suggested to be incorporated: (a) The potential move of the faculty position approval process to be at the Provost level in order to facilitate cluster hires. (b) The potential addition of post-Full Professor promotion procedures.

The agenda was then discussed:

1. Comments were made based around the Budget presentation made by Vice Chancellor Cimino and Interim Provost Zomchick at the Retreat. C. Cimino noted that there were no major changes regarding the budget over previous years. The discussion then proceeded to cover several of the items discussed with Chancellor Davenport in July including methods for budget input from faculty and the processes to be followed this year. VC Cimino noted that the Chancellor is still deciding on details but the expectation is that she will have individual meetings with Cabinet members to go over priorities, and may have as well a more open process that involves members of the B&P Committee and other representatives.

Cimino will ask the Chancellor if she plans to hold some meetings for budget planning (likely in February and March) that would involve the B&P Committee, but noted that she has been consistent in desiring input from the Senate on allocation decisions. Following a description of past practice of the Committee it was decided that we would again ask several Vice Chancellors to come to Budget Committee meetings to encourage open conversations about the priorities of their units. VC Cimino will lead a discussion of the various units that report to him at the October meeting including a summary of construction and building funding commitments. Gross will contact other VCs requesting their presence at B&P meetings to foster discussions.

There was considerable discussion about the need for transparency and appropriate means for input from all campus stakeholders, particularly Heads and Deans, if indeed there is a re-envisioning of campus priorities. There is room within the scope of VolVision2020 for considerable flexibility and several members noted that any reimagining should have broad input in order to make changes as legitimate as possible. Meetings such as the Leadership retreat have been mostly one-way information transfer rather than open discussion of possible trajectories for UTK. This includes issues such as cluster hiring and the process for deciding what areas will be chosen for such hires.

A few questions were raised regarding possible revenue sources including different tuition for science fields as has been done in engineering. This is being discussed by Chancellor davenport with President DiPietro regarding possible buy-in from the Board of
trustees. The issue has been discussed at the Council of Deans. There was discussion about the recent revenue from naming of colleges, and Cimino noted that how these funds are expended are based upon the donors desires and negotiation with the college needs. The funds associated with any naming do not have any "tax" for central funding - the funds all go to the college. There is a rough formula for what the costs are for various naming rights.

2. The list of possible foci of Committee activities was then held.

(a) It was decided that it would be appropriate for the Committee to collaborate with the Graduate Council on a review of what has been the various practices for graduate student assistantships, at least in terms of obtaining some data on the ranges of compensation and expectations of students. It was noted that there is incredible disparity across campus, some of which may be due to differential expectations by field in both compensation and responsibilities of graduate students. Given the Chancellor’s statements that UTK has far fewer graduate students than is desirable, an analysis from a strategic perspective of resource allocations to graduate students is needed. Cimino noted that there were considerable commitments, both recurring and non-recurring, of resources for graduate education over the past several years. Committee members who desired to work on this issue were Bailey, McKay and Franklin.

(b) The Living Wage analysis was agreed to be considered and data from HR will be obtained to carry out an analysis with the assistance of Senate GA Brooke Killian. Eldridge, Shefner and Lyons will work on this including possible consideration of recalculation of what the living wage rate considered should be.

(c) Gross will check regarding the gender study whether this has indeed been decided to be done every two years by the Provosts office.

(d) Discussion of Athletics contributions to campus started by Cimino noting that the Chancellor has informed the Athletic Director that she expects Athletics to have a plan in place for an annual assessment (3% was one figure mentioned) that would assist in campus E&G funding for expenditures such as the General Council's office, payroll system maintenance, administrators time, etc.). Cimino noted that he has information on what transpires around the SEC with many institutions having an assessment annually and then an additional funding from Athletics based upon end-of-year net revenue. There was discussion of further Neyland Stadium renovations and the fact that there has been approval for the design phase to proceed for the next modifications, which are expected to cost $106M. Discussion of the possibility of alcohol sales was held, which is one aspect of the charge to a Alcohol Use on Campus Committee appointed by the Chancellor. This must mesh with the recent changes to the Student Code of Conduct.

(e) Cimino noted that there outsourcing decision is on hold until additional numbers come from JLL in response to many questions and issues raised by the campus. It is not clear when a decision will be made.
(f) the Faculty Salary analysis will be carried out this year - Gross will ask IR for the data as in past years in November and K. Baker volunteered to compile the report.

(g) Regarding further effort on historical analysis of salary, M. Kent agreed to look at last years reports and make recommendations to the Committee about whether there are other analyses that might be carried out.

The meeting was adjourned at 5PM.