Finance Committee Minutes

2009-2-23

Present: Monika Ardelt
Jane Brockmann
Sam Brown
Kennie Merz
David Pharies (arrived late)
Andrea Sterk
Ken Wald
Caroline Wiltshire
Paul D’Anieri (Dean)
Dave Richardson

Meeting commenced at 5:02 pm.

The Dean opened up the meeting by handing out a document that had quantitative categories he was considering in evaluating a department. These included OPS budget, PhD/year, tenure-track faculty, grant monies/FTE, etc. This was described as a way to think through how to make budget cuts. This led to extensive discussion:

- It was noted that quantitative measurements miss qualitative factors or intangibles that can be ascribed to a department. The Dean agreed that this was a concern and would do his best to take important qualitative aspects into account.
- It was noted that interconnectedness between departments is missed as well.
- It was reiterated that due diligence must be exercised in assembling and validating all information obtained by the College because it will evidently play a key role in deciding on the nature of the cuts. The Dean stressed that the data has been made public and units are welcome to point out inaccuracies.
- It was asked how much the Dean’s vision for the College affects the choice of cuts. He replied that it is not easy to concisely summarize his vision for the college. He stressed our teaching and discovery missions in general, and pointed out that we are the only college on campus that focuses on basic research, on international affairs, on public affairs, among other things. He also pointed out even a very clear articulation of a “vision” will not lead unambiguously to criteria for budget cuts.
- In response to this, he stressed the role of CLAS in undergraduate education, international studies, and basic research.
- President Machen’s recent statement suggesting that UF should bolster its graduate program was also discussed.
- The proposed upcoming budget cut is still 10%, meaning that CLAS will have to plan for a maximum cut of $9.33MM. The present budget analysis for CLAS indicates ~$3.2MM can be saved via attrition and ~$1-2MM can be gleaned from
departmental suggestions aimed at saving money, leaving ~$4-5MM that would have to come from deeper cuts that likely would include layoffs and possible cuts that would nearly eliminate some departments and activities. All numbers are rough estimates.

- The administration is not mandating elimination of whole units.
- It was reiterated that all cuts would follow the rules outlined in the contract between UF and the Union.
- It was suggesting that some of the cuts might be achieved through the layoffs of underperforming faculty members. The Dean remarked that merit will not be taken into account in layoffs because doing so is excluded by the contract.
- On the obverse of the handout given to the Committee by the Dean, there was an example of an analysis that the College office had been considering. This analysis demonstrated how one might go about showing the relation between the income generated by individual units and the expenditures they involve. The Dean reiterated that this analysis, a form of Responsibility Centered Management (RCM), was only one of a number of analyses being considered internally. He also remarked that peer institutions like Ohio State and Indiana use variants of this model.
- The Dean was pointedly asked if he had decided on a budget cut plan yet. He replied that he has not, and that he planned to use the next few weeks to arrive at the best possible proposal for enacting budget cuts in CLAS.

He meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Kennie Merz