CLAS Faculty Council Minutes
Thursday, January 31, 2008, 10:40 p.m.
CLAS Dean’s Conference Room

Elected members present: Susan DeFrance, Jean Larson, John Leavey, Carol Murphy, Ronald Randles, Samuel Stafford, Donald Stehouwer, John Yelton, Kenneth Wagener, Ann Wehmeyer, Barbara Zsembik
Ex-officio members present: Alan Dorsey, Chris Snodgrass
The Dean: Joe Glover,
Elected members absent: Nora Alter, Barbara Zsembik
Student members absent: no student members have been selected

The meeting began with a discussion of the spreadsheet on the Liberal Arts & Sciences 2008/2009 Operating Budget 08-09 Projection created by Kimberly Browne and provided by Dean Glover, and how to read the items in the spreadsheet.

Glover confirmed that the Provost has authorized market equity raises and counter-offers. He said that chair support was being reduced to the level of support offered in Dean Harrison’s time, possibly also Dean Sidman’s time, which calls for a culture change around the college.

Alan Dorsey asked about the state of the deficit at this point in time. Glover said that this year the college will run a $1 million deficit as agreed upon with the Provost. Starting with the next fiscal year, the college will no longer engage in deficit spending.

When asked if the budget was a nine-month or twelve-month budget, Glover replied that on the expense side it is twelve-month; the only suplemental is the annual supplemental summer instructional budget handled through the Office of the Provost. Several sources of funds are untouched by the callback: PECO funds for building construction, grant money, foundation money.

In a discussion of endowment money, we heard about a department checking the terms of one of its sources and changing the use of the funds in a way that meets the donor requirements. Glover reported that the Dean’s fund is essentially the only one with flexibility available to the college, and it funds graduation, Pugh Hall loan expenses and other expenses state money cannot cover. The Foundation has responded to a call to ramp up the level of donations and the increase in funds has been going to travel and term professorships.

Since graduation is an expense that does not affect the academic experience for students, its cancellation should be considered for a $50,000-60,000 savings.

It was pointed out that the suggested changes will affect SCH’s, even with enlarged sections and making faculty teach more. In advocating for CLAS, we should be prepared to make the case for how the proposed cuts will affect SCH’s. Ron Randles asked if the cut we are taking will be seen as a $3 million cut, if the SCH’s decrease and tuition revenue with it. One suggested way to increase tuition revenue was to encourage students to take 3000 level courses rather than 2000 level courses, and the question arose whether such changes would benefit the college and departments that did so. The provost remains interested in offering classes on an electronic platform, and Glover reported that DOCE is talking to some departments about it. The courses will not be off book; the university wants to make sure it meets its corridors.

In a review of our staffing situation, Glover said that we expect to hire 10-12 people in legislatively-funded positions while we lose 7-10 ($700,000 worth) through attrition and 36-39 in retirements. One of the advisor lines is targeted to biology, since the major has mushroomed; negotiations focus on whether the individual will be in the Advising Center or a department.

Glover was encouraged to try to slow down the timeline for decision on the permanent cuts of recurring money. In particular he was encouraged to see if some of the difficult decisions could be postponed through shifting one-time revenues, possibly foundation money, indirect cost funds to cover recurring costs for a year.

Glover will provide a ranking of programs by SCH productivity per FTE. He asked if there were other metrics we would like to see. We also asked to know which programs do not receive any state money. Glover agreed to ask Kimberly to break down the $3.4 million Other Commitments category of the budget.

The meeting closed at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Larson, Associate Chair