

Council of Faculty Representatives Approved meeting minutes

November 3, 2023

Present: Praveen Sekhar (chair), Dene Grigar (vice-chair), Paul Bonamy, Laurie Drapela, Yijun He, Kristin Lesseig, Sam Lohmann, Kelsey Pascoe, Samantha Reisz, Aaron Whelchel.

Guests: Jenny Chambers-Taube (Vice Chancellor for Finance and Operations), Sarah Rauch (Director of Business Services).

Recorder: Lohmann.

Agenda Items

1. Committee reports.
 - a. Accessibility Council has created a request form for faculty to request funding for closed captioning to support universal design. Monthly meeting is upcoming. (Lohmann)
 - b. Commission on Status of Women, Oversight Committee discussed remote work policies on campuses and compared with policies at other universities. They are looking into whether employees are being told that “remote work cannot be used for childcare.” If so this may have an inequitable gender impact. (Drapela)
 - i. President Schultz mentioned at the meeting with CFR that there will be another round of salary adjustments for equity, depending on enrollment.
 - ii. EP29 in BPPM dictates the process by which salaries are determined across campuses. CFR members note that under EP 29, the independent campus budget cannot be a reason for pay inequity between campuses.
 - c. Research Advisory Council met and will be meeting every two weeks. The goal is to reconnect people around research on campus. (Lesseig)
 - i. The Graduate Student union negotiations are ongoing and not yet settled.
 - ii. CFR members suggest that RAC could discuss research support for career-track faculty.
2. VCFO Chambers-Taube Budget Presentation.
 - a. FY25 Budget Forecast. Projections started with a nearly \$5M deficit; after mitigation, a \$3.4M deficit remains. Forecast is based on Fall 2023 enrollment, anticipating a 3% tuition increase.
 - b. In FY24 some expenses were shifted to departmental and central “non-core funds” such as annual budget process; those are returned to the budgeted from Permanent Budget Line in FY25 forecast.
 - c. Projected total PBL allocation is \$38.8M. Revenue has decreased in recent years due to reduced enrollment; expenses have also decreased but not as quickly. Mitigation relies on non-core funds. VCFO does not yet know how much of core fund reserves can be used in FY25 but is planning for 5%.
 - d. Approximately 430 additional tuition-paying students (compared to Fall 2023) would be needed to resolve the remaining \$3.4M deficit through tuition revenue, or 625 students to resolve the full \$5M deficit.

- e. Interest revenue has been difficult to predict from year to year. Budget office has projected the revenue based on averages from previous years. However, it is an immaterial source of funding and controlled at the system level.
 - f. In recent years there has been a smaller deficit that could be mitigated internally with reserves. Reserves have gone down and deficit has grown, so now there is a “structural operating deficit.” VCFO hopes to identify strategies to reduce costs. The Chancellor has also convened a task force to look at ways to increase undergrad enrollment to bring in additional tuition revenue.
 - g. Budget mitigation approach follows system guidance, meaning no layoffs, no program discontinuation. Vancouver campus ideas: centralize services, restructure, or share staffing, streamline academic options and pathways, assess space utilization. VCFO notes that most costs are salaries and wages, so it is very difficult to address the deficit without layoffs.
 - i. Example of streamlined academic options: engineering planning to offer non-thesis Master’s degree option; Human Development reduced number of pathways within the program.
 - ii. If campus space is rented out, it must be aligned in some way with university mission.
 - iii. Question about whether enrollment goals can be met. There may need to be investment in certain areas to increase enrollment and retention. There is a need for marketing, especially with the message that half of students graduate without debt.
 - h. At the WSU system level, Faculty Senate has been told that “things will be fine” even though there is a 2.5% budget cut and \$85M debt.
 - i. Comments from CFR members:
 - i. Restructuring programs to reduce adjunct positions would mean functional layoffs, even if they are not considered layoffs “on paper.”
 - ii. It used to be more common to rent campus space for events in the summer.
 - iii. Executive positions could be absorbed or reduced as people in those positions leave or retire.
 - iv. CFR members propose the idea of a system-wide audit from outside.
3. Bylaws Discussion.
- a. Terminology: are clinical faculty included in the career track category? Could the designations change? In nursing, there are some clinical faculty who are not considered career track.
 - b. Rules for amending the Faculty Assembly Constitution (i.e. first two sections of bylaws).
 - c. Definition of quorum for CFR. 60% is proposed.
 - d. Definition of Academic Unit—it would be helpful to include examples in document.
 - e. Definition of roles for past chair, chair, and vice chair if the chair or vice chair leaves; election process for off-cycle election if needed.
 - f. Program review process. Academic Affairs subcommittee does not need to be listed since it would be ad-hoc.
4. Tabled for next meeting: Ad-hoc Committee Formation.