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Faculty Budget Priority Committee
Minutes
October 25, 2007, 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: Tom Sudkamp, Faculty President, Chair; Frank Ciarallo, CECS; Hank Dahlman, COLA; Pamela Tsang; COSM. Pam Zambenini, Staff.

Guests: Matt Filipic, Vice President, Business and Fiscal Affairs; Keith Ralston, Associate Vice President, Budget Planning and Resource Analysis.

The committee discussed the implications of the state's new funding mechanisms for higher education.

Dr. Filipic expressed that there is more support for higher education now than in the past 22. Due to a law change, the Governor rather than the Ohio Board of Regents now appoints the Chancellor. Chancellor Fingerhut does not have a higher education background and is not committed to traditional ways. While this is positive, the negative is that the future will be hard to predict. In the past, funding was tied to enrollment but this is no longer so without the old formula. There are indicators that the state would rather not fund enrollment but "missions," specifically focusing on science, math, and engineering.

A Strategic Plan draft from the Chancellor is expected to be distributed in the first quarter of the new year. The state would like to see research at state institutions spill over into the community and has made a major commitment to funding research projects, considering overall regions rather than favoring specific institutions.

Members asked how the state would evaluate the "mission" of a school for funding. Dr. Filipic stated there was some thought that the role of regional campuses might change.

Committee members asked how WSU would fare following the funding formula for the biennium. Dr. Filipic stated there would be more positive changes during the second year biennium with the first year being lean. One thing the state is requiring is that universities become more efficient regarding energy, sustainability, and purchasing. The university is currently making changes that won't be noticed by the general public, such as replacing boiler controls and changing purchasing policies to allow for competition. Another possibility will be raising and lowering building temperatures during warm and cool months, respectively.

Members asked about Dr. Hopkin's statements on tuition. Will we lower tuition or just not raise it? Dr. Filipic noted that the state has asked how much support they would need to provide to bring Ohio's tuition in-line with the national average. Concern was expressed about factoring in states such as CA and TX rather than just those states in our region.

The topic of a common calendar was discussed. The Ohio Board of Regents might support a common calendar because of the advantages for students. This was followed up with concern about loss of autonomy with a unified state system. It was noted that Chancellor Fingerhut has expressed that he sees a limited state system.

The committee questioned about the affect of the current summer school and intersession funding methods on course offerings and faculty. Mr. Ralston explained the current and indicated that it may be time to consider a new model for summer and intersession funding.

As their last task, the committee examined revenues from Auxiliary Operations on page 27 of the budget materials, and wondered if it is the philosophy of the university to make a profit or just break even in areas such as food services, vending, the Nutter Center, etc.? Unlike other institutions, Wright State does not differentiate between general and instruction student fees. Thus the funding for these auxiliary operations comes from the same pool as instructional funding.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.