

MINUTES
2014-2015 Faculty Senate Meeting
September 11, 2014
Heth 022

Members present: Suzanne Ament, Kevin Ayers, Ian Barland, Roann Barris, Vickie Bierman, Brad Bizzell, James Collier, Steve Corwin, Jason Davis, Eric Du Plessis, Lori Elis, Mary Ferrari, Jake Fox, Andrew Foy, Tim Fuhrer, Kim Gainer, Brent Harper, Vince Hazleton, Rhett Herman, Rodrigo Hernandez, Bill Hrezo, Margaret Hrezo, Prahlad Kasturi, Abhay Kaushik, Jerry Kopf, Mary LaLone, Elizabeth Lanter, Douglas Mitchell, James Newman, Laura Newsome, Monica Pazmino-Cevallos, Rob Sanderl, Mashooq Salehin, Sandra Schneider, Susan Schoppelrey, Wally Scott, Andrea Stanaland, Paul Thomas, Carter Turner, Amy VanKirk, Jimmy Ray Ward, Skip Watts, Jennifer Whicker

Members absent: Seife Dendir, Laura LaRue, Valerie Leake, Julie Temple

Guests: Sam Minner, Provost

- I. The meeting was called to order at 3:33 p.m.
- II. Provost Minner gave his report.
 - a. RU would submit a plan by September 19, 2014, for savings of \$ 2.6 million for this fiscal year and for savings of an additional \$ 1.3 million for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2015.
 - b. The principles that are guiding the savings plan were that the following be protected:
 - the teaching mission,
 - expenditures that would expand resources and create new ones (e.g., recruitment and advancement),
 - expenditures associated with activities that deeply engage students in learning (e.g., high-impact practices), and
 - junior faculty.
 - c. The savings plan would include the following steps that could be implemented immediately:
 - teaching by personnel in Academic Affairs (without additional pay),
 - reducing the number of adjuncts,
 - reducing support for research,
 - reducing travel (preserving funds for first-year faculty, with funding for other junior faculty at the discretion of deans),
 - leaving classified positions unfilled,
 - leaving administrative positions unfilled,
 - leaving teaching positions unfilled.

- d. The savings plan would include the following steps that could be implemented July 1, 2016:
 - utilizing contingency funds,
 - reducing the number of GTFs,
 - reducing advertising costs,
 - reducing operating costs, and
 - reducing the assessment budget.
- e. The list of potential savings would be submitted to Richmond, and the university will have to wait for a response as to which parts of the plan would be “real.” Lobbying is taking place on behalf of higher education, but the university will “have to move forward from this point as if [the savings plan] is real until we hear otherwise.”
- f. A question was asked about varying numbers that had been mentioned as cost-saving targets. Dr. Minner replied that one number was an institution-wide target and that a second number was the portion for which Academic Affairs was responsible.
- g. A question was asked about whether the savings plan took into account the enrollment shortfall. Dr. Minner replied that it did.
- h. A question was asked as to when the university would receive a response to its savings plan. Dr. Minner replied that it did not think it would be long but that he did not have a date.
- i. Questions were asked as to whether we could get data about the reasons some students do not return for the sophomore year and whether the new suspension policy had caused the drop. Dr. Minner replied that the university could try to get that information but that the response rate from that population was usually too low to base strategic decisions on that he did not believe the new suspension policy to be the cause. He also stated that the university was taking steps on both recruitment and retention by working on a new space for the Admissions office, working to make visits by potential students as positive as possible, looking for money to all for more visits by potential students, and providing money for deans to distribute to faculty in support of retention projects. He also stated that at some point the Language and Cultural Institute would “get cranking” and that as a result more international students might enroll at the university.
- j. A question was asked as to how much of the potential cuts savings were due to the state budget and how much to the enrollment shortfall. Dr. Minner replied that he did not know but could find out that information.
- k. A question was asked the possibility of raising tuition for next year. Dr. Minner replied that a letter from the governor had stated that tuition and fees should not be raised.
- l. A question was asked about whether the university had the resources to support its changing demographic. Dr. Minner replied that he had just attended a webinar on that topic and that faculty could be trained to work with the new demographic.

- m. A question was asked about the source of funding to fill positions related to Pathways to Excellence. Dr. Minner stated that these positions would come out of next year's budget.
- III. A motion was made and seconded to amend the agenda to omit committee reports and the report on FSEC actions during the summer. The motion passed.
 - IV. Dr. Kopf, president of the Faculty Senate, gave his report. He stated that the budget situation, while not great, could be worse, and he requested that faculty be measured in their comments to students and the public.
 - V. A substitute motion was introduced for the Motion *re* Reevaluation of New Investments.
 - a. It was moved and seconded that the rules be suspended to allow discussion. The motion to suspend the rules passed.
 - b. An amendment was proposed to replace "suspension of the investment" with "suspension of new investment." The motion's sponsor accepted the amendment.
 - c. The motion was tabled.
 - VI. The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 p.m.