

## **Faculty Assembly**

April 9, 2013

Library Conference Room

Ralph Olliges, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order.

### **Announcements**

Marty Smith and Gwyneth Williams wanted to acknowledge all the work that Ralph has done as Faculty Senate President since 2009. When Ralph initially took over as Faculty Senate President, Bill Lynch had just resigned the position to go to London and Ralph had just taken over as Vice President. Ralph had also just become a Department Chair. It was a time of change in University administration. Ralph never complained and has worked tirelessly in this position. He is a man of honor and has a very kind heart. Marty and Gwyneth presented Ralph with a plaque in honor of his service to Webster University as Faculty Senate President from 2009 – 2013.

Ralph thanked everyone in appreciation of the recognition.

### **Dr. Stroble, President**

Dr. Stroble thanked the assembly for inviting her to the meeting.

She thanked everyone for their contribution towards scholarships. Monday night, April 8<sup>th</sup>, the Scholarship Dinner was held with donors and students meeting each other. The speakers provide insights into their lives which provides for a very personal connection. She encouraged all to attend the Scholarship Dinner in the future.

There will be a Townhall at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup> in Grant's Gym where the 300 plus colleagues who have worked in the Working Groups will do a check in and share the information they have gathered.

Everyone was thanked for their work in sustainability and we are reminded of the Sustainability Conference being held this weekend.

Dr. Stroble stated that both Webster University and higher education are going through a transition period. In order to continue to be better at what we do, she reminded all to be inclusive and welcoming to each other. She would like to see everyone be reciprocal in their relationships, have a free flow of dialogue, and think critically about the issues in front of us to benefit our students.

She turned the floor over to Dr. Julian Schuster, Provost and Senior Vice President.

Dr. Schuster stated that we have numerous interactions. People need to be straight forward in their communications. We, as a community, are one and need to find a way to channel our interactions.

For three years, Dr. Schuster has had the pleasure of working with the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee.

Our attitude will not change. We need to focus on what is for the greater good for the greatest number of people.

Regarding the Gender Equity Study – Dr. Schuster stated that Webster University is committed to this study and providing the data for complete and full transparency. We need to find solutions to the challenges we are facing.

Faculty have not participated in the budget and it is Dr. Schuster's desire to find a way for faculty to participate. Keep in mind that there is nothing the administration will not share with faculty, but they cannot share the things that are not known. Sometimes schedules need to be changed because it must pass through the Board of Trustees for approval. The voices of the various committees represented are being heard and the administration is committed to sharing information.

Dr. Schuster stated that he has exchanged several emails with Jeffrey Carter for the sake of constructing a transparent environment with the upper administration. Colleagues are encouraged to speak their mind. All senior administration present will recuse themselves from the constructive dialogue. Those present were asked to remember that Webster also has other constituencies (600 plus members of our staff).

Dr. Schuster thanked the faculty for allowing him to speak and turned the floor over to Jeffrey Carter and the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee.

The administrators, including deans, voluntarily left after their remarks as requested by the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee. Thus, the administrators were not available to answer questions.

### **The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee Report**

Jeffrey Carter shared the names of the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee members: Doug O'Bannon, Cheryl Breig-Allen, and Susan Seymour.

The SFB Committee shared the email that was received last week from Provost Schuster (See Appendix A). The message is not an official statement regarding the budget, but is more an update on the progress of the budget since the Board of Trustees will not meet until April 26<sup>th</sup>.

The proposed FY14 Budget was presented to the Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees on March 27<sup>th</sup>, where it was endorsed and forwarded to the Executive Committee. It is expected to be approved by the Executive Committee and the full Board of Trustees on April 26<sup>th</sup>.

Overall, the budget provides for the following:

- Modest tuition increases, generally 3% or less
- A pay increase pool of 1% with delay in Mercer adjustments (with a possibility of mid-year adjustment)
- Delay in some non-faculty hires
- Reduction in travel and entertainment budgets, excluding professional development funds

The floor was opened for the following question and answer session:

**Q:** Weren't there a number of other issues brought up like 1) Gender Equity time table, 2) Mercer adjustments, 3) Adjunct raises, 4) Creation of super adjunct line, 5) Full scale look at stipend line? Where are we with those issues?

**A:** The email response is what we received.

**Q:** In the spirit of transparency, will administrative salaries be shared or not?

**A:** We have asked about administrative salaries and were told that 990s are available to the public.

**Q:** Does the freeze on non-faculty hires include the Assistant Provost for Student Affairs and Athletics?

**A:** SFB has addressed the increase in administrative lines and were told that they are replacements.

**Q:** Is there an organizational chart that shows administrative salaries and bonuses? Could that chart contain replacement lines?

**S:** It was stated that we keep hearing the word transparency, but with the past administration, we knew more than we know now. It is offensive and disrespectful to this group to continue to ask for information and be totally ignored.

**Q:** The Mercer data is now getting pretty old. Are there plans to readjust with new data? Does that have to be indexed by CPI in some way? In going back to the original data pool and pulling out those peer institutions, has that been discussed at all?

**A:** No, at one point it was discussed to be conducted in-house.

**S:** In 2010, 990s showed that some administrators received five figure bonuses in a year in which faculty said they would take a \$1,000 adjustment to defray the cost of health insurance. Senior administration does not seem interested in sharing the wealth. It is inherently unfair because they have received bonuses for work that they did not do 100% since staff does so much of the work.

**Q:** Dr. Schuster's email states that the FY14 Revenue Budget reflects the highest student credit hours we have achieved in the last five years. However, targeted projections are lower than the FY13 budgeted enrollments. We still end up not making our budget. Why is this?

**A:** The SFB will be addressing this issue.

At this point in the Assembly, the SFB distributed their report (See Appendix B) for faculty to review. The document has undergone many changes. Is this the approach that faculty wish for SFB to take? It was stated that you cannot accept something that has not yet been offered.

**S:** How can faculty be satisfied to work in good faith when good faith has never been shown? The document is not strong enough. Faculty should not vote on this without a response on all of the other items we have asked for. If we vote on this as it is, we are basically saying thank you.

**S:** The question was asked if anyone (faculty) was involved at all in the budgeting process. It has been stated that there are three faculty involved, but it is not known who those faculty are or in what capacity they are serving. It is felt that there are serious questions that need to be answered about the financial decisions that have been made over the last few years. In a difficult economy, you should save your surplus, not spend it. If the budget is low, one does not buy a chess team or a new location in Vienna.

**S:** It was stated that the whole budget process for SFB needs to begin in September instead of this late date in April. The comment was made that an assurance of good faith requires trust and confidence and we do not have that. We have had all of these assurances in the past and nothing ever comes to fruition. There is a feeling that even if faculty are involved with "a seat at the table" that it will not matter.

**S:** The suggestion was made that the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee should resend the original questions that were not answered and make no agreement this year. Then let the Faculty Senate negotiate for a seat at the table before an agreement is made.

**S:** Faculty would like more information from administration about administrative salaries and bonuses and the specifics of planning and salaries campus wide. There is distrust about the basis of how budgetary issues are determined. Faculty are losing confidence and morale needs to be boosted to give confidence in order to move forward in our jobs, feel good about our programs and, ultimately bring students to the university.

**S:** When Provost Schuster first arrived at Webster, he added faculty lines. It is felt that there is a willingness to expand faculty lines, but the money is not there.

**S:** A statement was made that regarding Mercer, there is much less concern about adjustments than across the board increases not including cost of living. It is hoped we do not get so stuck on Mercer adjustments that we lose sight of across the board increases.

**S:** An elected seat at the table would be shared governance. It is not a bargaining chip. We need to work with administration and move toward a long term approach to correct the deficiencies rather than a short term approach.

**S:** Changes in higher education and the economy do not excuse not engaging the faculty. There is no understanding of this and it is disrespectful.

**S:** The statement was made that the Faculty Senate is the appropriate venue to take up the transparency and shared governance issues. This is a bigger issue and it is appropriate for the Faculty Senate to be proactive.

The Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee did not present an offer to the faculty. An SFB member asked for a casual show of hands on whether or not to accept the 1% increase. Based on that show of hands, faculty did not favor accepting the 1% increase. Note: this was not an official vote.

A show of hands was asked for on whether the administration was seen in a more positive light, the trend reflected seemed to be no. Note: this was not an official vote.

Jeffrey Carter, on behalf of the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee, will email Dr. Schuster on Wednesday.

With no further business, the assembly adjourned at 4:20 p.m.