

Faculty Assembly Meeting

November 12, 2013

East Academic Building – Room 102

Gwyneth Williams, Faculty Senate President, called the meeting to order.

Dr. Williams stated that the Faculty Senate has been working with the administration to enhance communication and provide information to faculty. She introduced Provost Schuster and Dr. Greg Gunderson.

Provost Schuster mentioned that this is an attempt in establishing transparent communication between the administration and faculty. The administration wants to send a clear and unequivocal message that there is nothing that they do not want to share with faculty.

Report on Budget – Dr. Greg Gunderson

Dr. Gunderson thanked the faculty for the opportunity to attend and address the University's financial position. The following topics were covered:

- 1) FY 2013 Overview
- 2) FY 2014 Overview
- 3) How the budget has morphed and changed over time
- 4) Next Steps (FY 2015)

Regarding FY 2013, Dr. Gunderson said enrollment was below expectations but the University had a strong Endowment performance with a 21.8 percent return. We outperformed the market place by buying low and selling high on those investments. We managed our operational costs and instituted budget reductions as necessary last year and stayed within our 5 percent margin. We were re-evaluated for our credit rating and received the highest audit result that you can achieve.

For FY 2014, enrollment is down across the network in St. Louis and internationally. We are 95 percent student revenue driven. It is important to recruit and retain our students. No one more qualified for this task than those in this room. Spring II allows a chance to increase enrollment.

A pie chart was shown comparing Operating Revenue between 2012 and 2014. A pie chart was also shown with a breakdown of Domestic Tuition Revenue by percentage and campus.

Compensation – Total full-time and adjunct wages increased by 5.9 percent. Total student and administrative wages increased by 4 percent.

There was a 5.4 percent reduction in travel and entertainment.

Dr. Gunderson said we have significantly reduced the contingency fund as a portion of our overall budget. Rather than build a budget that generates a return, we wanted to create a budget that is realistic.

FY 2015 Budget Planning

The key to our success is the preservation of academic quality.

There is a commitment to forecast revenue and expenditures as accurately as possible in order to optimize financial resource allocation and utilization.

We need to meet strategic goals including a 5 percent operating margin.

There will be aggressive pursuit of new revenues and cost reductions to support strategic mission.

Report by Dr. Nancy Hellerud, Associate Provost:

The last time she presented to the Faculty Assembly she reported on enrollment for Summer and Fall I. In looking at Fall II, there is an overall decline in graduate enrollment. There is a gap between what was targeted and what was achieved for summer. That gap has grown in Fall II. Overall on the ground graduate programs are showing a decline in numbers.

Online programs are maintaining expectations. The on ground students who are taking online courses has risen as well. The cohort programs in St. Louis are doing really well (primarily Nursing and MBA).

Report by Dr. Rob Parrent

Fall undergraduate numbers at the Webster Groves campus was very strong. The university had a target of 483 new full-time freshman and had an actual count of 487. This is very favorable and speaks positively for us.

There has been much reorganization in the Enrollment area. Anne Edmunds is now Associate Vice President. Ellie Richards joined the graduate recruitment team and begins December 1st. Sarah Nandor who worked with undergraduate transfers is now exclusive to graduate recruitment. Jim Meyers is now Associate Vice President for undergraduate enrollment.

They are seeing a lot of good things happening and much energy in the enrollment area. They are working with Barbara O'Malley more aggressively to represent all program interests, marketing and promoting on campus events more, and promoting new campus calling campaigns.

The preview day had 119 students. Dr. Parrent apologized in getting students/parents to the faculty late.

Dr. Parrent said we are working with our community college partners, and changing the way we do things. We are working hard on community college outreach and obtaining a level of visibility that we have not had in the past.

Significant progress has been made on the Recruiter software system(85% completed). Graduate Recruiter started in October and they have put a "fast forward" on it to make sure that it is ready by December 23rd to help manage inquiries and funnel them through the system more effectively.

GMC is a new lead acquisition program that will help us get in touch with students requesting information within 24 hours rather than a week.

Dr. Parrent mentioned that "Transfer Day" and "Preview Day" are the dullest monikers you could have. He is soliciting suggestions for better names.

At this time, the floor was opened for questions from faculty:

Q: With the recent budget crisis and government shutdown, how does this impact military enrollment? Maryville is growing. How does their graduate enrollment compare to ours?

A: Nancy Hellerud stated that the people that work with the military students did a very good job of enrolling people.

Provost Schuster spoke on the Maryville issue and said that in the graduate arena, they are lowering tuition left and right. Preferred providers gave a discount and Maryville came with a price of \$300. We will actively investigate our options.

A statement was made that as far as recruitment/retention goes, several students from various programs have been told things when they applied (concerning programs and curriculum) that were not true, and we are losing students because of this. Dr. Parrent asked that this person contact him because he would like as much information as possible. He has people network with Admission representatives to make sure they have accurate information.

Q: What is the start up cost for a new campus in Ghana and how long will it be before that campus is up and functioning?

A: Dr. Gunderson stated that a third party provider is paying for construction of the Ghana campus. Webster provides faculty, pedagogy, etc. Our costs will be covered first and what is profit will be split between the two. Payback is three years. We have a Spring I start date with undergraduate and graduate students attending.

Q: What is the discount rate now? How has it changed over the last three years? And what is the optimum level?

A: Provost Schuster explained that there are two discount rates – one for funded and one for unfunded. The unfunded is greater than it should be because our funded is lower than it should be. Unfunded means we do not have sufficient Endowed scholarships to put toward tuition. We are paying more, relatively speaking, compared to all national averages.

Dr. Gunderson stated that there was concern from the Faculty Assembly regarding the “shifting sizes of pie” with regard to administration vs. faculty. The administration has tried to address how things are shifting. The data has not changed since last year. The Senate requested details about spending trends for presentation at this meeting. Provost Schuster stated that data can be provided from the pie chart on students/staff/administration and can be presented at a future meeting.

Drs. Gunderson, Hellerud, and Parrent were thanked for attending the Faculty Assembly and providing important information.

Publications Board

Julia Griffey, Chair of the Publications Board, addressed the Assembly about the role of the Publications Board. She explained the main role of the Publications Board is to: promote an intelligent independent newspaper and provide a forum for opinion; evaluate the newspaper; hold regularly scheduled open meetings which anyone from the university may attend; and champion the rights and responsibilities of free expression for student journalists.

The Publications Board for the school newspaper is by the Faculty Assembly. She welcomes feedback from other departments and mentioned that you can follow the newspaper on social media.

Announcements

Dr. Williams made the following announcements:

The February Faculty Assembly has been moved up one week from February 11th to February 4th.

CREDO Consulting group will be on campus next week; please attend a focus group if your schedule will allow.

The deadline for enrolling in various insurance plans is this Friday.

All were encouraged to attend the “December Toast” for August, October, December graduates. It was a very nice celebration last year. It will be held on Friday, Dec. 13.

The Fall Institute is earlier next year (September 26 and 27, 2014). It was moved to avoid Fall Break and Yom Kippur.

The Faculty Senate met with President Stroble and Provost Schuster on October 31st. A variety of topics were discussed such as the process of obtaining new faculty lines, budget, and internationalism. This was an effort to build bridges and open communication. The Senate is to meet with the academic deans this week to discuss the dean’s global initiative and new faculty lines.

The problem of the Global Citizenship Program not having online degree audits is known and being worked on. They believe it is a software problem with coding by running two different general education programs simultaneously. The statement was made that when we voted for this three years ago, we were assured that this would be taken care of.

Gwyneth Williams announced the following: “Almost 10 years ago, Jim Brasfield made the announcement to the Faculty Assembly that Gwyneth and Brad Loudonback were to be married. It was very nice to be congratulated and acknowledged. Many of our colleagues and friends have been excluded from the institution of marriage, not by choice, but by law. It is with great joy that I make the following two announcements:

On Friday, October 18th, Keith Welsh from the Religious Studies Department, married his partner Scott Gusman in Washington, DC.

On Monday, October 21st, Glen Bauer, from the Music Department, married his partner Tim Sharnas in Davenport, IA.

Congratulations to our colleagues and their partners!”

Kit Jenkins informed the group that she is sending out an email asking for anyone working with international sites, particularly with technology, to contact her as she is trying to collaborate with international sites by connecting through technology.

Report from Salary & Fringe Benefits Committee – Chair: Mike Hulsizer

The SFB committee members were introduced (Doug O’Bannon, Cheryl Breig-Allen, and Carole Tucker).

Dr. Mike Hulsizer started by stating that the SFB met with the administration last month and discussed many things that happened last year. They also discussed with Provost Schuster having a committee rather than just meeting with the Provost. It is felt that the initial discussions went very well.

Dr. Hulsizer then shared the results of the SFB survey and stated that 79 faculty assembly members responded.

A five-point scale was used to rank different categories, with five being high. Overall increases in salaries is always assumed to be the number one concern for faculty, so that priority is left off the survey. The ranking of other items below this one were the following: 1) the next round of Mercer implementation, 2) increase minimum salary at each rank, 3) increase overall TIAA-CREF University matching contribution, 4) apply TIAA-CREFF matching contributions to course overloads, 5) increase the amount of jump raise for promotion to each rank, 6) increase faculty professional development and travel funds, and 7) increase department chair compensation.

Dr. Hulsizer said that in times when we experience a tight budget, the SFB focuses more on fringe benefits. He encouraged faculty to let the SFB Committee know of any other potential fringe benefits that faculty would like to request.

A couple of suggestions made by the SFB are: to increase the dollar amount for developing an online course, offer raises to program coordinators, expand the tuition exchange program, and pursue discount partnerships with gyms/health clubs.

Dr. Hulsizer stated that any concerns raised regarding our current health insurance program/cafeteria plan were forwarded to the Insurance Committee. He asked for any other concerns to be sent to the S&FB committee.

The floor was opened for discussion. It was mentioned that the more the university veers away from the schedule of awarding Mercer adjustments, the more inaccurate the adjustments will become.

Several faculty believe adjunct pay issue is an important issue. Adjuncts are not represented when taking the SFB survey.

Finally, Dr. Hulsizer announced a book event being held on November 21st. Maria Holmes wrote *Connections: Making the Most of the Moment*, honoring the memory of her son, Andrew Holmes, who was a psychology major. The event is being sponsored by the College of Arts & Sciences and Mike encouraged everyone to attend.

Gwyneth thanked the Salary and Fringe Benefits Committee for all of the work they have completed.

Performance Pay Compensation Update

Dr. Williams, on behalf of the Faculty Senate, shared an update on the Performance Pay Compensation model. She reported the following chronology:

“For many years, decades in fact, salaries were broken into 75 percent across-the-board raises, and 25 percent merit raises. Department chairs completed forms every year justifying the 25 percent merit increases for faculty.

At the end of the last academic year, the Administration and Board of Trustees required that in the future, all salary increases must be based on performance evaluations. Across the board raises are no more.

The SFB agreement last April included this statement:

“The Administration is committed to the principle that faculty engaging in satisfactory performance should not fall behind the cost of living, and will work to rectify shortfalls through future budgets.”

The Provost has assured us that the faculty would be in charge of developing the manner of assessing this type of compensation model, though the Administration and the Board must ultimately approve it.

Some faculty have wanted the Senate to protest this issue and the Faculty Senate has chosen to take the path that we would develop the model rather than have a system imposed upon us with the understanding that it must be approved by the Administration and the Board.

The Senate spent this summer deliberating on this topic and engaged in extensive research into various models of pay-for-performance.

The Senate has met with full-time faculty by way of individual department meetings as well as two University meetings open to everyone to obtain feedback on the model. There have been many opportunities for input from the faculty. Based on the meetings, the Performance Pay Model document in front of you has been revised many times.

Because of the complexity of this, we made an early decision to split the awarding of compensation apart.

1. This academic year, we would develop a method of awarding compensation for satisfactory performance (which will involve a large majority portion of all moneys available for compensation).
2. Then next academic year, we will develop a different model for awarding compensation based on extraordinary merit.

The next step will be to send to the Faculty Assembly, our final draft of the Performance Pay Model next week along with a Qualtrics survey to get feedback on the basic components of the plan. We will gather the results and consider any final revisions.

The Performance Pay Model will then be forwarded to a committee composed of faculty and two deans, chaired by Nancy Hellerud, to put the final touches in place. That final plan must be approved by the Administration and the Board, as well as the Faculty Assembly.”

The floor was opened for questions/comments:

The statement was made that this is being forced upon on us. Do we really have a model that our Board and Administration can force us to move forward with? The Board can refuse to award raises if we do not agree to a model.

There was discussion about who should be the primary assessor of the evaluation. The primary assessor can be one of three individuals or groups: the department chair, peer review, or dean. The most common model used at universities lists the department chair as the primary assessor.

In the group meetings, it was felt by most that they would prefer the department chair to be the primary assessor. If an unsatisfactory rating is given by the department chair, the faculty member may appeal to the department chair and the dean.

It was stated that most of the department chairs of Arts and Sciences have composed a letter and copied the Faculty Senate President expressing concerns with departmental relationships if chairs are expected to evaluate faculty. There is the feeling that the department chairs are being “thrown into the snake pit” if they must evaluate faculty.

A comment was made that this seems like a rabbit hole of post tenure review and moving to a system of review that is closer to what is required for status review.

Within the parameters given, do all schools/colleges have to evaluate the same way or can each school/college decide? This is supposed to be more of a universal policy, but the question can be asked if faculty want a peer review within their department. Departments will have a fair amount of leeway to split criteria.

The Provost has said that there is not a quota as to the number of faculty who may receive merit raises and this part is for doing your job satisfactorily.

What percentage is satisfactory and what percentage is unsatisfactory for raises? Any raise pool would be for satisfactory performance.

The statement was made that this should not be a complex question for department chairs, but rather a yes or no question. Faculty are either doing their job or not doing their job. As long as everyone is doing their job, there should be no problem.

The model relies on the department to define criteria to which faculty are assessed. The model has changed greatly from the beginning and a provision has been inserted so that if someone is asked to take on a significant service, they can renegotiate with their department chair on the division of criteria.

With no further business, the assembly adjourned at 4:31 p.m.