

Report on meeting with Chancellor's Budget and Planning Committee 27 March 2006

Four members of the Faculty Senate Budget and Planning Committee (Gross, McMillan, Reed, and Schrick) met with the Chancellor's Budget and Planning Committee to give feedback on the campus budget hearings. The basis of that discussion was a memo sent from the committee to Chancellor Crabtree on March 23. Numbers below refer to the numbered items in that memo.

1. Salary issues were discussed in some detail with focus on how to both be competitive with starting salaries and, over the long-term address issues of compression and inversion. There was also discussion of how the 2% increase for the coming budget year should be distributed. There was no clear consensus on that issue with options ranging from across-the-board increases to merit increases to a primary focus on the living wage.
2. Mayhew pointed out that graduate funding is significant with about \$14 million spent on stipends, \$10 million on out of state tuition waivers, and \$16 million on in state tuition waivers. About another \$1 million is spent on health insurance benefits for a total expenditure of about \$41 million. Total E&G spending on undergraduate scholarships is about \$14 million. However, it was noted that these are not apples to apples comparison. Crabtree urged against pitting graduate and undergraduate funding as competitive interests. But all agreed that scholarships for undergraduates are somewhat out of line because of changes that have been brought about by the lottery – adjustments are being made. And there is an ongoing commitment to increasing graduate funding.
3. The relative use of graduate students, lecturers, and post-doctoral fellows for teaching and research was discussed briefly with the acknowledgement that finding the “right” balance is important but difficult.
4. Ongoing commitment was indicated for the Living Wage issues but there are some concerns about whether the numbers proposed by the taskforce are the “best” ones to use (noting a lower wage identified by a Nashville task force).
5. Administrators indicated that they are using the policy drafted by the Faculty Senate to address spousal/partner hires whenever possible. It was suggested that more could be done to publicize this policy without “over promising” on what the university can deliver.
6. The student information system was discussed at some length. Mayhew and Bible offered multiple examples to show that it is not at a “dead end.” Rather, it is at a point of the need for critical evaluation. Bible indicated that such an evaluation is underway.
7. Reporting mechanisms were discussed and it was noted that the system used by Engineering was time-consuming at the start, but once established is fairly routine. Barlow will work on trying to help other fiscal officers learn to develop such a reporting mechanism.
8. Administrators indicated that outcome measures are becoming increasingly important. As Deans receive new resources, they are expected to indicate expected outcomes and report on them.

The final five items on the memo related to process. Several were not discussed at all and relatively little time was devoted to any of these items. However, there was some discussion of ways to have more open review and redirection processes and incentives that could provide for more interdisciplinary collaboration.