

# Minutes, Budget Committee of Academic Senate

Meeting of February 6, 2001 (As Approved March 27, 2001)

*Present:* Charles Parrish (chair), Marc Cogan, Nancy Greger, Michael McIntyre\*, Hiroshi Mizukami, Louis Romano, William Slater William Volz, Shirley Walkowski\*, James Woodyard. Special guests: Charles Bantz, Meredith Gibbs.

*Absent with Notice:* Richard Beltramini, Charles Elder, James Kaltenbach, Scott Ransom, Vanessa Rose\*, Linea Rydstedt.

*Absent w/o Notice:* David Edelman\*, Marlyne Kilbey\*, John Ofenstein.

\*Liaison

1. The meeting convened at 3:10 p.m. The Chair introduced two guests invited to join the meeting, Provost Charles Bantz and Chief of Staff and Executive Vice President Meredith Gibbs. They had been invited to discuss the budget process with the committee.

2. *Report from Chair.* The chair explained that in the past, the budget Committee had often been reactive, responding to items that appeared in the Budget Book a few days before action was to be taken by the Board of Governors. Last year, the Budget Committee decided to take a longer perspective on the budget and to try to have input before the University had already made most of its budget decisions. In that spirit, the Budget Committee has attempted to get the University to provide more funding for faculty lines – to halt and then reverse the trend towards a smaller and smaller share of the budget going to academic functions.

3. *Discussion with Provost Bantz and V.P. Gibbs.* Provost Bantz began the discussion with a summary of the situation in Lansing. He indicated that Governor Engler has been trying to lower expectations about resources going to the universities. The Provost also indicated that he hopes to build a substantial pot of money for faculty initiatives, on the order of \$2 million, although it is now unclear where that money would come from. He suggested that a return to prior enrollment levels would increase university revenues by \$12 million. Other potential sources would be internal reallocations and tuition increases. One member noted that improvements long-term in enrollment will require improvements in our product, and those improvements may require additional funding. Provost Bantz suggested that there may be some slack in some areas currently. One member suggested that the strength of teaching at Wayne is the teaching by full-time academics who are working at the cutting edge of their field. It also was suggested that teaching assistants, in general, may make better teachers than “roving mendicants” who go from school to school with bowl in hand, piecing together enough courses to eek out a living.

An open ended discussion followed. One member stressed that the Provost’s Office should seek to determine what useful things the departments have had to abandon due to funding cuts. Another asked when the administrative divisions are going to be judged, for funding purposes, on performance. Vice President Gibbs noted that the Administration has a long

list of useful projects that have not been funded. She also indicated that some preliminary steps were being taken to introduce performance measures into the divisions.

One member noted that performance measures are just a budget tool, and the real issue is to set budget priorities that give appropriate priority to the academic side. One member noted that the university is not excellent at the entry level of undergraduate education but is very good for third and fourth year students. He suggested that we go with our strengths. One member noted that under the current funding arrangements, additional funding for the university would not go necessarily to academic functions. He suggested, for example, that if the university's revenue increased by \$12 million from an enrollment increase, the academic units would see very little of the money, although they would have the obligation for teaching additional students. He noted that the administration has a long to-do list, and under current procedures, that list takes priority over spending for improvements in the departments. Another member stressed the need to build performance measures into spending programs.

The Provost noted that Wayne, as an institution, has not focused on student recruitment. Compared to private schools, he suggested that Wayne is very much behind the times. One member indicated that Wayne needs a vision of what it can do well and how it can do it better. In his view, quality of the product drives recruitment. One member suggested that in the short run, money must come from reallocations because other desirable steps take some time to reach fruition. The Provost suggested that reallocation within the academic area is also needed because we currently try to do more than our resources permit. Vice President Gibbs noted that reallocation is also slow because most of the budget goes for personnel and people are not easily moved. At 4:48 p.m. this discussion ended and Provost Bantz and Vice President Gibbs left the meeting.

4. *Humanities Center.* The committee discussed what to do about the extension of the charter for the humanities center. It was suggested that the committee recommend that the charter of the center be changed to reflect its actual and intended functions. It was also suggested that the self study numbers did not "add up." The committee voted to recommend extension of the center, subject to a report being written and approved that reflected views on the problems with the center.

8. The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 27, 2001.

By Michael J. McIntyre