

Minutes, Budget Committee of Academic Senate

Meeting of January 18, 2005 (Approved June 7, 2005)

Present: Nancy Barrett (Provost), Stephen Calkins (Chair), Marc Cogan, Charles Elder (liaison), Michael McIntyre, Louis Romano, Vanessa Rose (administration), Vishwanath Sardesai, Assia Shisheva, Harley Tse, William Volz (liaison), Seymour Wolfson (Senate President), James Woodyard.

Absent with Notice: Charles Parrish, Frederic Pearson, Linea Rydstedt.

Absent: Ravi Dhar

1. The meeting convened at 3:03 p.m.

2. *Trends in Faculty Numbers.* The Provost shared with the Committee a presentation she would be making to the Board of Governors, "Trends in WSU Faculty Composition." The report had three parts. The first section consisted of the charts prepared by members of the Senate on the steady decline in the number of tenured/tenure track faculty, 1977-2001. She speculated that the decline may be associated with the change in WSU to a national research university in which tenured professors concentrate increasingly on research while the teaching is increasingly done by persons without tenure and not on the tenure track. The second part examined fall 1998 – fall 2003 (using only fall numbers) in more detail. She did not attempt to reconcile these numbers with those in the first part. The third part looked very specifically at gains and losses in tenured/tenure track faculty as of July 2004, based on a survey of deans. The college of science had both the largest absolute (18) and net (7) losses. The only other schools with net losses were nursing (4) and education (2). (One committee member observed that the "net" calculation compares real departures to offers accepted or pending, so losses may be understated.) Finally, the presentation calls for a benchmarking study involving the University of Delaware.

3. *Budget Performance Report.* Vanessa Rose reviewed with the Committee the FY2004 General Fund Budget Performance Report. Of particular note, there were very substantial savings on utilities (where problems in rate at which WSU was being charged were resolved) and fringe benefits (where health care did not increase as fast as it has in the past). For utilities, \$2.7 million was saved from a budgeted \$24 million; for FY2005, \$21 million has been budgeted. For fringes, \$7.5 million was saved from a budgeted \$63 million (an 11% variance). FY2005 fringes are likely budgeted too generously (they're budgeted at \$66 million, whereas \$62-63 million might be more appropriate), and money will be moved out of these accounts after first quarter numbers are in. Ms. Rose promised to give the committee year end performance detail on specific accounts as well as to answer a member's question about a discrepancy in the FY2005 Schools and Colleges budget.

4. *Ligon Research Center of Vision.* The Committee considered the subcommittee report on the Ligon Research Center of Vision rechartering proposal. Concerns were expressed about

the difficulty of understanding the financial data, as well as about the lack of external funding from agencies and the lack of publishing in peer-reviewed journals. The Committee adopted the subcommittee's report, which expressed these concerns but also recommended rechartering for a five year period.

5. *Future Business.* One or more members expressed interest in future meetings completing our work on centers and considering (a) the question of counting the number of faculty, and (b) indirect costs.

6. *Adjournment.* The committee adjourned at 4:35.