

Minutes for Budget and Planning Committee Meeting 12/3/2012

Attendees: Scott Gilpatric (chair), Nathan Preuss, Gerd Duscher, Jennifer Fowler, Harold Roth, Randal Pierce, Baoshan Huang (secretary), and Chris Cimino (ex officio)

Place: HBB Room 316

Scott Gilpatric opened meeting at 3:30pm.

1. Discussion/approval of minutes of Oct. 29 meeting

Passed unanimously

2. Discussion with Assistant Provost Denise Gardner of OIRA

Asst provost Gardner introduced the role of her office (as a “decision support office”) and how UT data are collected and reported. A large part of information is reported to federal/state offices and public. OIRA does not own most data but is one of the official reporters of student data. Research data is reported mostly from the Vice Chancellor for Research’s office. Assessment data are collected from various sources.. Other responsibilities include administering SAIS . Most institutions now conduct evaluations online, even to mobile devices. The office provides some input on data collection that will help faculty with research grants. Future potential projects include a university-wide alumni survey and other surveys to students at different years in college. OIRA assists with University-wide accreditation (SACS, every 10 years, documents will be submitted in Fall 2014).

Currently UT is getting more comfortable with the Banner student system. In response to the committee’s concern about the data challenge here at UT, Dr. Gardner indicated that the challenge starts with the data owners and we need to make sure the right information gets to the right place.

There are a lot of places that data are fine, just some pockets. Ways to make improvements include ensuring data consistency and being aware of data formats and the ways it changes over the history and to provide plenty of documentation.

The committee indicated that online evaluations have been the norm. Many faculty are concerned about the biased data with online SAIS. Dr. Gardner indicated that there is always a selection bias on any survey. The provost realizes that and never relies only on the online evaluations. It is always going to be a challenge to get more students to complete the online evaluation, and faculty are encouraged to figure out an effective way to get the students do it.

In general, there are there more variations with online SAIS. Maybe we need to wait and see more data to see the difference. Overall UT got around 50% rate of responses for SAIS. One consistent thing is the university culture on how to use the results.

Provost's task force on effective teaching is looking into shortening the forms or making other changes so that students are more willing to finish the survey. SAIS for 100 and 200 level courses maybe able to ask some common questions.

In response to the committee's inquiry about the retention rate of UT, Dr. Gardner indicated that retention is critical. The chancellor has asked a group to look into admission and retention. Now her office is looking rigorously into data about freshmen, transfer students, and other groups. They look into both the students who left and who stayed. For example, why are we losing a lot of freshmen and sophomore? Part of the reasons may be due to some students are not quite ready for large universities.

In response to the committee's question as whether there are places that faculty can make use of data but are not aware of, Dr. Gardner indicated that her office is trying to provide better data and provide data in better ways.

3. Budget Updates from Chris Cimino

The Athletic department will not provide the approximate \$6 million a year like it has done in previous years in the future. The Chancellor has agreed to relieve them of the annual commitment for the next 3 years. Current initiatives and programs will not be impacted, but additional funding will not be available for new items..

The athletic department will continue paying the parking garage debt. UT will not reduce any current commitments on scholarships. Only new commitments will be impacted.

In the past years, UT, with the help of athletics, has been able to fund many initiatives for the campus, including scholarships, fellowships, and other academic initiatives with. At this difficult time, we are reducing the amount of commitments for them so they may concentrate on getting where they need to be fiscally.

In response to the committee's question as whether there are other things can be done (such as rainy day funds) that can help athletic department to go through difficult times, Chris indicated that there are reserve funds. Athletics had \$4mil on reserved fund and \$1mil emergency fund. Now they only have a bit over \$1mil.

A question was asked about the new TV contract. Chris indicated we do not know the timing for that yet, nor the amount. The Chancellor has said athletics will retain those new revenues to help build a sustainable fiscal model. Most universities handle contributions back to the academic programs differently, making the decision at the end of the year based on availability of funds and success for the year. As athletics develops a new model going forward this will be considered.

The garage debt that athletics contributes towards is about \$1.1 million per year for five of the seven garages. The total for all garages is approximately \$3.3 million dollars for all seven garages.

We are awaiting the release of the state's budget in January. The budget request for the upcoming year by THEC was \$35.5 million (UT will receive 7 million of that). At the opposite extreme the state asked for all state agencies to consider a 5%. In the middle scenario, it would be status quo. We are at about 160 million on a state appropriation.

A webcast is available on the governor's hearing on higher education.

On the issues of tuition and the state appropriation with the governor, Chris indicated that TN Care will continue to cost state more funds. Health care competes with available funding for higher education. Sales tax projections also influences the budget.

4. Discussion of revised resolution regarding faculty salaries

Revised resolution was presented to the committee and was passed unanimously.

Adjourned at 4:50pm.