

Budget and Planning Committee, Faculty Senate, 04/12/2021 minutes

In attendance: Ken Baker, Tamah Fridman, Phillip Daves, Cristina Barroso, Eric Lukosi, David Horton, Lisa Driscoll, Michael Gelantalis, Kellie Fecteau, Louis Gross, Deborah Crawford, Jon Phipps, Jennifer Webster, Renee Thomas, John Zomchick, Dixie Thompson, Kari Alldredge, Gretchen Neisler, Robert Hinde, Amber Williams, Mark Savage.
Members not present: Chris Cimino, Alex Rodrigues.

Agenda:

- 3:30 Vice Chancellor for Research Dr. Crawford, Interim Budget Director Renee Thomas, Core Facilities Director Jon Phipps, and Interim Research Development Director Jennifer Webster.
- 4:15 Provost Dr. Zomchick, Angie Cross, Gary Gray

Questions for the Vice Chancellor for Research:

- [Could you provide a brief overview and summary of your budget and large budget items?](#) Office of Research and Engagement will become the Office of Research, Innovation, and Economic Development, effective July 1, 2021. We have a finance and administrative team, a communications team, and a research analytics team that helps analyze data related to research scholarship and creative activity outcomes. There are four larger divisions:
 - a Division of Research and Innovation Initiatives that houses our core facilities program, research development team, business development group that's focused largely on strategic initiatives or strategic opportunities with federal agencies, and then we have our university institutes and centers including NISER the National Institute for stem evaluation and research, ORI, the University of Tennessee Space Institute, that is currently being reimagined and the Multidisciplinary initiatives that we will launch in the coming 12 to 18 months
 - a Division of Research Administration as the office of sponsor programs and that's the group that helps faculty to submit proposals to external sponsors
 - a Division of Research Integrity and Assurance charged with making sure that we create a culture that recognizes and honors the responsible conduct of research at the university + UTIA compliance, and

- a Division of partnerships and Economic Development that makes sure that the research and scholarship outcomes that we generate within the university can be connected to external entities in the private sector in the Foundation world and the nonprofit sector.

ORI director will have a role in the Division of research and Innovation initiative and will work closely with the director of the Office of Research.

\$19.1M in the budget for FY2021. \$4.5M (23%) of the budget used for ORE services (salaries and operating), \$7.2M (38%) for strategic investments (Science Alliance \$4.2M, Joint Institutes \$1.3M, SARIF \$904k, STIR \$800k), and \$7.4M (39%) for academic unit cost-share and loans (start-up packages \$5.6M, proposal cost-share \$1.5M, bridge funds \$330k). Awards supported by 16 UT core facilities in FY20 amounted to \$159M.

This year, Chancellor Plowman created a one-time \$5M fund to update research infrastructure in 2021, focusing on physical and cyber infrastructure. John Phipps is working to develop a multi-year physical and cyber infrastructure refresh plan.

- [What has been the impact from COVID on your budget and on UT research proposals, grants funded, and expenditures? At what point do you foresee these will return to more 'normal' levels?](#) Some impact as a result of the hiring freeze, other than that, very little impact. Sponsored expenditures (travel, conference registration) tracking 5% down in FY21. In the pandemic year (April 20 to March 21), the number of proposals submitted exceeded the number of proposals submitted in 2019, but lower than that in 2017 and 2018. However, financially these are higher value proposals.
- [How do you foresee the Oak Ridge Institute at UT will impact your budget, UT research proposals, grants funded, and expenditures?](#) The very reason for creating the Oak Ridge Institute at UT is to grow ut research expenditures. In the next 12 to 18 months the new director of ORI will hire research faculty and postdocs who will support the work of some of our faculty, similar to the idea of Georgia Tech Research Institute.
- [If we assume that things do return to normal, then the new Budget Allocation Model may begin preliminary implementation. At this point, what do you foresee as the biggest impacts to ORE, your budget, and UTs research mission in general?](#) From my previous experience with institutions that implemented similar models, I expect a big boost in productivity, because the incentives are where they need to be in the academic units to really foster investment in research. The role of the Research Office will become one of incentivizing multi-disciplinary activities

because the deans will have sufficient discretionary funds to invest in their own research enterprises.

- What is the current status and plan to create a sustainable funding model for JIAM? Is there a better way we can capture expenditures in the building for F&A allocation like departments in TCE? As part of the creation of the Oak Ridge institute at UT, we will be sunseting The Joint Institute's for Advanced Materials, Computational Sciences, Neutron Sciences, and Biological Sciences, at the end of June this year. The building on the Cherokee Farm campus that we currently call JIAM will be renamed, and it will become the headquarters of a future UT Institute for advanced materials and manufacturing. Faculty housed in the JIAM building will return to their departments. Grants that were run through JIAM, will be run through their departments. We're also building a new building on the Cherokee Farm campus it's currently called Innovation South that will House some of our manufacturing research programs, and it will also become part of the physical assets of our new institute.

Lou Gross: One of the problems with the use of those buildings is that UT people were charged excessive amounts, even though the state built them so presumably the ORI will be billed for excessive amounts for using this space? I'm happy to look into that nobody's actually said that to me before.

Lou Gross: have any faculty for ORI been hired? No. Are there any search committees? There's \$8 million dollars in the governor's budget this year, not yet appropriated that would be the down payment on beginning to hire research faculty.

- What is the plan to create a sustainable support model for core facilities? Are there new tracking measures coming on board to better capture the effect of core facilities on research that supports the top 25 mission? We are looking at upgrading some of the core facilities, subsidizing them at the right levels
- Are there sufficient funds for startup packages for new/replacement faculty?

It looks like there are sufficient funds for startup packages, but then I only see startup packages once you all have determined that you have the funds to make an offer, so it could be that we're priced out of hiring some faculty because your academic units decide that you don't have enough money to come up with your share of this startup package cost share.

- Other than COVID, the new ORI, and the new Budget Model, do you foresee any new significant challenges and/or opportunities for greater UT research? It would be nice to grow the Faculty community in strategic areas, it would be nice to begin to be able to invest in multi-disciplinary research opportunities. I would like to

get us to a position where we're proactively imagining together the areas where we think there's lots of opportunities and where we should be in hiring together, where we should be investing in research infrastructure, etc.

- Lou Gross: You mentioned that you've been through the Budget Allocation Model in terms of supporting multi-disciplinary enterprises. And you've also mentioned that you don't see planning going on. I already see problems with that. The deans don't have any way of adding the faculty lines so there's no overall oversight of how this is going to happen. Can you promise us that you will come to faculty and tell us when we need to push on the upper administration, meaning Chancellor, to make sure that there is planning so that we can be successful without having to go to every Dean involved in a multi disciplinary project and get approvals? Yes, Lou I commit to you that I will be deeply engaged in those conversations and that I will press where there's real multi-disciplinary opportunity. I would like to see faculty coming to me with these opportunities.
- Is there sufficient support for units that do not generate large amounts of F & A? I do not know the answer to this question.

Questions for the Provost:

- What are the overall impacts of COVID on the budget? For FY22, the university will be on a continuation budget from FY21. The impact from COVID on academic affairs was very mild. There will be money for raises of 4% for merit and equity adjustments. The enrollment for the next year looks positive even though it became more difficult to project with certainty. We broke the 30,000 applications mark. We have seen an increase in out-of-state and flattening in-state applications. We are transitioning to BAM, accounts for the colleges are already set for depositing carry forward surplus from their budget for this year.
- Lou Gross: Graduate level enrollment is constrained by the fact that it's constrained by teaching assistantships under the new budget model. It means, Deans have to plan for five years ahead and what is happening right now with regard to planning for graduate enrollment for next year with regard to support for students, that the Deans may not have a clue long term how much is there to support. Dixie Thompson: Our budget is set for the next year and that'll go forward with the new budget allocation model, the resources that have paid for graduate tuition waivers will be now in the hands of the College Deans. The assistantships will be offered at least at the same level as they have in the past, and Deans will have the opportunity to reallocate additional resources to graduate students, support should they wish fellowship support will continue much the way that it has with over \$4 million a year, provided to support our students through fellowships. We're

going to create general rules that college offices could use to know how much it would cost to create, for example, a new GTA or GRA line. Tuition for graduate students is set by the Board of Trustees.

- **Lou Gross: Could you say something about the status of graduate students' fees?** There are offices that depend on those fees, so to make the fees go away, we'd have to go back to the board of trustees to either pay them through the revenue or do we provide additional support to the graduate students, so that they themselves have more resources to pay those fees, so there are lots of different things that are under consideration, right now. Both the Provost and Vice-Chancellor, and Chris Cimino are involved.
- **Lou Gross: Why was I never allowed to pay those fees when a student was supported on a grant?** Dixie Thompson: a department can pay for those fees should they wish so unless there is something in the funding agencies' language that would prevent it. I know of no fiscal reason that you couldn't charge it to whatever account you wanted to.
- **Tamah Fridman: The lecturers asked to raise the minimum salary to \$60k and got an increase to \$45k. This is still below survival level for a single household in the absence of a sponsoring spouse and puts lecturers at a level below middle class while they do not have the skills to survive at this level, for example, to repair a car on their own because it is cheaper. Using data from 53 departments and 330 NTTFs that have been adjusted to the minimum salary as \$45k, we computed that the funds required to raise the salary floor to 60k are \$2,479,836.00, and that would affect 205 people out of 330. Another interesting fact from the life of statistics is that for Natural Sciences and Mathematics departments, the mean salary for lowest rank lecturers is \$49,265, with 68% of lecturers below this mean salary. The median salary for the 38 lecturers of the lowest rank is \$45K. Also, the issue of overloading. Do we have any hope to convince you to look into these issues?** John Zomchick: Dean Lee is going to further address the salary issues of the non-tenure track faculty this coming summer so let's see what that produces. Right now, there are no further plans to address non-tenure track faculty salaries at the central level. We're going to allow the colleges to do that. Terry Lee said that she will look at compensation issues very carefully, including the compression issues that the most recent raise has created.

When we compare the number of faculty and teaching load, one of the promises of the new budget model is that deans will begin to be able to look at ways in which they can increase the hiring of tenure line faculty. More departments will be hiring more of the lines that have been vacated due to retirements and resignations will be searched for and filled.

- Michael Gelantalis: Regarding the salaries of lectures, we talked about the average and the median, maybe we should also talk about the standard deviation within certain departments, for example, as there are some instances with great discrepancies that are not easy to explain. Sometimes an explanation that's given is the time that somebody has spent here, but now a lecturer that spent 5 years here will be making as much as a new hire. There doesn't seem to be a bonus for the time spent here. John Zomchick: These are compression issues that come up with both tenure track and non-tenure track faculty. One of the things that we've done here for years and years is to give discretion to the department heads or at least to the colleges, and oftentimes the colleges let that discretion flow down to the department heads and determining who gets raises each year. One of the things that we noticed was that salary money seemed to leach out of the non-tenure track faculty lines, at times, so we need to pay closer attention to that. Dean Lee has promised me that she would come up with a plan to address compression issues.
- Lou Gross: Presumably, there is no way for us to go to your office anymore, and to request a basically a set of hires that could be viewed as a cluster across colleges, unless the deans are involved. When asked about faculty lines, we are told to go to each Dean and negotiate and there's no way a faculty member is going to be readily able to do that. We just met with Dr. Crawford and she said that she's supportive of coming up with ways to encourage cross-unit multi-disciplinary kinds of initiatives but there is no real planning for how that's going to happen under the BAM model, so this is to encourage you to get together with her and come up with a plan for how we can foster this because it's not in the best interest of a Dean. John Zomchick: I just talked about this with Deb Crawford this morning. I couldn't agree more that the future of knowledge creation, the future of research, the future of our ability to address the grand challenges really do depend on the cross collegiate multi-disciplinary cross-departmental teams that we would like to see happen. For example, for data sciences initiative that has four or five colleges involved, we need to be able to hire faculty.
- Lou Gross: how are we going to deal with the broadening and diversity aspects of faculty hiring without creating very explicit incentives for the deans to allocate funds for that? Or are there in the strategic planning for the BAM already funds for incentives for deans to do this? There are no incentives in the band that are earmarked for diversifying our faculty. We did provide incentives, this year, partly psychological to a certain degree. The Provost Office did scrape together some money and fund new lines in the college of Arts and Sciences primarily. We've also been funding some lines in the college of Business under a previous agreement. We are providing bridge funds for targeted hire that you found, the year one we

provide 100% salary, and then it decreases by 25% each year. We also did provide funds for new lines at Africana studies. There is an expectation for the deans in their annual performance reviews, that they will in fact find incentives from their budgets (in BAM, all the money is flowing to the deans) to hire diverse faculty.

- **Dr.Barroso:** And besides recruiting diverse faculty there needs to be a push on retaining diverse faculty because we continue to just talk about recruiting but we don't retain. There need to be policies to hold our deans accountable for actually doing that. **John Zomchick:** Research Development Academy is established for mentoring, additional support, to combat social isolation, and help to develop a research network. This is one program to better retain our underrepresented faculty, there are other programs – teaching and learning innovation mentoring programs and other kinds. We also have exciting developments in enrollment management and student success and in the graduate school to make sure that we're doing all that we can to recruit black and brown students and other under it bypass students here to the campus provide them with the support that they need and get them into a pipeline so that we can work on the origin of the problem. **Kari Alldredge:** Any student admitted from a flagship school can enroll at ut free of tuition and fees. Flagship schools are high schools that have had lower college-going rates, high socio-economic diversity, many of the schools have 100% free and reduced lunch and they tend to have higher rates of racial diversity. We added eight schools this year to the 30 that existed. The flagship program is one part of what we call our tristar scholarship program, which also includes Tennessee pledge which is for any high school graduate with household income \$40,000 or less – they can, if once admitted, come to the U. of Tennessee free of tuition and fees and room and board. The third program is UT Promise, which is the system-wide program for Tennessee families with household income below \$50,000 regardless of high school. If you're a high school graduate in the state and you're admitted to UT Knoxville, Chattanooga, or Martin, you can come free of tuition and fees. **Amber Williams:** A team of professionals works with our incoming students at the UT Success Academy to keep the students that we recruit. There is a UT Lead - a program for first-generation students. We lose the most students in year one for first generation students but similarly with men of color. First-generation students historically if we've kept them after year one they're kind of graduating at the same pace as the continuing education population, but men of color continue to go down. In fact, 50% of our black men go home before it's time for graduation the other interesting thing about, that is, their average ACT score and their average GPA are all very similar to our women of color which have about a 90% retention rate and 74% graduation rate on our campus.

- Lou Gross: With respect to ORI, \$8M of the state money for hiring faculty, we have to be very careful as the previous experience with hiring faculty with ORNL was not very positive, especially in the diversity department. Also, the DOE award given to the campus for graduate students for ORI, went into effect last year, and we still have no faculty at ORI, and if they have not yet expended any funds from that to bring in new graduate students, that is not good.