

# The Budget and Planning Committee, Faculty Senate

## Final report for the academic year 2020-21

### **Committee Members:**

Ken Baker (co-chair), Tamah Fridman (co-chair), Cristina Barroso, Chris Cimino (ex-officio), Phillip Daves, Lisa Driscoll, Kellie Fecteau, Michael Gelantalis, David Horton, Eric Lukosi, Alex Rodrigues.

### **Ex-officio advisory members:**

Louis Gross, Beauvais Lyons.

### **Faculty Senate Bylaws:**

Membership shall consist of at least 10 faculty members. Ex-officio members shall include the chief financial officer for the campus.

The duties of the Budget and Planning Committee are: (1) to provide for campuswide faculty input and expertise into the campus budgeting processes; (2) to inform the faculty, through the Faculty Senate, concerning budget matters; (3) to analyze and present budget and other related data as needed to bring to faculty attention (e.g., living wage analysis and faculty salary analyses); and (4) to work with other Faculty Senate committees on budget-related matters (e.g., the University/System Relations Committee to monitor The University of Tennessee system budget).

Both long-range and short-term aspects of its role will receive the committees attention, including budget priorities, THEC formulas, and planning for projects of The University of Tennessee or other entities that may eventually result in changes to campus facilities. The committee shall invite appropriate campus administrators to attend meetings and provide overviews of their units budgets as needed. The primary concerns of the Budget and Planning Committee are policy and communication. The Budget and Planning Committee is not expected to become involved with, nor engaged in, comprehensive investigations necessary as a basis for budget decisions.

### **Summary of Accomplishments:**

The Budget and Planning Committee carried out a series of meetings with senior administrators to discuss key issues that impact UTK. The main focus was on Covid's impact on the budget and planning, and budget and planning past Covid. We developed a methodology for a novel approach to salary analysis that includes considering the year of degree and the year of hire as variables. The data used for the model were from March 2019 that seemed appropriate as there was no salary raises in 2020 so they were off only by the promotions, however, considering the changes in early 2021 and more expected changes, we will present the model in the Fall after obtaining current salary

data. We looked into salaries comparison using mean/median and found that the mean is not a reliable representation of the salaries situation. For example, after the floor for lecturers' salary had been raised and having had accounted for that, we found that 68% of lecturers in the Natural Sciences Division of the Arts and Sciences college had salaries below the mean. We argue that salary comparison between peer universities shall be switched from being based on mean salaries to being based on median salaries. We need to encourage peer institutions to report the median salaries as well.

### **Summary of Meetings:**

- 08/14/2020 FS retreat, The committee met for an hour to make introductions and set some preliminary goals.
- 09/28/2020 Meeting with Vice Chancellor for Finance Administration Chris Cimino, Covid impact on the university budget. The minutes are here.
- 10/26/2020 The meeting set which vice chancellors to invite and what financial data analyses to undertake. The minutes are here.
- 11/23/2020 Housekeeping meeting, google groups, the website for B&P document chest page, etc.
- 12/06/2020 Chris Cimino delivered a presentation on the anatomy and dynamics of the UT budget.
- 02/08/2021 (i) New approaches for faculty salary data analysis, salaries as a function of degree year and of date of hire preliminary results and graphs, (ii) questions for the vice chancellor of Student Affairs (for 02/24 upcoming meeting), (iii) athletics questions. The minutes are here.
- 02/24/2021 Meeting with Vice Chancellor for Student Life Frank Cuevas and Assistant Vice Chancellor Mark Alexander. Focus on student programming engagement, student fees, student housing infrastructure. Noted high diversity ethnic background of Student Life employees. The minutes to be posted
- 03/08/2021 Meetings with Vice Chancellor for Development and Alumni Affairs Chip Bryant and new Athletic director Danny White. Lou Gross challenge to Danny White that Athletics would provide support to the academic components of UTK equivalent to the total salary paid to the Athletics Director is accepted by Danny White. The minutes are here.

- 04/12/2021 Meetings with (i) Vice Chancellor for Research Dr. Crawford, Interim Budget Director Renee Thomas, Core Facilities Director Jon Phipps, and Interim Research Development Director Jennifer Webster, and (ii) Provost Dr. Zomchick, Angie Cross, Gary Gray. The minutes are here.

**Future plans:**

Work on the website will be completed over the summer. The website will contain the documents chest and also have a UTK budget education primer for new members of the Budget and Planning Committee.

**Closing remarks:**

In 2020, UTK was ranked #112 among National Universities (US News) with a median starting salary of alumni at \$51,400. The ranking is computed using the following data: graduation and retention rate, undergraduate academic reputation (based on peer assessment survey), faculty resources, student-faculty ratio and the average federal loan debt of graduates, application requirements, tuition and financial aid policies, student body demographics, campus life, post-graduate earning data by undergraduate focus and user ratings and reviews submitted by alumni. Nonacademic elements like social life and athletics are not factored in.

- 40% of a school's rank (previously 35%) comes from graduation and retention, graduate indebtedness, and social mobility factors (Pell grant graduation rates).
- 20% comes from faculty resources (class size, faculty salary, faculty with the highest degree in their fields, student-faculty ratio, and proportion of faculty who are full time) as research shows the greater access students have to quality instructors, the more engaged they will be in class and the more they will learn and likely graduate.
- 20% expert opinion
- 10% financial resources (per-student spending)
- 7% (previously 10%) student excellence
- 3% (previously 5%) alumni giving

In light of our endeavor to increase UTK ranking, we may want to pay more attention to improving the faculty resources. In the first two years, undergraduate students are taught almost exclusively by non-tenure track faculty whose salaries are below that of Knox county high school teachers (while they are expected to deliver a higher level of student education) and also below starting median salary of UTK graduate. The teaching load of a non-tenured lecturer is similar to that of a (tenured) community college faculty and 30% above that of high ranked universities. Focusing on the competition with community college will not bring UTK a higher ranking.