

University Budget Advisory Committee

Minutes – 11/26/2019 meeting

Voting members present: Nabil Al-Tikriti (Chair, At-large)
Stephen Davies (Secretary, At-large)
Brooke Di Lauro (At-large)
Chris Garcia (COB)
Suzanne Sumner (At-large)
Abbie Tomba (CAS)
Kyle Schultz (COB)

Non-voting members present: Dana Hall (Athletics, Health & Physical Education)
Non-voting members absent: Representative from the Student Government Association
Representative from Staff Advisory Council

Guests: Juliette Landphair (VP Student Affairs)

Summary of discussion:

1. The committee plans to host two more guest presentations this academic year: Nina Mikhalevsky (Provost) and Lisa Bowling (VP Advancement & University Relations). After this, we will meet once or twice to wrap up our work for the year, consider our recommendations for budget priorities, and write a report reflecting them. We aim to finish up by mid-April.
2. Ms. Hall reiterated that the spreadsheet from Mr. Messplay was used effectively by past incarnations of this committee to frame budget recommendations. Dr. Al-Tikriti agreed to request this spreadsheet from him. Additionally, it was agreed that Mr. Messplay should be invited to attend our final two (post-guest-presentation) meetings in person, at which he can give his thoughts on how state budget allocations played out in Richmond (which will have happened by then).
3. The bulk of the meeting was devoted to Dr. Landphair's presentation on the Division of Student Affairs. Ultimately, everything this organization does is devoted to student success, and seeks above all to help students reach the graduation stage.

Student Affairs comprises the following units:

- Athletics
- Policy / Public Safety
- Student Involvement
- Residence Life
- Student Life
- Multicultural Affairs

Dr. Landphair explained that Student Life is a mainly reactive body, responding to concerns raised by and about students; whereas Student Involvement is more proactive, seeking to get students more involved in aspects of UMW life.

(Also of note: the Honor Council, and the new Center for Community Engagement, report to Provost, not to Student Affairs.)

She also noted that Public Safety is a challenging budget category because “when something breaks” that impacts safety, it’s automatically mission critical and *must* be taken care of immediately, regardless of cost.

4. Dr. Landphair shared the principles that guided her divisional priorities for 2019-2020:
 - The UMW Strategic Vision.
 - Student Engagement, specifically Social Life (and the perception thereof). This is consistently flagged as a problem area on the ASQ survey (taken by students who were admitted to UMW but chose another college) who think “there’s nothing to do on campus or in Fredericksburg.” Improving campus recreation – specifically outdoor recreation – was made a priority.
 - Diversity & Inclusion, including specific programming on peer education, implicit bias, and microaggressions.
 - Wellness, as broadly defined. Dr. Landphair noted that the Wake Forest well-being survey shows that our students are pretty engaged. We do have disproportionate numbers of students with disabilities, emotional difficulties, *etc.*, which skews the survey data somewhat, but this, too, is evidence that we are effectively reaching this population.
5. In terms of the timeline, Dr. Landphair told the committee that she meets with her direct reports over the summer to determine wants/needs, using Strategic Vision as a guidepost.
6. Dr. Landphair outlined the following budget challenges for her division:
 - The overall University budget. The previously one-time \$200k budget reduction has now been made permanent, which puts a major strain on resources. Dr. Landphair does believe, however, that if we can raise the academic profile of the institution (which is currently our goal), this may start to take care of itself. (Tier 5 students, who are full-paying but not as academically prepared, don’t retain in high numbers.)
 - Staffing. Our Student Affairs division is woefully understaffed compared to other, comparable institutions. This is largely for historical reasons. The upshot of this is that existing staff are simply so overburdened with urgent tasks that there’s no much time to make strategic decisions. President Paino’s plan is to do an audit of staffing soon.
 - Historical Facility Planning. On new buildings and old, there is often no budget for things like furniture replacement, cameras, *etc.* The “Deferred Maintenance” practice of previous administrations greatly exacerbates such matters.
 - Revenue generation. Our efforts to raise money from various services (the fitness center, as one example) have reaped only very modest results. Divisional leaders seek out innovative ways to raise revenue, including involving themselves in Giving Day. Even modest amounts of funds raised for the office’s discretionary spending can make a big difference in planning and staff morale.
 - Debt, especially on building projects. Since we can’t get money from the state for non-academic buildings, we are in a great deal of debt from (say) the University Center.
7. Ms. Hall brought up another compelling budget challenge: the Capital Athletic Conference, home to our D3 sports teams for many years, is now being discontinuing. It will cost additional monies to either join another conference or schedule non-conference opponents for an entire athletic team’s season. And this with around 50% of the current Athletic budget already coming from fund-raising!
8. Dr. Landphair agreed to send the committee this upcoming year’s budget priorities, as currently envisioned, and to make it clear which parts are shareable with a wider audience.

Action items:

- Send vetted Power Point slides from today's presentation to Dr. Al-Tikriti for publication on UFC website. (Landphair)
- Request "the spreadsheet" from Paul Messplay for use in framing budget recommendations. (Al-Tikriti)
- Invite Paul Messplay to attend our last one or two "post-presentation" meetings. (Al-Tikriti)
- Schedule presentations by Nina Mikhalevsky and Lisa Bowling for March. (Al-Tikriti)