

## University Budget Advisory Committee

### Minutes

Sept. 29, 2023

Attending: Andrew (Drew) Delaney (chair), Alexis Rutt, Brad Hansen, Dan Hubbard, David Fleming, Martina Pugh (student representative), Patrick Catullo (*ex-officio*), Robert (Bob) Rycroft (co-secretary), Sandrine Sutphin, Smita Jain Oxford, Alexis Rutt

#### Guest: Amy Jesse & Melissa Yakabouski

- Welcome and introductions of each member and Melissa Yakabouski and Amy Jesse

#### Melissa Yakabouski - Admissions

- Melissa and Amy were very happy about being combine into one meeting as the two departments relate to each other in many ways.
- Digital Marketing has grown in last ten years compared to print marketing.
- They feel fortunate that their budgets have not been cut or diminished over the last couple of years which has helped with recruitment and retention.
  - Because of this, there are not major asks being made. The biggest ask is to remain a priority and keep budgets as close to where they are as possible.
- Melissa explained that the process of initial identification of quality students at the outset is the best way to use funds that they are given.
- Travel and mailing costs have significantly reduced in the last couple of years.
- They have made decisions like moving admissions events to the UC instead of the Anderson Center to cut down on costs.
- Initial budget ask is for an additional Recruitment Specialist that could focus on the southern states and possibly live in that market.
  - Larger VA state schools are continuing to grow and plan to grow into the future.
  - Maryland has grown in population and is a better potential out of state target.
  - Florida is also a state that is growing in population but students are willing to leave Florida to go to college.

#### Amy Jesse – Marketing

- Marketing is split in two budget lines, Advertising and Media Buy.
  - The budget is healthy for the University, 80% of budget is spent in Ad buy and 20% is the management of the Ad buy. The biggest part of that is the Richmond Airport which reaches prospects and Alumni.
  - Billboards and at home ads are targeted with location and admissions cycle.
  - There is also separate campaigns for Parents and Transfer students.
  - Biggest ask is for UMW programs to come to Marketing and work together so that marketing and advertising is not redundant.

- Patrick Catullo commented that reinstating budget for food at admissions events or on campus options could be very influential for the prospective student and parents.
  - o Melissa also pointed out that she has had to spend some of her budget on items enhancing the student campus experience.
  - o These items may seem small but can help her sell the school if there is a better campus experience.
  - o Suggested things like a “Winterfest”, lights on Ball Circle, to enhance the campus experience.
  - o Traditions at UMW have been hurt by COVID and reinvestment of funds could help drive a better campus experience. Amy Jesse also supported this notion.
  - o Multiple members of the committee agreed that investing in the campus experience would help with recruitment of future students.
  
- Melissa Yakabouski reiterated that bureaucratic obstacles at UMW and a lower salary base have hurt efforts to hire effective Regional Recruiters and Admissions Counselors.
  - o All universities are feeling the effect of this but being a smaller school, UMW is affected more.
- Dave asked whether we are using Alumni as recruiters to help with recruitment and marketing.
  - o Education professionals are targeted with UMW clothing to advertise UMW
  - o “Refer an Eagle” is a program that has sped up the application process for potential students.
  - o Melissa pointed out that many of our Alumni are not very engaged with UMW.

Respectfully,

Scott Gerseny

Co-Secretary