

University Planning and Budget Committee

Minutes of the Meeting December 1st, 2020 via MS Teams

Members Present: J. Melnyk, J. Snyder J. Hodgson, S. Hazan, S. Cohen, J. Gamache, E. Pana, A.F. Pearson, S. Petras, L. Washko, L. Walter, R. Simmons, D. Harris, K. Poirier, C. Casamento, M. Fallon, Y. Kirby

Chair Melnyk called the meeting to order at 1:48 pm.

Minutes: D. Harris moved to approve the minutes of the November 17th meeting, seconded by K. Poirier. Voted to approve with offered corrections implemented.

Announcements: Chair J. Melnyk stated that he had met with President Toro and determined that the consultant was not the Boston group but another organization who will be looking at financial (revenue and expenses) issues. He also asked members to think about an email he sent delineating what the Faculty Senate is asking UPBC to do in preparation.

Discussion followed with questions such as: how would revenue be counted (credit hour production?), what methodology would the consultant use, what would the BOR do with the report, would departments feel threatened, what was the motivation of the BOR looking for long term plans when so much of the current environment is changing daily. Chair Melnyk asked if the group would be comfortable asking the department chairs for information. The response was to focus on qualitative aspects of the departments such as what were their strengths, how do their programs serve the university, students, and the state of Connecticut; stories of alumni and previous students emphasizing their success.

S. Cohen made a motion:

1. UPBC is undertaking this description and defense of the value of our academic departments and programs at the behest of the Faculty Senate Steering Committee. To make this clear to the university community, any request for participation by departments sent on behalf of UPBC should come from the Senate president. When UPBC has received, assembled, and reviewed the responses from departments, we will issue a report to the Senate Steering Committee which may then release that report to the Senate, the faculty, and/or the administration at its discretion.
2. While UPBC cannot prevent readers of the report from using it to their own ends, we feel that it would be a betrayal of the report's intention--which is to defend the value of all of our academic programs by underlining the many ways in which such programs may be valuable--if the university administration were to use the report to identify specific measures with which to compare or rank CCSU's academic programs.
3. The UPBC chair shall convey these stipulations to the Senate and University presidents before we undertake the project.

There was no further discussion, and the motion was approved by voice vote.

Chair Melnyk stated that he would like the committee to respond to him for the next meeting with:

1. suggested wording of questions to go to the department chairs,
2. what information can the committee provide to chairs to aid them in responding.

The thought was presented that the university should be proactive in promoting ourselves.

Brief Reports/ Divisional Updates:

CFO C. Casamento stated that she was looking for additional technical adjustments and needed another \$217,000 to meet the BOR request. President Toro had given the Provost flexibility to find the \$612,000 reduction for Part-time/GA/UA costs and he was working on it. All Directors had submitted a list of positions they were willing to give up (~50% of the total vacancies). In response to a question, she stated that the list was open to substitutions as needed. S. Cohen expressed concern that the elimination of these 46 positions is a permanent response to what is presumably a short-term financial crisis, and that it was done without consultation with the UPBC.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm so that members could attend the Open Forum with President Toro.

The date of the next meeting will be December 15th, via MS Teams.

Submitted, J Hodgson, Recording Secretary