

Report on the Financial Policies Committee for the 2009-10 Academic Year

Membership

At the start of the year, the faculty members of the committee were: Donald Campbell, Ronald Ehrenberg, William Fry (ex officio), William Lesser, David Lewis, Stephen Pope (chair), Charles Seyler, Donald Smith, Charlie Walcott, Peter Wolczanski. During the year, William Lesser resigned, and Tony Simons joined the committee. For most of the year, Paul Streeter represented the administration on the committee; Elmira Magnum joined the committee in January 2010.

Meetings

The committee met approximately every two weeks during the semesters, and had in total 13 meetings during the year. The topics considered included: the proposed new budget model; a proposal for voluntary salary reductions for faculty; a proposal for part-time faculty appointments; the FY 2010-11 budget; the capital budgeting process; administrative cost savings; quantification of the “cost of instruction”; procurement and strategic sourcing. Notes summarizing each meeting were prepared by the chair and circulated to the committee.

Actions

A significant role of the committee is to provide to the administration faculty perspectives on proposed policies and financial decisions of the administration. This the committee did on all of the topics discussed. Additional specific actions include:

- endorsing the proposed new budget model, and highlighting the importance of the UOBAG (university operating budget advisory group);
- deciding against proposing a voluntary salary reduction;
- proposing to the provost and the academic deans modifications to the existing part-time policy for faculty (discussions with the deans revealed that the proposal was not beneficial);
- reporting to the Faculty Senate on the FY 2009-10 budget and on the above two items.

Recommendations for the future of the FPC

With the introduction of the new budget model and the UOBAG, it is time to reconsider the FPC, its existence, its charge, and its position in the university’s decision-making process. The key decisions are currently made by the administration (with input from deans and various task forces), and the Board of Trustees. How the faculty as a whole should and can effectively be involved in this process needs to be reconsidered.

Stephen B. Pope (FPC chair)

June 16, 2010