
CAMPUS PLANNING AND FINANCE COUNCIL

Minutes of 17 January 2023

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Campus Planning and Finance Council was called to order at 3:03 p.m. on 17 January 2023 via Webex video conferencing by Geoffrey Lindenberg, chair.

Members in Attendance: Todd Barkman, Cheryl Bruey, David Dakin, Betty Dennis, Bret Geier, LuMarie Guth, Keith Hearit, Lynne Heasley, Mohammad Daneshvar Kakhki, Geoffrey Lindenberg, Colleen Scarff, Jan Van Der Kley

Members Absent: Mason Deraad, Valerian Kwigizile, Abby Dawn Simmons

Advisory Members Present: Christopher Cheatham, Tony Proudfoot

Ex Officio Member in Attendance: Bret Wagner

Guests: Ron Cisler, Dean, College of Health and Human Services; Dan Guyette, Dean, College of Fine Arts; Carla Koretsky, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences; Raymond Thompson, Dean, College of Aviation

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Agenda

It was amended to move New Business following the Reports of Officers.

[MOTION] It was moved by Bruey, seconded by Wagner, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Dennis, seconded by Hearit, to approve the 6 December 2022 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Lindenberg did not provide a report.

Ex Officio Wagner did not provide a report.

New Business

A roundtable was held with Cisler, Guyette, Koretsky, and Thompson. Koretsky gave an overview of the structure of the Strategic Resource Management (SRM) budget model (Charge 2). Subvention amounts are set to decline over a set schedule, leading to either budget cuts or growth in revenue ([subvention schedule](#)). In fiscal year 2023, four colleges had a deficit (College of Arts and Sciences, College of Aviation, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, and College of Fine Arts), and three colleges had a surplus (College of Education and Human Development, College of Health and Human Services, and Hayworth College of Business) ([Final Strategic Allocation Calculation for FY23](#)). The roundtable thus included three deans from colleges with a deficit and one with a surplus. There are two ways out of a deficit: growth or cuts. Cuts are difficult due to previous streamlining and accreditation. Efforts are going toward creating headcount and credit hour production. Growth is challenged by demographic trends in Michigan. The pace of growth cannot meet the pace of the subsidy schedule. Additionally, space costs remain constant with existing structures.

Colleges with graduate education have major expenses. Graduate teaching assistants are a high cost, and small class sizes are more expensive. The University Participation Assessment (UPA) is a challenge

because it is assessed uniformly on all revenue streams, and some fees are based on specific costs without accounting for the UPA.

Cisler, who represents a college with a surplus, emphasized the importance of spending subvention returns in a way that prioritized investments benefiting the University as a whole.

There was discussion on the inherent incentive in the SRM model to adjust the curriculum so that credit hours stay within a student's home college. This undermines the concept of liberal arts education. One proposal to address this is the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding analyzing shared revenue with graduate programs. There was discussion regarding the merits of virtual versus in-person credit hours. Virtual credit hours are more profitable, but the decision to offer a class virtually or in-person needs to be based on pedagogy and the needs of the students. WMU's value proposition is tied to the residential experience. First and second year students struggle with online courses, and this can lead to retention concerns. Some students expressed a preference for in-person classes during the pandemic. Virtual classes are convenient for students with flexibility and fill up quickly. They are especially popular during the summer when many students are not in residence.

A discussion was held regarding the pressure from the SRM to lean into adjunct instructors. WMU has been able to avoid that pressure and maintain a high level of full-time faculty. There is concern about the pace of the subsidy schedule. The colleges need to work together as the rollout of SRM proceeds and more data needs to be gathered for evaluating SRM and running scenarios. In the literature, implementing an SRM when revenues are decreasing is discouraged, so WMU is likely experiencing more challenges than ideal with the rollout. There should be conversations about how we can adjust the rollout to meet these challenges. Elements of identity that add value to the University need to be decided on and prioritized. It is difficult to incentivize strong revenue sources within colleges experiencing a deficit. The budgets are not necessarily an indicator of best practices, and [Quality Indicators](#) need to be used to decide on alterations to the SRM. There is a need to define the point at which unintended consequences of the SRM need to be addressed. Some advantages of the SRM are already apparent. It is highlighting emerging programs and focusing efforts on retention. The University is strengthening partnerships with community colleges in the state, and this may lead to growth.

Hearit left the meeting at 4:20 p.m.

Wagner left the meeting at 4:44 p.m.

Reports of University Representatives

None.

Reports of Councils/Committees Standing Committee(s)

None.

Unfinished Business

The presentation on retention efforts by Cheatham was postponed to the 21 February 2023 meeting.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Bruey, seconded by Dennis, to adjourn the meeting at 5:03 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Campus Planning and Finance Council will next meet on 21 February 2023 via Webex video conferencing.

Approval

Submitted by LuMarie Guth, Secretary

Minutes approved on 21 February 2023.