

UNIVERSITY of WISCONSIN
LA CROSSE

Date: August 10, 2008

To: Joe Heim, Chair, Faculty Senate

From: Steven Senger, Chair, Budget Review Committee

Re: Final Report for 2007-2008 Academic Year

As you are aware the Faculty Senate Budget Review committee consists of those faculty sitting on the Joint Planning and Budget committee. The committee provides a mechanism whereby faculty can report on issues related to the campus budget and make recommendations to the Faculty Senate in cases where it is not possible to do this through the Joint Budget & Planning committee. Consequently, the work of the Budget Review committee depends on the work of the Joint Planning & Budget committee. During the 07-08 academic year the committee found only a couple of occasions where it seemed necessary to formally meet outside of the Joint Planning & Budget committee.

Other than the standing duties the committee received no special charges for this year. At the organizational meeting on September 12 members of the committee did raise several areas of concern for committee consideration.

Athletics and Instructional Positions

Members of the committee were concerned that the shared nature of coach/instructor positions was adversely affecting academics. The committee met with Interim Provost Colclough on October 3, 2007 to discuss this issue. The committee concluded that faculty concerns were adequately understood and that there was no appropriate action for the committee to take at that time.

Differential Tuition Commitment

When the differential tuition program was first approved the University agreed to match funds at a specified level. Over the years, as the students voted to raise the amount of the differential tuition fee, the University match was increased beyond the original agreement. In the 06/07 year this issue was raised with Interim CFO Colclough. He indicated that the issue had been discussed with the differential tuition oversight committee and that the University commitment would be returning to its original amount. This year the committee was assured that this issue had been resolved. The situation with the campus match has been further delimited this year in the process of resolving campus structural deficits.

Need for colleges to close books / Need for accurate institutional records

Committee members were very concerned with the difficulty of obtaining accurate account budget information over the last few years, as well as the difficulty in closing books from past budget years. Considerable improvement has been made in these areas over the past year as CFO Hetzel has worked to resolve longstanding budget problems.

Centralization of salary savings for faculty and IAS

The committee was also concerned the centralization of faculty salary savings. Previously, only faculty salary savings were centralized, however with the introduction of IAS career progression it was also decided to centralize IAS salary savings. The policy that has been in place for several years has allowed colleges to keep 1/3 of faculty salary savings, with 1/3 being used to pay promotions and 1/3 available for what has been described as “other campus priorities”. Originally, JP&B was to make yearly recommendations on the use of the last third. However for the last several years the amount not used to pay faculty promotion increments has been accumulating and used for other priorities, most significantly to fund “extra section” IFTE. The committee was concerned with accounting for the use of these funds. At a meeting on April 23 the committee unanimously passed the following recommendation.

Permanent salary savings dollars from instructional lines are to be used only for faculty promotion; Instructional Academic Staff career progression; and instructional salaries, including search and start-up costs.

Since this motion was passed some circumstances have changed. In particular, the Budget Council this summer is recommending that salary savings from all positions be centralized. This centralized pool would pay for promotion increments, sabbatical leaves, career progression and similar costs. Coupled with this is a commitment to put \$1.2M into new instructional base budget and academic reserve.