

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

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Finance Committee

Campus Governance

3-31-2022

Finance minutes 03/31/2022

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UMM Finance Committee

March 31, 2022 (virtual)

Meeting Minutes

Present: Roger Rose, Brad Deane, Bryan Herrmann, David Roberts, Mary Zosel, Matt Senger, Marie Hagen, Bart Finzel, Jennifer Deane

Absent: Lucas Granholm, Kendra DeRosa, Shelby Maloney

Guests: Melissa Wroblecki, Jessica Dierks

Approval of Minutes: There was a call to change the last question wording to contribute than “commit”. The minutes were then approved unanimously.

1) Budget updates from Leadership

The budget compact meeting was on March 4. There were a few questions from the provost office around metrics on MPACT 25. The provost is interested in UMM putting in a column to show the goal for the next fiscal year. There was also discussion around the tuition waiver and the request from the state since there are new people in the federal government. The cuts Morris has made already was discussed. It was also brought up that Morris has the lowest student debt between all of the system campuses, so even with asking for an increase in tuition, our student debt should hopefully remain lower than the other campuses.

Question: Did the budget 5 question trendlines? Answer: No, they felt comfortable with where our budget is at and where we are projecting.

Question: What is the student debt rate? Answer: UMM is about \$23,000. The system is above \$25,000 right now.

Question: What are other campuses student debt rates? Answer: The baseline for the whole system is \$27,864. The Twin Cities campus is around \$28k, Duluth is a little above \$25k, and Crookston is under \$25k but is not as low as Morris.

Discussion: Members were surprised that the student debt rate is as high as it is with prairie scholars, aid packages, and the tuition waiver. With the waiver we have $\frac{1}{4}$ of the school not paying tuition. Interest was expressed to see the breakdown in terms of debt and the distribution in hopes to not see a cluster of students with really high debt. Leadership noted that it has to be students who have borrowed and have borrowed through the institution. A committee member noted that there are a number of students who receive the tuition waiver but have other expenses that they still need to borrow money to pay for. Leadership also noted that students from Minnesota are in a different scenario to out of state students as they could also receive the UPromise scholarship or a MN State grant. The Finance Department will plan to provide a report that looks at the financial metrics for students. This is part of MPACT 25, and the committee could commit to look at this data annually.

Discussion: Follow up on Budget Compact Meeting

The budget 5 wanted to see a breakdown of salary increases more. They also are wondering about the financial investments we've made towards MPACT25 goals. The finance committee would like to see the indicators of investment for the MPACT25 goals at the next meeting to discuss.

Discussion: The budget was also reviewed at the Campus Conversation on March 24. There were questions on what would happen if the system doesn't fund our deficit. The tuition increase won't balance the salary increases alone (which is the same across system campuses). There were also questions on capital planning and student employment.

Discussion: Morris has been making various cuts for some time now. It may be valuable to have a document that tracks our cuts every year to see how many faculty and staff have retired, what positions have been cut as well as expenses and any new salaries for new hires. It is hard to make a judgment call on cuts without seeing what has already been cut. Leadership has a document from FY14 to FY23 to show how much Morris has cut to help show the Budget 5 how much we've reduced. The challenge is that even though we cut there are still salary increases too. A committee member noted that it would be helpful to see a document that has more than just dollar figures, such as how many faculty members were lost in a department. The Finance Committee Chair will follow up with Leadership to see what kind of trendlines we are looking for within that document. Another member asked to also see where we've made investments and if those investments are succeeding. Leadership can put that data together and present it in the fall.

2) How Finance can engage with HLC assessment to budget analysis

Discussion: Reviewing program review documents

Disciplines produce program review documents about every five years where the disciplines state their goals. It may be useful for the committee to review to see where a discipline's financial needs and potential areas of investments for the discipline is. The Political Science documents were completed this year and were reviewed by the committee. The document includes the discipline's mission, how it relates to campus, student outcomes, contributions to diversity, and trends and conclusions. The Division Chairs and Dean currently read and discuss the program review documents which then go to the Curriculum Committee.

Discussion: Would there be value in the Finance Committee reviewing these program reviews?

There is a need to differentiate factors that are limiting a discipline due to lack of resources from those that have lack of ambition. Some disciplines don't have enough faculty members or other resources to get their goals done. There was uncertainty that the Finance Committee would be appropriate to differentiate these factors. The program reviews are also so staggered and things change quickly making these reports out of date. The reviews also don't include non-academic departments as there are many departments across campus that also invest in students. The program reviews also have each program representing and defend themselves. There was a chart provided by institutional research that was included in Political Science's program review that may be beneficial to review for multiple disciplines.

Question: Is there anything this committee would say that would overrule staffing decisions? Answer: There would be value in considering the committee's suggestions as we need to be thinking strategically and looking at long term investments.

Discussion: Where else could the committee gather information to review?

We could potentially look at divisions on a rotating schedule rather than disciplines to get more timely information. There are also metrics in various others for assessment. For example, an EBI survey looks at housing and dining. The Finance Committee could have a collaborative conversation to discuss things we look at.

Question: From the HLC perspective, what will support the goals of HLC? The committee can further discuss what a conversation between the Finance Committee meeting and leadership would look like. It may be useful for the committee to see division level trends that the committee could advise on.

The meeting was adjourned.