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Finance Committee

Campus Governance

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Finance minutes 09/01/2022

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UMM Finance Committee

September 1, 2022

Meeting Minutes

Present: David Roberts, Roger Rose, Lucas Granholm, Bart Finzel, Mary Zosel, Matt Senger, Kendra DeRosa, Jennifer Deane, Bryan Herrmann

Absent: Stephen Gross, Marie Hagen

Guests: Melissa Wroblecki, Jessica Dierks

1) Introductions

There is still the need for another student.

2) Finance Committee Charge

Charge: The Finance Committee reviews the annual campus budget and advises the chancellor on the formation of budgetary proposals. The committee considers the allocation of financial resources to and within the campus and examines the financial impact of all major proposals and policy initiatives. The committee reviews and recommends policies on financial management within the Morris campus. It monitors deficits, reserves, and endowments.

Discussion: Last year, there were informal proposals on ideas (mostly about pay increase). Many of the meetings seemed to be on general monitoring of budgets in the context of trends.

It was noted that the minutes are public and anyone can access the link. There are also two document repositories for Finance Committee members which are: UMM Finance Committee and UMM Finance Reports on Google drives.

Last year the committee had 13 meetings while there are only 7 scheduled meetings this year. The Steering committee adjusted meetings for more weeks for Campus Assembly and for more open hours to have DVLPA speakers and other events scheduled during the community hour. It was suggested that since there are less meetings that members could review formal documents not during the Finance Committee scheduled meetings. The Finance Office will have more precise financial information at the October 13 meeting after more weeks have passed from the start of the semester.

Question: At the Committee Chairs meeting everyone addressed whether to meet in zoom, person, or have a hybrid schedule. What does the committee want to do?

Input: Many members preferred zoom as the default for meetings but recognized that information flows better at in person meetings. Zoom may work best when there are presentations while in person meetings would be better if there is more discussion. The next meeting was decided to be via zoom.

3) Budgetary Survey

The Budgetary Survey was initiated last year and is continuing this year. It was rushed quite rapidly and there was some pushback from the committee that people may get into more micro details. After receiving responses, it was decided that some of the survey questions needed to be evaluated. Many answers for “other units” didn’t provide the responses we expected. Melissa Bert has a proposal on how to modify the process so the committee can prepare a better survey.

Question: Was the budgetary survey initiated to connect the dotted line between programs and budget?

Answer: Yes, we want to show that we are using assessment in budget decision making process.

Question: When looking at the top section of the survey, it is trying to be delicate in asking for information. Can we separate the questions so Academics receive their 2 questions and non-academic units get their 1 question?

Answer: The question for non-academic units didn’t ask about assessment which was an oversight on how the survey was designed.

Question: Did this go to each division or discipline?

Answer: This went to a division level to people who fill out budget worksheets as well as the budget managers of each area. Some Division Chairs were responding on behalf of the disciplines.

Question: If we want to pull information from disciplines why don’t we just look at the assessment reports?

Answer: The program review documents aren’t a complete set and there is several years between review document sets.

Question: What is the timing for the HLC document?

Answer: The document is due next summer

Question: Will the “pilot” budgetary survey that went out already be included in the HLC document or will we use the upcoming budgetary survey that will be created?

Answer: We will talk about the pilot to show that we didn’t get the information we were hoping for and are making steps to get the information we need.

Question: From the top section of the pilot, it sounds like the survey was sent to individual disciplines, but it actually was sent out at a division level. Should we go down to discipline level?

Answer: It may be more likely to get the dotted line from divisions to budget connected if it goes through Division Chairs. The Curriculum Committee is already making decisions on courses which have budget implications. What we are trying to make clear to the HLC is when our curriculum committee makes a decision, it includes resource decisions.

Information from Leadership: There are assessment and budget mechanisms identified that we have been completing for many years. Melissa Bert has identified a budget survey to consider that could serve as our annual budget worksheet process. They are as follows:

1. Curriculum Committee decision making
2. Tenure track faculty hiring
3. Program review
4. Annual budget worksheet process

Question: From an academic program perspective the Finance Committee won't be engaged in this?

Answer: The Finance Committee will be engaged in this but from the experience with the pilot we need to start over and have the committee collaborate and review information.

Question: When a Division Chair receives this, are they going to be instructed to send down to disciplines?

Answer: What we have to work out as we work through the survey is to see how much needs to come from individual disciplines. We may need more information if they haven't completed a recent program review yet. The goal of this document is to clearly see how our campus works through assessment and transcribes the information.

Question: Would it be valuable for disciplines to put together a short-term basis consulting group?

Answer: Collecting information is a good idea but there may not be a need to create a formal group. Until there is more of a sense that this committee does more than review, monitor, and suggest, that getting people to put in more time isn't a requirement.

Question: There are 5 identified nonacademic units in Melissa Bert's document. Is there a sense across the rest of the units if they are doing something similar or will they have to invent a process?

Answer: There are 5 units we are planning to work with to use as sample units. There are different things happening that may not be student assessment but is assessment across campus. HLC wants us to demonstrate that as well. The data may be different but it could help units see what information is needed.

Question: There are a lot of model nonacademic units in the notes. Will we have a model academic unit?

Answer: That is the goal. We could use disciplines that just went through assessment since the information is already there.

4) New Business

Updates from leadership:

The President has asked Huron Consulting to take a look at finances overall on various things.

They've engaged with Crookston, Morris, and the Duluth campuses. This is different from PEAK and they've looked at all of the budget documents this committee has seen. Their goal is to look at expenses and make recommendations on ways to save resources.

Question: Will Huron engage with campus governance?

Answer: It is unclear at this point.

Discussion on PEAK:

Some conversations have been tying back to HLC and how we represent resources we are using locally that don't have a cost to us because they are being provided centrally. There isn't a great direct line and some units in the cities are being told to invest resources into system campuses. On our campus, we wear many hats and there is an expectation that central will provide what we don't have. There could be a requirement a local unit should do that we don't because we have it provided centrally.

PEAK is currently focusing on areas of Human Resources, Finance, and IT. One example is that FMLA will go through a group of people in charge of it for the entire system. Since FMLA is Federal law, central has the legal expertise to be more efficient. Currently, there are 150 people trying to manage FMLA.

The next meeting schedule will be held via zoom.

Meeting adjourned.