

Report

The Voice of the U.M.K.C. Faculty

November 20 and December 4, 2001

Note: This is a Report on two meetings. Your Secretary apologizes for the lateness of the Reports, but end of the term and a looming deadline -- combined with a winter break trip to Paris :-) -- interfered with their completion. There were some resolutions presented at the meetings, but they were rejected. However, the discussions raised some important issues.

Budget woes

Several aspects of the budget were discussed by the Senate. On Nov. 20th Chancellor Gilliland spoke with the Senate about the rather dismal budget picture facing the University. The state gets its funds from

income and sales taxes. Both were down, and though the Christmas sales picture was not known at the time the Chancellor spoke with us it was not expected to be rosy. Therefore, between 3 & 5% of the state share of the university's budget would be withheld. There was a small possibility that the 5% figure would increase, but the Chancellor didn't think it was likely. The budget projections for 2002 are obviously murky at this point, but another 5% withholding is certainly a possibility. Enrollment increases should cover some of the budget loss. Another possibility is savings through cost cutting where things

\$\$\$ HELP NEEDED

The Chancellor wants suggestions and ideas from the faculty & staff about places where the University can save or raise money. People might know of unnecessary administrative or teaching costs, or might have revenue generating ideas.

Send suggestions to your Senator, or to Kathleen Schweitzberger (Senate Chair) or to the Senate Budget Committee. Be as specific as possible, but it is not necessary to know the exact amounts involved. Presumably money saved in the units would remain in the units, though that has not been discussed.

SENATE WEBSITE

The Senate now has an up-to-date website, thanks to Senator Jakob Waterborg (SBS). Go to www.umkc.edu/facultysenate.

ELLEN SUNI IS NEW SENATE VICE-CHAIR

In a contested election Ellen Suni (Law) was elected to replace former Vice-Chair, now Chair, Kathleen Schweitzberger.

can be done more efficiently.¹ The administration thinks it is important for salaries to remain competitive, and would raise tuition if important programs could not be funded in other ways.

Gilliland said UMKC's budget turmoil is compounded by the development of a new budget system that she thinks will ultimately make the budget easier to work with and understand. She said the current system is a mess, and almost \$10 million is "off budget," which means that those items aren't budgeted for but are paid out of end of the year cost savings captured from the units. Eventually budget responsibility will be largely transferred to the academic units, and they will be able to fund and pay for new programs out of savings they make and income sources they develop. [Secretary's note: What seems to be envisioned is essentially a federal system, transferring power and responsibility back to the units and away from the central administration. The central administration would not be a normal source of new funds, but it also wouldn't capture end of the year money from the units and use the captured funds to pay for off-budget ~~unfortunat~~ Unfortunately, in the short-term the transfer of funds back to the units would apparently create its own budget problems, because the units would also have the responsibility of developing an emergency reserve, a function now performed by the central administration.

The entire budget process is in a period of transition, since the process is changing and because the state appropriations are unpredictable. The Chancellor said that she would like to get in front of the budget problems, rather than always reacting after the fact. She discussed the option of an advisory committee with the Senate, and asked for ideas. Her thoughts were preliminary, and she wasn't sure what the committee should look like or do. [At its Dec. 4th meeting the Senate appointed a Budget Committee. Members are Jim Durig (College), Mike Golden (Library), Stuart MacInich (Education) and Marvin Querry (College). Their goal is to supply information that will help the Senate and faculty understand the budget and participate in a meaningful way. We have neither the knowledge nor time to participate in detailed budget making, but could discuss policy issues and the setting of budget priorities. Faculty can also suggest ways to save money and increase revenue.]

On another item, the Chancellor was asked how much money had been spent on the BluePrint process and the workshops. She said \$2.5 million of privately raised money had been earmarked for the development of people and special projects. \$2.1 million of that sum has already been raised, and \$750 thousand had been spend on Gordon Starr Co.

During the budget discussions several Senators raised questions about the size of the administration. Contradictory assertions were commonly made on the campus. One group said the university was efficiently administered, and that the administration took a remarkably small portion of the funds. Another argued that the administration was disproportionately large and getting larger. This seemed as though it were an argument that could be resolved. The Provost agreed. He said he didn't know the answer but would try to find out and distribute the information to the Senate and faculty. One problem, he said, was that

¹ A 5% holdback in state funds does not represent 5% of the university's money, since the state only pays \$85 to 90 million of our budget. Another \$76 to \$80 million comes from fees, and approximately \$60 million comes from auxillary opeations like the bookstore, and from grants. That distribution of income needs to be taken into consideration when discussing the university's budget.

government regulations regarding things like animal welfare and student loans had dramatically increased the need for staff. Additionally, there were computer information needs, including security issues.

During the budget discussions the Provost said that faculty development was a central concern of the administration. The intention was to support units and chairs. The issue of part-time faculty was also discussed in this context. Everybody agreed they were paid too little, but there was a question of the distribution of resources. Salary compression was also a problem, and there was a shortage of funds for programs.

The discussion of part-time faculty continued at the Dec. 4th meeting. Senators thought they were being treated unfairly. There was no doubt that they brought in money, and part-time faculty more than paid for themselves. Some of the part-time people brought special teaching skills to the school. Additionally, if enrollment increased we would need more part-time people to teach them, unless we could afford to hire full time people. Still, the budget was so tight that it wasn't easy to say their salaries should be raised. If that were done other programs would need to be cut.

The increase in part-time faculty threatened to change the type of institution we were, since characteristically part timers didn't do research. But it was important to recognize that some did, and in an urban university we had the advantage that we could draw on talented people within the area. Some people in the law school, for example, were judges and practicing lawyers who brought special talents to the school. There were similar cases in all the units, and we needed to be able to retain those people.

Senators discussed several plans. One option, obviously, was a higher salary, but given the budget situation at the school that was a difficult choice. A second option was to allow part-time faculty to buy into the university benefit system. A third possibility was to offer part-time faculty a contract after a certain number of years working for the university. The contract could confer some benefits, like more job security with a reasonable period of notice before they were let go. The Provost said that he is interested in these issues. He thought it was a mistake for the university to become too dependent on part-timers, and agreed with the Senate that there were issues of fairness. He said that he wanted to continue the dialogue, since he thought it was central in defining the type of university that we were and that we would become

Treatment of athletes

Student athletes have a problem. They are often on athletic scholarships, and whether or not they are, they need to miss some classes because of the athletic schedules. They are instructed to bring their schedules to instructors at the beginning of the class. Some instructors allow the athletes to miss classes that conflict with their schedule, some don't, and some treat athletes differently than students involved in other university sponsored activities (like debate). At the Senate's Nov. 20th meeting Professor Jack Ward, speaking for the athletic department, requested that the Senate recommend to the faculty that a uniform standard be applied to students involved in any university sponsored activity, so that athletes weren't discriminated against. They recognized that it rested with faculty whether to give excused absences, but they hoped that the Senate would recommend that a policy statement be uniform and be in the syllabus.

The issue was referred to the Academic Standards Committee, and in the discussion on Dec. 4th the Senate decided that some faculty members might have their own justifications for treating different university activities differently. Was the Senate supposed to come up with a list of what activities constituted legitimate activities for excused absences or for makeup tests? Did we want to recommend that all activities should be valued the same? The catalog said that class attendance policies were decided by the individual instructors. Was it possible that there could be some give, and some better communication by the athletic program? We also didn't know how many people were involved. Was this a common complaint, one that could be handled by better communication in individual cases, or something that rarely became an issue? The Senate decided that individual faculty members should think about the issue and decide what their own policies should be. It didn't seem to be an issue where we could recommend a uniform policy.

Class scheduling

Class scheduling times vary within individual units and between units. That sometimes makes it hard for students to get the classes they want, and means that some classrooms stay vacant for considerable periods of time. Should there be a general policy on when classes should start and end?

The discussion raised several issues. Different units had different markets, and different schedule periods worked for them. For example, B&PA needed to start most of its classes after 5:30, while the Ed School student population was free a little after 3:00. Courses that were conveniently scheduled for one group might be in a time conflict with another. Also, some courses were 5 hours, and if they ran 3 times a week (convenient for many students) they didn't fit in the normal 50 minute block. Sometimes adjunct professors were used, and an attempt was made to fit the schedule to the professor's schedule. Also, a new undergraduate curriculum was being discussed in the College, and that could create scheduling problems if variable hour courses, teaching formats or discussion sections were used.

The issue was given to the Academic Affairs Committee for a study. In the December meeting the Senate decided it wasn't clear that the different class schedules created a serious problem, and that the flexibility of scheduling had some significant advantages. We decided not to recommend any change in policy.

Campus police and campus emergencies

Scott Shelton, the new chief of the UMKC police, gave a report on the police and on emergency planning. He said that the campus didn't have enough police, but that it was developing a master plan for emergencies that would identify individuals in various buildings who would be trained in what to do in an emergency -- who to contact, where to send people in the building, etc. Each building would have a plan and designated officials. Once the plan is completed -- it is quite detailed -- they intend to go to the various departments to discuss and implement it.

The police would also like to move towards a community policing model, rather than have the cops ride around in patrol cars only, and they would like to become an accredited department. The advantage of accreditation is that it would enable them to retain and recruit good people. Shelton said that given the size

of the UMKC police force and the size of the campus we should have an accredited force. The UMKC community and police force are larger than those of many towns in the area.

Short takes and reports

The campus is still working on an architectural master plan to be presented to the Board of Curators next Spring. It is working with the neighborhood associations and civic leaders, but it turned out that it wasn't necessarily working with the designated leaders of the neighborhood associations. Rather the university was picking its own representatives from the neighborhoods. Obviously, these might not be representative, and there was suspicion of what the university was doing. The Senate suggested that the leaders of the various neighborhood organizations be contacted and consulted.... Lawrence Kaptain discussed the Faculty Teaching Scholars Program, which he said was going well. His plan was that this year's scholars would mentors next year's. Rolla and UMSL will become Learning/Teaching Centers.... The Senate and the Administrative Issues Committee have continued to discuss the problems involved in the evaluation of the upper administration. One question is what the purpose of the process is -- to grade the administrators, or to help them in doing their job better. A related issue revolves around the impact of the evaluations. Will we do a lot of work, and come up with an effective instrument, only to have it the results dismissed?

Respectfully submitted,

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Faculty Secretary