Note: This is another double report. I apologize for the tardiness of the reports, but everything hits at this time of the year. As has been true in all of the recent meetings, most of the issues swirled around budget questions.

Budget

The budget was central to almost all of the issues the Senate discussed. Generally the outlook is bleak, but it is still unsettled. Currently UMKC gets $77.8 million from the state. The hope is that there will be no more cuts this year unless state revenue is below expectations. There will most likely be cuts in next year’s state appropriation - guesses range from 5% to 15%. The Governor would like to limit any cuts to 10%, but the Legislature and the Governor don’t often agree, so it is hard to tell what the final amount will be. Additionally we discussed the possibility that UM’s medical insurance would be collapsed into the state plan, raising our costs and probably lowering quality. [Note Subsequent to the Senate meeting this bill was withdrawn.] President Floyd said he would limit tuition increases to the 3.2% inflation cost IF the state did not reduce its appropriations, but it seems probable that there will be a reduction. Some of the losses from state funding should be offset by increased tuition income from enrollment gains and higher fees.

Graduate Fee Waivers: Connected with the budget crisis is the issue of graduate student fee waivers. If a student would not come here unless they got a fee waiver then, if they are not displacing a fee paying student, the fee waiver doesn’t increase costs. On the other hand, if the student would come here even if they paid full fees, waivers decreased revenue. Would our graduate students, on the M.A. level, come here even if tuition was charged? On the answer to that question lays the conflict about graduate tuition waivers. [Ph.D. students, it is agreed, should get waivers if they have GRA or GTA status.] Is a fee waiver needed for a good graduate program even if the students would come here anyway? Is there any way of really determining whether an individual student would come here? Should we care? Are different standards used for athletes? Though it was noted that not all athletes get full fee waivers, some Senators suggested we might not be able to afford both a Title I athletic program and a graduate program, and thought we should seriously consider changes in the athletic program. The Chancellor, though, is reluctant to cut programs, because they will be hard to re-establish in better times.

Salary compression: Also connected with the budget crisis is the issue of salary compression. The 2% salary distribution pool is supposed to be distributed on a merit basis. If it is distributed to those lowest on the pay scale it will add to salary compression, but if it is distributed on a percentage basis those who need it most will get the least. The central administration intends to leave the issue to individual units, since in some the problem of salary compression is of central importance, while others are far less concerned with the issue. Some Senators thought the issue of salary compression was extremely important, especially because it has such a high impact on retirement pay. Additionally, those who
supplemented their salaries with one-time grant funds\(^1\) were dismayed to find that grant income is not used in figuring out retirement benefits. The Provost was asked how salary compression could be put on the administrative agenda. He said that the central administration would deal with it if there was a strong feeling that faculty regarded salary compression as a top priority problem. He commented that it was a difficult issue to deal with when funds were so limited. He needed data on the extent of the problem and the dollar amount needed to rectify it.

There were many problems on the campus - the poor pay for part-time faculty and lack of benefits, salary compression, inequities in pay. We appointed a subcommittee tasked to come up with a plan to deal with these issues in the light of the budget realities: Profs. Harold Manley (Pharm.), Jerry Place (SICE), and Karen Vorst (A&S). How were the issues of workplace of choice, diversity and excellence to be realized?

**New initiatives:** There are several new initiatives underway. They would be funded out of the central administration’s share of new enrollment money, and are predicated on the hope that there will be no significant state budget cuts. Many of these were made to honor commitments that had been made in prior years. Nursing was to start a BFM program. SICE had stopped every search because of budget cuts and they were promised that the funds would be restored this year. The emergency contingency fund had to be replenished. Money was put into a special diversity hiring fund, in which matching money would go to the units if they found appropriate people to meet their needs, and the diversity in action fund had received some money. [We wanted some input into the Diversity in Action Project, so that the Senate would know what changes were made, and faculty could be involved in defining the issues. That was the only way in which faculty cooperation could be achieved. Jerry Place (SICE) and Ellen Suni (Law and Vice Chair) were appointed to meet with Joe Seabrook and discuss the issues.]

**The Board of Curators** has approved the increases in Educational Fees, and the IT fee will also be increased. It will apply to every credit hour, whether taken on or off campus. The Residence Hall Plan was also approved. Groundbreaking will take place in June, and the new residence hall should be finished July 2004. The Board also approved giving a 6 hour tuition waiver to faculty dependents.

**Part-time faculty**

At the April 1st meeting there was an extensive discussion of part-time faculty. At the time of our meeting the Provost’s office had not yet put together a committee to examine the issue, but Jeff Thomas (Law and the Provost’s office) announced at the Senate meeting that a small fact-finding committee on the part-time issue was now being formed. He noted that the data was poor and inconsistent. [Several Senators noted that this was a general problem at the university.] The Senate thought it was unnecessary to form its own committee, since we could cooperate with the Provost’s committee. We did not see a conflict of interest between the Provost’s office and the faculty on this issue. [At the time this Report was written the committee still had not been appointed.] The Senate will cooperate with the committee rather than appointing its own. Presumably some Senators will be on the committee, but its composition is not known at this time. Senators had several questions:

* We thought an assessment of the situation in the units was needed. Things were defined differently, and situations varied. We needed a survey to see what people who were not defined as regular faculty were doing in the areas of teaching, research and service.

* The pay situation, and the lack of any job security, were clearly an issue - at least in some areas.

\(^1\) Retirement benefits do go up when grant funds, through overhead return, contribute to increased merit raises.
Perhaps the number of years in service could be used to guarantee a longer notice if a contract was to be terminated. Would it make sense to have regular raises for new degrees and the number of years of service? Partial benefits were mentioned as a possibility, as was the question of whether part-time faculty could buy into the UMKC benefits package if they paid a higher percentage of the costs than regular faculty. How do other institutions handle the problem? Some part-timers really needed the benefits, and it ought to be possible to devise a plan to allow them to participate in the university's benefits package.

* A question was raised as to whether the differences among the units meant that an across the board solution was impossible. Perhaps the issue should be left to the different units. The Senate decided that there were broad issues involved, and that if the issue was left solely to the units it was likely that no action would be taken since the budget lines for part-time faculty were an easy target when there was financial stress. Most Senators thought it was reasonable for the Senate to recommend a minimum salary/benefits package. It was noted that one way to increase part-time pay and benefits, without increasing their budget line, was to reduce the number of part-time faculty. That way each remaining person could be paid more. But that would probably involve increasing the teaching load of full-time faculty. Were we willing to recommend that?

**Faculty Activity Reports (FARs)**

Different units use different FAR forms, and different time periods. Some go from July 1 to June 30, while other units go from January 1 to December 31 (most common). Most Senators questioned the efficacy of the July to June form, since the forms are filled out before the end of that covered time period, and since some grant results were not known. Additionally, most Senators thought that the question about the number of hours per week that a person worked (present on some, though not all, unit forms) was a bad question. It invited lies. Also people didn't know how to answer the question because it was unclear whether summer research hours should be included. We suggested that at the next Senate meeting a motion be presented to get rid of the “number of hours worked” question.

Respectfully submitted,

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Faculty Secretary