

Academic Affairs Budget Advisory Committee (AABAC)

Meeting Notes

October 28, 2020

Present: Kirk England, Beth Say, Colleen Harris, Sean Anderson, Michael Aldrich, Manuel Correio, Alicia Virtue, John Lu, Amanda Quintero, Eric Kaltman, Karen Gundelfinger, Administrative support

Absent: Melissa Soenke

Kirk welcomed everyone and provided an overview where we stand fiscally. He stated that the permanent budget cut received for CI is 5.1 million, and tuition cut of approximately 1.9 million, so we are looking at a 7 million decrease. However, enrollment came in higher in Fall and we are better off than we thought we would be. **Beth** said that we don't know for sure about tuition for Spring. They are hearing that students may not return in Spring. She stated that the 5.1 million dollars is a permanent cut that we have to take this year. Cabinet has gone back to the divisions to determine what their respective portion of the cut will be. **Kirk** stated that the University is contributing 4.1 million from permanent reserves to help offset the deficit. That leaves 1.0 million that needs to be cut from the division budgets. BFA agreed to take on 50% of the remaining amount, DSA \$200,000-300,000, advancement \$150,000. This leaves \$100,000 for the DAA which will come from the Provost's budget. All issues for this year are resolved but the AABAC is to create the planning framework to use in when considering possible FY22 budget cuts. **Kirk** said that the planning framework considered and approved by the AABAC and Provost will be sent to Deans and AVPs to complete. All information is on the AABAC website for reference.

Colleen asked about fiscal year 2022-23. She inquired about the EEP and what the savings will be for programs. How will this work? **Beth** stated that the EEP requests are being reviewed on a case by case basis. With the vacancies these will create we will look at mission critical positions that need to be filled and perhaps wait to hire in other areas. She stated that a lot of the information **Kirk** is providing needs to be strategically placed. There needs to be a structure in place to track where we see the division going, and where allocations will be given in the next 5 years.

The first task of the committee is to work on the concept of a planning framework. **Kirk** stated, first and foremost, that he doesn't want to talk about dollars when we talk about planning. He said the planning comes first and then dollars follow. He believes this approach aligns with where we are at this time, especially with the new provost coming on board and no strategic plan in place. **Beth** said that the conversations in Cabinet have been about the importance of the university continuing to look forward and planning for the future while in the midst of this budget crisis. They want to move us forward while dealing with the cuts. **Beth** reiterated that 49% of the university budget is designated to the DAA, but BFA is absorbing 50% of the budget shortfall.

Committee Feedback at this point in the discussion:

Colleen- Importance of equity efforts and making sure we can support the students who have the most need. Prioritizing the equity gap. TT density is still a concern and what the EEP will mean for that and any future budget cuts. Staff positions are already tight as well.

Sean-Hopes we can dispense with the fact that we are not going to save everyone. If the funds aren't there we can't keep everyone and everything intact. We are past doing more with less. He would like to see everyone take on a portion of the cuts and not completely protect a particular area/unit. He is concerned that this remains a unified project across the board, including the other divisions. It needs to remain transparent.

Kirk said that planning strategically will define priorities. The overarching question that needs to be answered by the committee: Will we approach this exercise strategically, or does it make sense to simply ask everyone to make a cut to their budgets.

Amanda- We don't have time given that it takes roughly two years to develop a strategic plan. The strategic initiatives and GI2025 report were used to develop a six year plan and do represent program/business unit strategic priorities that are aligned with SI and GI 2025. With a new Provost coming in not knowing how lean we are, strategic direction may look different. Some areas may no longer align with the priorities. The one gap that remains is A&S. It is important for the Deans and AVPs to have a six year plan in place prior to the arrival of the new Provost, and is in favor of having a 6-year plan from the schools and units to provide the new Provost as the framework.

Kirk said that the AABAC has already worked on priorities (matrix) and this is a starting point. Amanda stated that this information needs to be given to the new Provost, and he needs to see what the cuts look like. Where is there room, where is there no room, or flexibility. There is some connection between what is already in place and a 6-year plan.

Michael- Lack of strategic plan leads him to say that a scenario approach is the best way to go. The more we can inform that approach. How we determine some of the percentage assumptions is not clear to him. Manuel agrees with the ideas about equity. How will it impact our students and how we see them through to graduation? We are already losing students this semester, so keeping students requires faculty development to be effective in this environment into the Spring and next Fall. Keeping in mind how cuts will affect the students and their graduation time.

Kirk agreed and stated that we already have the Strategic Initiatives and the GI2025 plan in place.

Manuel- Is worried about cutting sections as it impacts students first-hand.

Beth said that we need to be strategic in scheduling, making sure that we keep class enrollment robust.

Sean is worried that there will be a big focus on cutting sections. He wants to graduate quality students and this is not going to happen based on just having lots of sections. It is hard enough now teaching virtually to continue to hold multiple course sections.

Alicia- Whatever framework we produce will need to allow each school or unit to determine its own mission critical needs. She hopes everyone can control their destiny. We need to look at the overarching values and that every student has a quality education and graduates in a timely manner. Plus preserving employment of those who teach and support. Perhaps have mock scenario targets to help us all start the process.

John- He doesn't see any way possible for us to create a strategic plan for the near future. Each school does have strategic priorities in place and if there is an additional cut, it should be what and where those cuts can be made. He likes the scenario planning model that has been suggested. He feels that we need

to give a realistic idea of what might be to come. Give a positive scenario and then 2 maybe 3 worst case scenarios.

Eric- He is new needs to ask questions- Do we take notes of these meetings? Is there a strategic plan somewhere at the school levels? Eric asked about the timeline as well. **Kirk** said we need to have some sort of framework by the end of the year. **Eric** asked if we are looking at 2022 or planning for a more detailed strategic alignment for the future. **Kirk** said that this committee is fairly new and it was set up to be representative of every part of our division. It isn't set up to lead but to be advisory.

Amanda asked if the planning framework was for the new Provost. **Kirk** said planning documents would be sent out prior to his arrival.

Manuel asked if this is going to be presented to the new Provost before he arrives? **Beth** said that she will be having on going conversations with the new provost. Also, we have been asked to work with Senate to begin to think about academic program planning at large so there is a roadmap for planning in place when the new Provost arrives. She agrees that there hasn't been a strategic plan in place for years. Hopefully laying this foundation will help the Provost have those conversations with the DAA leadership.

Alicia touched on what **Amanda** referenced. She is also concerned that the AABAC is moving from advising to dictating. She expressed concern that the committee is not representing the new Provost. She is hearing this from others as well.

Sean said it is a very real thing but it is up to the committee to really explain what is going on to those who are concerned. It behooves us to be as transparent as possible. We need to get things done and if we drag this out it is not doing us any good. **Beth** said that there will be another budget from the Governor in January. If we haven't at least talked about or thought about this prior to the January budget announcement, then we are doing a disservice to the institution. We have been funded very richly and we won't have this next year. **Beth** feels our appropriation from the CO will be cut.

There was a great deal of discussion on transparency and making sure that the focus and purpose of this group is clear. **Kirk** indicated that information about the AABAC is on the APB website and includes details on the scope and purpose of the AABAC. **Amanda** said that Beth needs to send messaging to the division that nothing has really changed. **Beth** agreed that a message from the Provost is helpful, but as **Sean** said we need to be speaking with our colleagues and getting the word out there.

Kirk says he has some ideas to give to the group for how to move forward along with notes from this meeting.

After discussion, it was decided that the AABAC will meet every other week. **Kirk** will send meeting invites.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:30pm.