

Facility Administration Collaborative Committee
Thursday, June 11, 2020
2:00-3:30 PM McM 305

Minutes

Present: Dr. Dan Edelman, Dr. Melinda Arnold, Dr. Christine Shearer, Dr Vicki Trier, Dr. Joy Honea, Susan Simmers, Dr. Keith Edgerton, Dr. Suzette Nynas, Dr. Jennifer Lynn, Dr. Debra Schoenfeld, Dr. Natalie Bohlmann, Dr. Kimberly Hayworth, Maureen Brakke

Motion to approve May 18, 2020 minutes. Minutes were approved.

Order of Business:

Chancellor Edelman opened by welcoming everyone. He then covered several topics.

- MSU Billings Accreditation Review:

- The review went very well. All initial concerns going into the review were met with approval, thereby validating everyone's hard work.

- Operating in a Pandemic, the likes of which few have seen:

- Kudos to all that worked to teach online.

- MSU B's plan to stay with the same Academic Calendar for Fall Semester 2020, was not met with approval from MUS. The semester will therefore start August 19, 2020, with Faculty back on Campus August 12th.

- The hardest thing to do was telling students to go home when some did not have a place to go. Gratefully United Way stepped up to plate and was able to assist some who needed funding for alternative living arrangements.

- Cases of COVID - 19 are still increasing in Montana, and in several other states. People are not using precautions. We need to be prepared for that for Fall.

- Enrollment:

- Applications are down.

- MSU Billings is combatting low application numbers with Digital Advertising.

- The Billings Gazette gave MSU Billings a \$10k Grant where they will match our advertising dollar, dollar for dollar up to \$10k.

- MSU Billings has also been calling students that were enrolled last year but have not yet registered for Fall. Chancellor Edelman asked that Faculty reach out to their students and do the same and stated that these are unprecedented times. Dr. Hayworth is launching a campaign. She will be in contact with Deans, and is looking for Faculty volunteers.

- Budget:

- COVID -19 has affected the budget.
- Considering the effects of COVID on our budget, the Executive Budget Council has offered recommendations.
- It is important to have a measured response, in neither over-reacting nor under-reacting.
- Presently the Budget is being generated without any electronic programs, by manually entering numbers for nearly 5000 accounts into a spread sheet. A University wide digital system will be implemented, once all the information needed for making an informed decision is available.

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- Dr. Nynas asked when MSU Billings will be having the Spring 2020 commencement and convocations. To which the Chancellor responded it is unknown at this time, but it will not be on December 19, 2020 as originally planned.
 - Dr. Honea asked if the budget is balanced, what is the worry? The Chancellor replied there is more concern for the potential effects of COVID on the University than the current budget.
 - Susan Simmers pointed out for FY 2020 the General Fund has a deficit of \$1.4 Million with a \$2.5 Million deficit overall. For FY 2020, there is enough in reserves to cover the deficit. It is unknown how COVID will affect FY 21. The Provost furthered the conversation by reiterating the fact there is only so much in reserve. If all reserves are used for FY 2020 there will be nothing to fall back on for FY 21.
 - The FY 2021 CARES Act equates to \$2.2 Million, with \$1.1 Million for students and \$1.1 Million for the institution. It can be used for FY 2020 as well as FY 2021 and must be used by April 21, 2021.
 - Provost Arnold added the CARES Act for FY 2020 equates to \$2.2 Million. \$1.1 Million is to be used for students, and \$1.1 Million for the institution. Of the \$1.1 Million for students, approximately \$500k has already been distributed to students.
 - Regarding the potential affect COVID could have on this institution, Chancellor Edelman offered the example if enrollment for AY 2020/2021 is down by 10%, it will lead to a \$2.6 million loss. If enrollment is down by 20% it would result in a \$5.2 Million loss. The chancellor added the institution is working to do what it can to avoid the storm of enrollment drops and COVID effects in many ways, one of which is working to refinance the 5 year plan for pay off bonds.
 - Dr. Lynn asked if the CARES Act money can be used for training needed due to COVID -19 i.e., training required to convert face to face courses to online courses due to COVID – 19. The Chancellor replied there are other funds available that are better used, would be less restrictive, and would leave the CARES funds as a reserve for COVID related emergencies, and items like PPE, infrastructure, and equipment required to operate amidst COVID.

- Dr. Honea inquired as to if the institution has a running inventory of what expenditures have occurred for COVID using CARES funding. Provost Arnold replied various campus departments are involved with the process and are tracking COVID related expenditures.
- Dr. Bohlmann asked what timeline is being referenced regarding the budget.
- Susan Simmers stated FY 20 budget closes June 30, 2020. FY 2021 must be loaded into the system by July 3, 2021. Everything will be finalized by August 7th.
- Dr. Bohlmann inquired further by asking why if the numbers must be known before decisions can be made, Numbers will not be known by the July 3rd deadline.
- Chancellor Edelman reiterated the concern is not about FY 2020. The concern is the unknown effect COVID will have on FY 2021. The numbers need to be known to know the impact on the FY 2021 budget.
- Susan Simmers added the enrollment numbers are being monitored and are updated weekly.
- Dr. Honea commented given the uncertainty of enrollment the faculty will want to know when they will know what decisions to cut or not cut faculty are being made.
- Chancellor Edelman brought into the conversation that out of \$1.4 million available in performance-based funding, the institution will receive only \$964k. The Chancellor has asked several times for the full \$1.4 Million.
- Dr. Honea inquired as to when the \$964k will show up.
- Susan Simmers replied some of the funds have been provided already. She added efforts are in the works to obtain other sources for funding.
- Dr. Hayworth mentioned Summer enrollment is down by 38 students, which equates to 6.2 %.
- Provost Arnold added the goal is to come in under budget for Summer sessions.
- The Chancellor added everyone needs to do what they can to make students know they are safe. We have an opportunity to become better and stronger.
- Dr. Bohlmann inquired about a projection for the deficit.
- The Chancellor reiterated the projection is that student numbers must come up.
- Dr. Bohlmann asked for a worst-case scenario.
- The Chancellor stated worst-case scenario is if enrollment is down by 25%, there will be layoffs and faculty workload review, and the possibility of retrenchment.
- Dr. Honea asked for a timeline for the potential of the worst-case scenario. If not Summer, if not Fall, then what time is projected for down the line? Chancellor Edelman replied there is no timeline, and anything is possible. Cuts are unwanted but will happen if necessary.
- Dr. Edgerton asked Chancellor Edelman when he will know if cuts will happen.
- Dr. Bohlmann added faculty would like to be a part of the conversation before decisions are made.

- Chancellor Edelman offered that everyone is welcome to come and be a part of the solution.
- Dr. Honea asked when the decisions for Fall will be made, to which the Chancellor replied Summer enrollment numbers will have to be analyzed and will act as guidelines for Fall.
- Provost Arnold mentioned increasing Faculty's workload from 21 to 24 credits.
- Dr. Honea inquired as to how much not having part time Faculty would actually save. The Provost replied Reducing reliance on Part Time Faculty could lead to saving approximately \$400k.
- Dr. Bohlmann inquired as to whether the 16 Voluntary Separations will help with the budget.
- Chancellor Edelman answered the hope was to have 16 Voluntary Separations, but the actual number received to date is 3.
- Dr. Honea questioned if the Voluntary Separations, Hiring Freeze, Potential Layoffs, Cutbacks etc., will end up saving \$1.1 Million.
- The Chancellor reiterated the best way to create a healthy budget is not by making cuts but by increasing Enrollment.
- Dr. Bohlmann stated the College of Education has worked hard to retain students, but enrollment is still down by 5%. The only chance the COE has is with Freshman.
- Chancellor Edelman mentioned how great a Freshman might feel if they received a call from their future Instructor/Professor. Dr. Bohlmann replied if given the list of names of Freshman, the COE will call them.
- Chancellor Edelman voiced previously the institution provided a culture where accountability was not exercised. The case going forward will be different. If people are problems, or are acting inappropriately, the situation will be looked into, and the problem will be taken care of.
- Dr. Nynas inquired as to whether the \$1.1 Million savings being discussed was strictly for the General Fund, or if it includes other Funds for FY 21.
- Susan Simmers offered that the answer to Dr. Nynas' question is not known right now, but it is being worked on so areas of where funds are available can be determined and answers can be given.
- The Chancellor added work is being done to ensure the institution is not in this position again.
- Dr. Honea mentioned with talks of layoffs, and "Bold and Unprecedented" budget decisions the Faculty is wondering what is happening in the Fall.
- The Chancellor reiterated at this time there are no answers. Anything is possible, but layoffs and cuts should be preventable. There are things to be looked at before making cuts. One solution is Faculty's workload can increase for a while. Other things should be tried first, before cuts occur. Chancellor Edelman stated through out all this, no one has been turned down for Tenure. He offered the reminder of everyone needing to be a part of working together to create the solution.
- Provost Arnold mentioned Dr. Beer, as the new Interim Dean for COB volunteered to teach a class, and that all need to do what they can to be a part of the solution.
- Dr. Bohlmann inquired if asking for more Voluntary Separations would be considered.

- Chancellor Edelman offered there is no basis for asking for more Voluntary Separations that can be deemed as appropriate.
- Dr. Bohlmann continued with asking about Leave of Absences.
- Dr. Edgerton added to the question by inquiring as to whether some Faculty could temporarily operate under a .5 FTE, while still maintaining their status and benefits.
- Dr. Shearer mentioned some departments are running like clockwork, with full classes. These departments have been carrying the departments with low enrollment that should not be working. Faculty workloads need to be reviewed to determine cost effectiveness to enrollment.
- The Provost added the Workload Taskforce will be back in the Fall.
- Dr. Honea asked about someone retiring in FY 21 being applied to FY 22. The Chancellor replied a retirement in FY 21 could be applied to FY 22, but it would serve a limited purpose.
- Dr. Bohlmann brought up the need to discuss what can be done with Faculty. The Chancellor and Provost each replied Faculty does not need to wait for the Administration, and Faculty is welcome to come up with ideas too.
- Dr. Edgerton declared there are many steps to take before "retrenchments" should occur.
- Dr. Bohlmann added there are things to be explored before getting to the worst-case scenario. Chancellor Edelman responded with "**Exactly.**"
- Provost Arnold stated Faculty working half time, if fiscally beneficial is an excellent idea. She emphasized the need to evaluate whether faculty could maintain their status and benefits, if working half time at a .5 FTE. The Provost explained the drive to work towards getting away from Part Time and Adjunct Faculty, while relying more on Fulltime. Ideally, without the current hiring freeze, more Fulltime faculty would be hired.
- The Chancellor reemphasized the certainty of an ongoing effort to correct the overall budget matter.
- Dr. Honea expressed satisfaction with the thought of Faculty being able work at .5 FTE, if able to maintain their current status and benefits.
- The Provost reiterated the need to first check whether receiving benefits is an option at a .5 FTE.
- Susan Simmers will check into the legal aspect of faculty benefits and whether the cost of reduced salary would be fiscally beneficial.
- Dr. Bohlmann stated if benefits are lost, Faculty will not be interested in the half time concept.
- Dr. Edelman expressed there is no reason why working 50% with benefits can not be explored. The Board of Regents may need to become involved, but there is no reason not to explore the option.
- The Provost added if ever there is a time to explore options, now is the time.
- Dr. Honea indicated the need for more discussions like this. She then inquired about whether faculty has the authority within the realms of face to face, blended, or online classes depending on the students' needs.
- The Chancellor confirmed that Faculty is empowered to meet their students' needs.

- The Provost continued by reiterating that students will only be charged a fee for hybrid and online classes. Students will not be charged a fee for face to face classes that are changed to hybrid or online. Furthering the topic of meeting students' needs, the Provost added intersession classes are being looked into for Veterans during December. To receive their funding, Veterans have different requirements for classes. The new Fall Semester dates of August 19 – November 25, 2020 will not meet the requirements. The option of adding two weeks of classes for December 7-11, and 14-18 is being considered. Dawn Githens is helping.
- In summary, the Chancellor offered as a prior CFO, he will do whatever it takes, if necessary. However, he Remains:
 - Always available.
 - Proud of the Faculty for stepping up for the students, now more than ever.
 - Very confident MSU Billings will emerge from this fine and positioned very well.
 - Appreciative of all that are working together in seeking a solution.
 - Dedicated to offering information as information, not misinformation, is obtained.
- Provost Arnold took a moment to acknowledge Dr. Nynas and the College of Health Professions and Science in their efforts to step up, make sacrifices, and find ways to work within the budget. The Provost reiterated that many are making sacrifices and invited everyone to bring something to the table.
- Dr. Hayworth offered that she was able to make 1-10% cuts in their budget, in a layered fashion within her Department, and are now in a holding pattern.
- The Chancellor added the Hiring Freeze should be looked at as more of a Moratorium than a Freeze. There will be some new hires, where necessary.
- Susan Simmers is looking through departmental budgets and making determinations. For the July 3rd deadline, some plugs will have to be put in the budget. Adjustments will continue to be made to meet the numbers.
- Dr. Bohlmann offered her appreciation for hearing how others are making sacrifices within their departments. In addition, Dr. Bohlmann pointed out that because of optics, Athletics do not have to make cuts, while they continue to come in over budget.
- The Chancellor commented that Athletics brings in \$600k to MSU Billings. However, everything is on the table right now, including Athletics.
- Furthering the topic, Dr. Shearer submitted that Athletics is a complex department. Students from the Athletics department pay for Dorms, and Meal Plans. They offer a high retention percentage. 40% of the COB consists of Athletics' students. They total 7% of enrollment. Dr. Shearer offered that while Faculty has one point of view, Athletics is a different situation. Dr. Shearer reiterated that Faculty needs to be educated.
- Drs. Honea and Bohlmann added that learning everyone has "skin" in the game is good.
- In closing, the timeline for Rank and Tenure Advancement Applications in lieu of AY Calendar changes, was called into question. Provost Arnold asked if anyone objected to leaving the dates the same. It was unanimously agreed by all that, the dates for Rank and Tenure Advancement Applicants will remain the same.
- The Provost added Brett Weisz is working on Digital Measures.

Meeting Adjourned: 3:40 PM

Next meeting: June 29th, 2-3:30 PM

