

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: February 24, 2005

PRESENT:	Alan Davis	Sandie Rietz
	Audrey ConnerRosberg	Mary Susan Fishbaugh
	Keith Edgerton	Randall Gloege
	Bruce Brumley	Noreen Lee
	Connie Landis	Matt Redinger
	Amanda Mears (student)	Emily Valenzuela (student)
	Tasneem Khaleel (ex-officio)	

ABSENT:	Mark Hardt – <i>excused</i>	Lorrie Steerey – <i>excused</i>
	Paul Bauer – <i>excused</i>	
	Carl Hanson (ex-officio)	Joe Michels (ex-officio)
	George White (ex-officio)	Randy Rhine (ex-officio)
	John Cech (ex-officio)	Janie Park (ex-officio)
	Terrie Iverson (ex-officio)	Curt Kochner (ex-officio)

GUEST: Trudy Collins

PRESIDING: Keith Edgerton, Chair

Keith Edgerton called the meeting to order at 3:45 p.m. in the Missouri room of the SUB.

The minutes of February 17 were accepted as presented.

I. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Further Budget Discussion – Janie Park and Trudy Collins

Dr. Park is at an NWCCU conference and unable to attend.

Enrollment Reserve

Ms. Collins noted that the Board of Regents require a reserve that is at least 2% of the total budget. Our administration has chosen to go above that percentage (see attachment

to these minutes). In the 1996-97 year, we were hit with an enrollment drop that left a gap of \$800,000, so the administration wants to keep at least \$1 million in the reserve.

The question was raised that if our past worst case was only an \$800,000 gap, why does the enrollment reserve keep growing bigger? We should use the money in the reserve so we don't have to cut academic programs.

It was noted that the reserve is not just used for enrollment drops, it is also for other contingencies like our recent need for more bandwidth.

Another question was raised about the \$200,000 for the Foundation's Capital Campaign: are we sacrificing faculty lines to fund the campaign? Perhaps we should keep that money and let the Foundation fund its own efforts. It was noted that the \$200,000 goes toward the administration of the Capital Campaign. The campaign is generating scholarships, which in turn bring more students to the University. Would it really help to cut that funding?

It was cited that the main goal of this University's administration seems to be to balance the budget. Our goal is supposed to be educating students. Perhaps we could engage in deficit spending.

Ms. Collins noted that the two things we can do for financing our debt would be (1) to ask Bozeman for more money, and this administration will not be obligated to Bozeman in that way, and (2) to borrow from next year's budget if we think we can recoup it.

The Senate thanked Ms. Collins for her valuable and understandable presentation.

Recommendations

Keith Edgerton asked the Senate what recommendations they would like to make to the Chancellor right now to help with budget cuts.

It was cited that we could use the enrollment reserve to balance things now while we have an inquiry about why our enrollment targets are always so unrealistically high. We could also continue to work on our retention habits—perhaps some training on customer interaction for those people who work with the students every day.

It was remarked that the administration seems to want the newly hired faculty to immediately generate more student FTE, which is not true. It can take a couple years before a new faculty member begins attracting more students to a program. With the same idea, if other programs like the Red Lodge Office and the Montana Business Incubator are not generating FTE, should they not be cut?

It was suggested that for right now, our enrollment reserve should be smaller. We could have a bigger reserve later, but in the short term is it worth it to cut a faculty line to keep a large reserve? We also need to decide, as a campus, how big we want to be.

It was noted that we are slated to hire two new recruiters. It should be suggested that those two positions not be filled.

Another suggestion was to use the enrollment reserve to give a rebate to students, not need-based or by discipline, just a discount if students come here. We could keep the enrollment reserve where it is now if we used half of it for this rebate.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

rjrm