The University of Rhode Island  
Strategic Budget and Planning Council  
March 27, 2012  
10:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Thomson Board Room, Ballentine Hall

Members in Attendance:
Chair Don DeHayes, Vice Chair Bob Weygand, Peter Alfonso, Abu Bakr, Faye Boudreaux Bartels, Winnie Brownell, Trish Casey, David Coates, Tom Dougan, Nancy Eaton, Cheryl Foster, Jeff Johnson, Ron Jordan, Patricia Morokoff, Stephanie Segal, Michael Smith, Linda Barrett, Ann Morrissey

Members Absent:
Bob Beagle, Thorr Bjorn, Steve D'Hondt, Ken Kermes, Scott Martin, Ray Wright

See the complete list of member information at the Strategic Budget and Planning Council website at http://www.uri.edu/budget/sbpc/Membership%201-11.pdf

Meeting Minutes
1. Meeting was called to order at 10:10 am.

Announcements
1. Stephanie Segal, incoming Student Senate President, was introduced to the Council by outgoing Student Senate President David Coates. He thanked Council for the past two years and for the opportunity and the learning experience. Chair DeHayes thanked David for his extraordinary work on the Council and as Student Senate President.

2. June SBPC meetings dates were announced - June 13th, 18th and 22nd. Exact times & locations TBD. Calendar will be updated, distributed & posted to the SBPC website.

3. This year’s applicant pool is the highest in URI history. UVM & UNH are down 10%. A larger applicant pool allows the institution to be more selective. Campus looks great. Financial aid/awards letters sent out. This is a competitive market. Decline in High School grads in RI. Deposits due May 1. Seeking ways to identify the at risk upper class students.

4. "Finish What You Started" program appears to be working. The University was able to encourage 32 (10%) of the students to return. Not all students left due to economics: some were discouraged by the job market; some took a semester off and never came back and were embarrassed to return, etc. In addition, some of the students who came back have already graduated.

Agenda items
1. Item # 2 on the agenda - Divisional Budget Presentation Process - Vice Chair Weygand raised concerns and questions. Vice Chair Weygand asked the Council to revisit the process for the upcoming Divisional Budget presentations to specifically address potential increased bureaucracy resulting from having teams review and present to the Council. He felt the University is in a path of decreasing state support & revenue from tuition and fees. SBPC is charged with finding best way to deal with finances, etc. When Bob reviewed the details of the budget review process, he felt the
bureaucracy in the review process had grown. He questioned if so many peer reviews were needed and if the council is adding too many layers and complicating things. He said this process seems less efficient and time consuming. The more bureaucracy of the Council, the less streamlined it becomes. Better ways to operate that would take up less time and still result in a quality decision.

a. Discussion:
- Will result in more review, which is needed
- Does not increase bureaucracy
- Different way of presenting
- Critical review of each division; adds more critical thinking
- Eliminate the advocate/presenter with a vested interest
- Follows the model of grant reviews - to select a group to more carefully read the proposals; the grant writing/peer review model works; very well tried process; will gain efficiencies in the long run
- Reviewers are not making a decision, they are presenting
- Neutral presentation not by an advocate
- Requests would be more thorough
- Needs to be a devil’s advocate in each presentation
- Wild variations in the documentation in the past proposals
- Level of specificity and trace documents do not have the same level of detail
- Some VPs did not submit a presentation at all last year
- Need to lessen the bias
- Provides consistency
- Forces VPs to focus on the clarity of the written record and not on oral presentation, which leads to inequities; Some decisions are being made based on the oral presentation (hence no trace) and some on the written

b. Vice Chair Weygand states that if a VP is not submitting or presenting properly, that can be remedied. Clearly, the council needs to have a fully well documented proposal from every VP. He doesn't think this process would remedy that.

c. Chair DeHayes reminded the council about being open & transparent. President Dooley has been clear about having transparency. It will take a few years to hone down the new system. Council was dissatisfied with the process last year and decided to create the subcommittee to recommend a new process. New process was recommended by subcommittee and discussed at three Council meetings, subsequently approved by Council.

d. The end result - SBPC will use the process as it stands (and was approved in October 2011). The Council will critique the process and correct the issue of inadequate VP presentations. Every member should review proposals thoroughly. Deferring it to other groups waters down responsibility. We need to be more effective & cost efficient. We need to focus on education. Council will review the process after this cycle

2. URIP - 38 employees took the program. A portion of URIP will go to reinvestment. The calculation is that there would be savings in year 1 after reinvestment of about $1.5M. 2nd yr would be add’l $1.5M. The University didn’t have an expectation as it was a voluntary program. There were 251
people eligible. In 2008, there was a flat $20K payout and 68 people took it (there was a health benefit change too). In 2008, it was strictly to balance budget & save $. This URIP was to make strategic reinvestments. There are not a lot of positions freed up with only 38 retirees. Most retirees were from Fund 100. Phased retirement is still in the works. Deadline for phased is April 2 - after that date there will be no phased option in future years.

a. There was an inquiry from the faculty wanting to know how the new and old basketball coaches are being funded. We are not increasing the budget for basketball. Athletics will be taxed with reallocation. They need to find the $ themselves and manage it themselves. There is no indication that the athletics budget will be increased. Thorr came to the Council about reallocation of the University’s Fund 100 fund balance. This is not affiliated with the coach. There was no policy for surplus at the time. That policy has been forwarded to the president.

b. In response to the idea that the University has a deficit from lack of retirees - this was an interpretation based on media assumptions and not fact based.

3. Physician Assistant Program

a. Chair DeHayes introduced the draft business plan for a new program – at this time seeking insights from the council – should we go further and take the next steps? Next step would be to develop academic courses. Why are we thinking of this? Health is a strategic area for the university and state; constituent groups around the state have vested interest in providing more healthcare professional opportunities; Hanover research provided market analysis and some cost analysis; what is the niche/opportunity and the challenge. This is a “what if?” proposal. There is a national need for these positions. The larger issue is the new “one tuition” model being proposed to allow for this program – a necessary program for any form of financial viability – as we would need operate as a private institution - with the unprecedented one tuition model. To meet accreditation standards the program would require 10.2 FTE investment; Lifespan has indicated, although not committed, to co-invest at about 15% of personnel costs; one time costs are fairly significant as are other non-personnel expenses; Clinical sites are an issue with medical programs; hospitals are enthused.

4. The Minutes from February 21, 2012 were approved as distributed with two members abstaining (David Coates & Cheryl Foster)

Next Meeting
April 27, 2012 10:00 am – 12:00 pm Thomson Boardroom