The University of Rhode Island  
Strategic Budget and Planning Council  
May 15, 2012  
9:00 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, Ray Wright, Nancy Eaton, Cheryl Foster, Patricia Morokoff, Linda Barrett, Ann Morrissey, Steve D’Hondt, Thorr Bjorn, Trish Casey, Tom Dougan, Ron Jordan

Members Absent:
Bob Beagle, Ken Kermes, Scott Martin, Michael Smith, Jeff Johnson, Stephanie Segal, Winnie Brownell

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. Chair called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

Agenda Items

1. April 24 minutes approved
2. Vice Chair Weygand proposed and Committee voted to amend March 27 minutes as follows "the current process of divisional budget presentations should be reviewed to specifically address potential increased bureaucracy resulting from having teams report to the entire committee." March 27 minutes approved.
3. SBPC Team Budget Presentation: Student Affairs Division
   i. Budget request for Student Affairs presented by: Nancy Eaton, Thorr Bjorn, Abu Bakr
   ii. Before the beginning of the presentation, Chair gave a quick overview of the Team Presentation Process as previously adopted by the Council:
      a. There are two parts of each team presentation, a factual outline of the entire request and a critique of the strengths and weaknesses of the specifics of the request
   iii. Nancy Eaton gave the factual overview of the entire request
   iv. Thorr Bjorn expanded upon the Recreational Services portion of the Division's request:
      a. The committee should consider funding the operating of the Fascitelli Wellness Center (FWC) because the facility plans to be largely student run.
      b. The facility will be available for faculty and staff use (Note: it was later added that while faculty and staff will have access to the facility, this access will come at a charge).
      c. Peer institutions are all building state of the art facilities, this investment in the FWC will help URI compete with these institutions.
   v. Abu Bakr presented the Disability Services portion of the request:
a. There is a discrepancy on the amount of money requested for the two DS coordinators.
b. Caseload for current staff is 350 individuals per counselor; the department would like it to be between 180-200.
c. While this is a Student Affairs request, it is a University issue. All divisions benefit from having more accommodations for the disabled individuals within the University community.
d. A fee for service model may be something the department should look at in the future, other institutions are already moving toward this.

vi. Chair asked Vice President Tom Dougan to comment.
   a. VP Dougan complimented the presenters for their work on behalf of the Division.
   b. VP Dougan pointed out that the waiting list for non-emergency counseling sessions was at three weeks during the previous semester. Limiting the number of times an individual can meet with a counselor cuts down on the waiting list but limits access to mental health care. This is a problem because there are limited mental health care resources surrounding the Kingston Campus.
   c. VP Dougan pointed out that the resources committed to Disability Services have the University in compliance with Civil Rights Laws, but this does not guarantee that the University will not face a lawsuit for inadequate service.

vii. Q&A
   a. The $1.3 million request is 32% of the current Student Affairs Fund 100 budget.
   b. $1 million of the request is for permanent expenditures, the remaining is for one-time-only expenditures.
   c. Board of Governors (BOG) mandated that the recreational fee be rolled into tuition. Fee raised roughly $1 million annually before being rolled into tuition. Once recreation fee was rolled into tuition, recreational services budget was funded by tuition. The funding came from tuition at that point.
   d. Cuts made to Recreational Services budget in the wake of the recreational fee being rolled into tuition may not have solely been due to the loss of the funding generated by the fee. There were many budget cuts going on during this period of time.
   e. There is a new BOG so the new board may have a new feeling on a University recreation fee. However, if a new fee is instituted, it will probably limit University ability to raise tuition in the future.
   f. The Bookstore donated $300,000 for the FWC four or five years ago and that is in a holding account and can still be used to purchase equipment. At last year’s presentation, Vice President Dougan mentioned that equipment could be funded from a possible surplus from construction funds.
   g. Chair mentioned opportunities in the fall for one-time-only $ from fund balance from institution funds.
h. Per Vice President Dougan, if FWC is not recommended for funding by SBPC, Student Affairs intends to make a request for funding from the Student Senate.
i. Much of what Disability Services provides is educational and ensures academic equity. Given this, a discussion ensued about whether some departmental expenses could be funded by the Division of Academic Affairs.
j. There is a segregated budget for funding the needs of disabled students as they arise throughout the fiscal year. This budget comes from the general fund.
k. Ron Jordan asks whether there has been a strategic decision or plan for the direction for career services regarding a centralized model versus a decentralized college based model? Career Services request is focused on improving senior year experience. Seniors will be prepared for life after college. Request also aims to improve career fairs by improving recruitment of employers.
l. Chair: Office of experiential learning is now adopting a model to link with each of the colleges. Rather than having the duplication of a career office in each college, a central Career Services Office is one which can work very well with the new experiential model. We need to ensure that we integrally link the two offices.
m. The graduate student requested by Career Services was mentioned but there was little explanation of the need for this position.
n. Trish Marokoff raised the concern about how to sustainably fund student services in the future? Are there other ways to meet student service needs beyond tuition and fees?
o. A suggestion was made that the University look at a fee for service model for the Counseling Center and possibly other services.
p. Chair raised the possible coordination between the staff psychologist requested by the College of Arts & Sciences, the psychologist at CCE and the two Counseling Center positions requested. Overlap between the functions of the psychologists were not readily identifiable.
q. Chair: The FWC is a prime example of why the total cost of a building (construction costs + future operating expenditures) needs to be communicated to the council prior to the approval of such construction. The SBPC adopted a policy about this topic a few months ago.

4. Communications: President Dooley

Choices facing the Council will not be easy, but they need to be faced differently than they ever have been in the past. The question needs to be: what are we going to do now, regardless of what we have done in the past? Our future depends on our ability to raise revenue. The question needs to be: will this help or hurt our fiscal standing? We need to plan for the probability that state funds will not solve our problems in the near future. The Council needs to focus on things which will make us competitive in higher education. Parents are interested in the job their son or daughter will be able to obtain
upon graduation. URI is becoming more and more dependent on out-of-state tuition and thus we need to compete on how we will help individuals get their first job upon graduation. Need to balance that with the public service responsibility of a land grant university. We need to embrace this challenge. I am not persuaded that we are as lean as we need to be. This goes to the Deans and Division Heads, we want to know if we can offer the same service with less people. We will redirect any money we can from administration to student services and academics. A formal review will begin this summer.

From a formal study conducted by the Budget & Financial Planning Office: Relative to filled administrative positions at grade 13 and above for all sources of funds, since 2007, four positions have been added. Not a terribly alarming trend. Now, given our total number, can we get by with less? We will study this further to help us determine an answer.

We will begin building robust scenario analysis and five year contingent plans which will be brought to the SBPC. We are still figuring out what the level of participation of SBPC will be in this endeavor. We do not want to be caught in a situation where the political climate dictates that URI needs to drastically cut funding and we have not prepared for what we will do. Detailed analysis of administration bloat will look at cost of the administrators, not just the number of administrators.

a. Chair: Final analysis could reveal a cost reduction in administration since 2007.
b. The President sees four areas where URI can improve revenue generation:
   1. Campus development. We have space in a highly desirable location which can be used for revenue generation.
   2. Collaboration with the global private sector to bring in revenue.
   3. URI tuition is still priced low in comparison with competition in terms of non-resident tuition. This is a highly competitive marketplace but there is still opportunity.
   4. Getting out from underneath state bureaucracy in some ways. Operating differently than we have in the past.
c. Vice-Chair adds that increasing retention rate can be another source of revenue if the retention rate on campus has not been maxed out. President comments that continuing to improve four year graduation rates will pay dividends for URI.
d. President: We need to look at what we regard as teaching. We need to look at what we are asking our students to learn.

5. SBPC Team Budget Presentation: President’s Division
   i. Presented by: Provost and Council Chair Don DeHayes, Faye Boudreaux-Bartels, Stephanie Segal (absent)
   ii. Factual Overview portion of presentation presented by Provost and Council Chair Don DeHayes
   iii. Critique of Request presented by Faye Boudreaux-Bartels
a. Over $100,000 spent last year on legal counsel hired from outside the University. This amount is consistent with prior fiscal years. The expenses are usually incurred when the University needs to seek the services of a specialist in a specific field of law. This annual expense will be difficult to avoid going forward. Requested position may not reduce URI external expenditures on outside legal services.

b. URI does have several lawyers on staff working in various positions, however, they are not centrally located.

c. When pressing legal issues arise, backlog of more day-to-day legal issues quickly mounts.

d. This request represents a 4.9% increase of President's Fund 100 budget.

e. A paralegal could take day-to-day work off of the University attorney's desk which can increase efficiency.

f. Director of Research Compliance, a vacant position which will be filled soon, could also take care of some of the backlog.

g. There are lawyers employed at various positions on campus in other positions who, with the proper authorization, could potentially be utilized to reduce the legal backlog.

h. It is pointed out that the URI attorney at times does work for RIC and CCRI. Brief discussion about the plausibility of these institutions paying a portion of his salary.

i. Brief discussion about whether the full amount of money requested by the President's Division to fill the requested position would actually be sufficient to fill the position with a qualified candidate.

Announcements

None.

Meeting adjourned.

Request for Information:

Minutes by: John Olerio