

Minutes
Senate Open Session
Friday, September 12, 2008

This open session is by request of President Friedman, who as of 2:30 p.m. is opening bids with Dr. Jackameit for the new science building. This session is to determine how the College will reduce its general fund budget by 5%, 10%, or 15%. It is a brainstorming session to gather ideas, i.e. what should be cut and what should not be cut. All groups are represented in this session, including students. Two representatives from SGA are in attendance.

Science Building

President Friedman stated that 12 firms submitted bids on the science building; all were very competitive. The administration hopes to sign contracts in the coming weeks.

Budget

The President's Staff wants everyone's input before determining which programs and services are cut. As of the open session, 26 people had completed the online survey. The Senate is to make recommendations to the President's Staff based upon the suggestions made during the open session. These recommendations will be weighed when the President's Staff compiles its plan for how the College will achieve the 5%, 10%, or 15% budget reductions.

Dr. Jackameit gave a presentation on the current State budget situation. Currently, the housing market is down, and unemployment is rising. Community colleges already have been cut by 5% in 2008 and 2009. Revised revenue forecasts are due in October. What we as a College are charged with is to present a contingent budget reduction plan to the governor. Our plan is due to the VCCS on September 22nd. The VCCS will submit a compiled report to the governor by September 26th. Our plan must include ways to reduce our general fund budget for both FY2009 and FY2010. One-time savings are allowable, but permanent reductions in the budget are required for the second year. Considering the current likelihood of a budget reduction, the VCCS might consider a tuition increase. The tuition increase may even occur mid-year.

It was noted that for meaningful budget cuts to occur we must consider personnel. Approximately 85% of the College's general fund budget is devoted to personnel. However, there are considerations beyond the bottom line such lay-off regulations (part-time employees are not subject to lay-off regulations).

President Friedman urged the attendees to consider to what extent the College would go to avoid laying off personnel. Each possible solution is trade off. For example, the College could reduce wage personnel by 50% or lay off 6 full timers. As a College, we must consider our values, i.e. what is important to us. We need to reduce the impact on students and instruction and not limit access. He and Pryor Hale both strongly urged the attendees to remember how cuts affect enrollment (both now and in the future). Enrollment drives the College's funding. The College cannot lose enrollment to other VCCS colleges, and thereby lose funding in the future. We need to consider how these reductions will affect us in the long term.

Several people, on the survey, suggested worthy items to cut, such as food, beverages, and energy consumption. President Friedman stressed that meaningful cuts also must be made. Also, the College cannot eliminate student activities because they are funded through student activities fees. Similarly, the equipment trust fund is not eligible. The general fund budget is from where the reductions will come.

For each proposed cut, the College must look at the cost and the benefit. Basically, the more money we cut from the budget, the greater the benefit (for this process). But what is the cost to the College? The costs include effects to the mission, value system, and potential enrollment of the College.

President Friedman then opened the floor to questions from the attendees. He stated that we're under a mandate from the governor to come up with a plan for these budget reductions. How the governor decides what percentage will be cut is unknown. However, each state agency is going through this exact process. We also discussed the impact that a particular reduction has. President Friedman stated that projecting impact is not exact, and we cannot know for certain what impact each of these proposed reductions will have. One person asked if there was a new policy on early retirement; there is none to date. Another asked if we have control over our raises. There was a discussion at the VCCS level over applying raises towards the 5% reduction plan. President Friedman questioned whether it was legal to do so, partly because we are not unionized. How do we as a College decide whether or not to forgo a raise? Does 51% majority overrule? These are unanswered questions. There was no decision made at the VCCS level. If we raised tuition by \$5.00, how much revenue does that generate over the course of one academic year? \$350,000. In 2002, we increased our tuition by approximately 50%, from around \$40.00 to about \$60.00. How did this affect enrollment in 2002? The college experienced a 1% to 2% increase in enrollment in the mid-2000s until recently. Now, we're seeing a 5% to 6% increase; however, economics plays a large part in enrollment numbers. Can the governor issue a raise freeze? It's unlikely, especially now. He probably would have done so already.

When considering what to cut, the President's Staff will consider multiple layers. They will look at enrollment by discipline and within majors in a program. The other side of the equation is the personnel used to run each program/discipline. Also, are adjuncts used or are full-time employees? In addition, the impact on the mission and goals of the college will be considered as well as the effect a reduction will have on our accreditation. For example, we could easily cut the math department (because of low enrollment and the use of full-time faculty), but it would negatively affect the college, i.e. students would not be able to graduate, we would not be accredited, etc.

Suggestions

The following suggestions for cuts to the general fund budget were made:

- Cut all programs equally
- Cut travel, professional development, and educational assistance
- Limit the use of the state car and van
- Conduct a formal evaluation of services so that services can be centralized and redundancies eliminated
- Target our marketing efforts; focus on e-marketing
- Eliminate printed schedules (including Workforce Services)
- Offer retirement incentives to those close to retirement (do we lose the positions?); bring in adjuncts as replacements
- Reduce/cut pay for adjuncts
- Outsource some functions of the College
- Reduce energy consumption
- Eliminate Friday classes
- Lower hourly wage rates – especially for student workers (set them equal to work study rates)
- Buy our own office supplies
- Turn off lights and computers, close doors to classrooms and offices
- Allow for summer hours year round so that building can be closed (saves energy)
- Evaluate which programs have low enrollment and high personnel costs. Take into account the investment of the College, the needs of the community and businesses, and essential programs.

- Re-negotiate dual enrollment contracts so that we are able to keep some of the revenue.
- Limit auditing or pass the cost of auditing a class along to students (except for senior citizens who by law may audit a class without paying).

Senate Recommendations

Given the suggestions made at the open session, the Senate also suggests the following:

- In achieving the budget reductions, limit the affect on student enrollment.
- Limit excessive tuition increases. The student representatives fear that students will not be able to afford excessive hikes in tuition costs.
- Give incentives to faculty/staff who are nearing retirement, e.g. add two years of credit time to their retirement.
- Lower energy consumption
- Have all eligible faculty (administrative, professional, teaching, etc.) teach a course.
- Do not pay adjuncts for orientations, dinners, etc, i.e. during planning week. This should be a part of their normal salary and contract.
- *Do not* cut/reduce adjunct salaries.
- Evaluate marketing expenditures, i.e. the amount spent on branding, the use of color printing, personnel, etc. Make our marketing efforts targeted. Use more e-marketing. Eliminate printed schedules.
- Utilize service learning and the valuable resources here at PVCC for in-house needs. For example, the performance arts department and IT used students to help code the performance arts website. This model could be used throughout the College instead of using professional/paid services.
- Stop printing the student handbook, catalog, etc. These resources are available online. Only print a few copies if necessary.

Adjournment. Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Submitted by Crystal Newell