

Minutes of the Senate Budget Policies Committee
Friday, March 19, 2021
2:00-4:00 p.m. via Zoom

Members in Attendance: Tyler Bickford (Chair), Panos Chrysanthis, Yolanda Covington Ward, Gary Hollibaugh, Mackey Friedman, Melanie Scott, Juan Taboas, Adriana Maguiña-Ugarte, Brian Smith, Alex Sunderman (GPSG), JC Lee (Secretary), Emily Murphy, Frank Wilson, Vice Provost John Wallace, Lorie Johnson-Osho, Amanda Brodish, Richard Henderson, Thurman Wingrove, Stephen Wisniewski, Irene Frieze, Susan Jones

Absent: Immaculada Hernandez, John Mendeloff, Jennifer Jones, Chris Bonneau, John Baker, Lorraine Denman, Beverly Gaddy, Ben King (SGB), Wesley Rohrer, Phil Wion, Dave DeJong

Call to Order at 2:04p.m.

1. February Minutes: Approved

2. Matters Arising

JT: Asks about Pitt IT replacing all desktops with laptops, and wonders if this has undergone a cost-benefit analysis.

SW: Doesn't recall this in the Computing and Information Technology meetings but will check into it.

TB: Is this a university wide initiative or just in the dental school? Asks Steve Wisniewski to check into this.

YCW: Did we resolve the critique/questions about the new budget model?

TB: Chair's report (which includes conversations with colleagues at other schools) will address this. We'll also revisit the issue next meeting.

MF: Perhaps along with the Attribution Study (next meeting).

TB: Yes, though the Attribution Study hasn't been rescheduled yet.

TW: The Attribution Study likely will not be ready next month—we're still working on it.

3. Faculty Hiring Initiatives: John Wallace, Vice Provost for Faculty Diversity and Development, and Lorie Johnson-Osho, Director of Faculty Diversity and Development (Slideshow, ["Faculty Hiring Initiatives"](#) available on Box)

JW: On Sept. 19, 2019 received an email containing an article that named Pittsburgh the worst city to live in because of inequality across gender and race, which led him to a report showing that Pittsburgh performs worst in rates of maternal mortality and ranks #4 in poverty for black children and women.

Equity Report Summary: Just by moving, a black resident of Pittsburgh would do better in many ways.

Pitt lags its peers in % of Black Faculty (2018-7): Majority of units have 0 Black faculty. 3.1% of Pitt's 4, 810 full-time faculty were Black in 2019.

LJO: IChange Network

Pipeline Problem, Hiring Problem, Retention Problem. A cohort of 19 universities is undergoing a three-year effort to increase recruitment, hiring, and retention; to increase the ability of faculty to mentor a diverse student population.

Year 1: Self-Assessment – where we are now

Year 2: Action Planning

Year 3: Implementation

JW: Notes that Steve Wisniewski and Amanda Brodish provided data for the analysis. Retention has to be thought of as a priority, which is why currently we're focusing on faculty already here, on ways to help them feel elevated and celebrated.

Race & Social Cluster Hire Initiative

"Cluster of clusters"; The Pittsburgh Promise, which allows kids to attend any Pennsylvania school is out of reach for many kids because of attendance: many kids in the community have asthma—because of mold in houses, or mice, roaches, because there is smoking in the house, or violence or gunshots cause them to have asthma attacks and miss school; and these kids don't have a second inhaler as many more privileged kids do. Pitt is creating interdisciplinary teams of scholars to focus on these interrelated issues in the city. (U54 Grant Initiative)

We know that when undergraduate Black students study with Black faculty, they are more likely to graduate on time and to go on to graduate school.

MS: If an NIH grant doesn't come through, will the university support these initiatives?

JW: \$16 million is committed to move this initiative forward.

MF: Are there thoughts around compensation as it relates to effective recruitment and retention? We have trouble with this because of our low rank in compensation. How much thought has been given to escalating compensation for junior faculty across the board? We'll have a hard time being competitive—is this part of the conversation?

JW: No, not explicitly. Notes that Pitt has 8-month contracts—looking at it personally, he can raise half his salary over the summer, and does; the return on retirement is 20% of salary; and Pitt gives substantial tuition benefits. When thinking about compensation, we should take all of this into account, not just salary. Would be interested in looking at salary benchmarking data.

MF: At Assistant Professor, we generally rank at the bottom third compared to our AAU counterparts. \$90 K as opposed to \$135 K yearly.

JW: Notes that his family has seven Pitt degrees.

JT: Not every school does 8/9-month salaries; faculty recruitment packages vary dramatically across the university. How will we balance start-up packages across schools?

SW: There will be a pool allocated, and the Office of the Provost will work with the dean of a particular school to negotiate start up packages.

JT: Could the deans use this money for retention?

SW: This is just for hiring; there are other pools of money for retention.

MS: Where is the money coming from for hiring in the School of Medicine?

SW: Research faculty in SOM are supported by Pitt Health Sciences.

TB: Asks if benchmarking is on the dashboard, or just in this report. Who is the peer group?

AB: AAUP

TB: Why is Bradford doing so well?

JW: Bradford faculty is low; students 40% are Pell-eligible; also, location: Pitt Bradford draws students from NY (Buffalo) and the Philly area. A small environment, with strong support for Pell-eligible students. Here in Homewood, and in other city schools, students who might not get into Pitt's main campus might go to Bradford. Kids don't get lost and have an opportunity to do many things across campus, activities, etc., as they would at a small high school.

TB: Do they recruit from high schools in Pittsburgh?

JW: Yes.

SW: Historically, they've done well recruiting under-represented students. Livingston Alexander built this infrastructure.

JW: When the senior leader is Black, that matters.

TB: Retention has been challenging in the Dietrich School; in English, we have successfully recruited junior faculty of color, but have not been particularly successful retaining or promoting them. A critical issue: the fact that outside offers need to be sought to get a raise; we have trouble matching those outside offers, and this communicates that “We’re not invested, not working all that hard to keep you.”

JW: The other piece is that our departments are not particularly hospitable to black faculty, they are not particularly healthy, welcoming, supportive environments. If we made people feel welcome and recognized they wouldn’t go searching. Feeling satisfied in their jobs is key: a both/and. Ensuring that people have competitive salaries is important, yes, but we can curtail the shopping by making faculty of color feel welcome and recognized here.

PC: For us, it’s not salary or benefits that are tough, but the two-body problem: spousal hires.

JW: There is a policy. The challenge is moving quickly to work out salary issues for the spouse, making deans aware of the policy so that departments are able to move quickly.

PC: The problem is that new lines aren’t opened, and so we have to sacrifice an existing line. This gets in the way—it’s worth reflecting on.

JW: This presents a budget concern, especially when making a life-long commitment to TS faculty.

TB: The additional service burden is also problematic. Are there resources for releasing junior faculty from some of this?

JW: There are some resources, though we may need to look for additional funding.

TB: Thanks John Wallace and Lorie Johnson-Osho

4. Chair’s Report: Tyler Bickford

TB: Last month at the Faculty Affairs meeting, Vice Provost Wallace gave a presentation on the “transition moment” and late August paychecks creating challenges for faculty. Vice Provost Lu-in Wang raised the possibility that part-time faculty and graduate students would receive an advance on their September checks. Tyler suggested adjusting the pay calendar rather than trying to solve the problem with a one-time band-aid action. The Provost’s office said it is willing to look into updating this.

AMU: Says she took such an advance as a grad student and that this was helpful. Perhaps taking money from paychecks through December to get a full month’s advance in August, noting that it’s costly to relocate as she did.

TB: Recalls difficulty securing a mortgage loan.

PC: Notes there are often immigration problems.

TB: Two subcommittees have been formed:

1. Outlier: Tyler Bickford, Emily Murphy, Beverly Gaddy, and Benjamin King. Calls are scheduled; they've had one so far.
2. PBCs: Dietrich school is scheduled; Engineering is more challenging, as there are questions about how their committees are running.

Budget Re-Start process: TB has met with budget committee chairs at several public AAUs with decentralized budgeting, including University of Indiana, Rutgers, University of Arizona, and others. Asks the committee to look again at the list of universities with decentralized budgets and reach out to colleagues we know to ask for information about how this model is working. TB will compile notes from these conversations and share them before our next meeting.

Two themes stand out: 1. If schools are bringing in revenue via tuition and indirects, and this is being "taxed," the RCM model is designed to incentivize schools to make decisions informed by budget; 2. Strong shared governance within the units is important; faculty in units need to be fully involved in the process. The central tax system is in part a strategic investment fund—the provost and chancellor distribute a portion of this—but faculty committees in some places have a say in how this money is spent. This suggests we need to be looking at, and making more robust, shared governance mechanisms.

MS: Expresses concern about deans and department chairs and their "fiefdoms."

TB: If we devolve more of this to units, oversight becomes more of an issue, so how we as a committee oversee this process, as we are charged, is perhaps a question.

SW: (Follows up on Juan Taboas's question about desktops being replaced with laptops.) Not a policy, just offering it to people. "Opt-in for faculty."

FW: At Greensburg, it's a three-year rotating program, faculty choosing the device they want.

5. [Mean and Median Salaries of Full-Time Employees FY 2020](#): Amanda Brodish (Report available on Box)

AB: Methodology of Report: produced annually and modified from a report required to be shared with state in December, thus the lagged data. This report is data from fall of 2019, pre-Covid.

Faculty reflect 9-month equivalents and are bucketed by rank; School of Medicine reflects only Pitt salary. Staff reflect 12-month equivalents for 1. Executives/Administrators; 2. Other Professionals; 3 Secretarial/Clerical; 4. Technical/Skilled/Service. Cells with 3 or fewer faculty are repressed; all subtotals are net of excluded faculty.

AMU: Notes wide range of salaries in the “Other Professionals” category. Hard to understand where you stand in a particular job category.

AB: Acknowledges this is a large bucket. Will look into what percentage of staff fall into this category and follow-up.

AMU: Looking at Appendix and notes that there are many job classifications, with much variation in pay grade. Can some of this information be collapsed to make it easier to read?

TB: Asks if the new system will make this more legible?

AMU: Could there be a report that presents this data by job classification? Is this possible?

SW/AB: It wouldn't work to break down by responsibility center—too few people. We'd lose data.

TB: Asks if he and Adriana Maguiña-Ugarte could work together on this, to help refine the report.

SW: Suggests that rather than revising this report, they work with HR to report data on the new classification system.

AMU: Says she's not opposed to this, if in fact the new classification system will be in place within the next year as promised.

TB: Clarification: only the School of Medicine has UPP (University of Pittsburgh Physicians) dual employees.

Meeting adjourned: 3:42p.m.

