

Minutes of the Senate Budget Policies Committee
Wednesday May 5, 2021
2:00-4:00 p.m. via Zoom

Members in Attendance: Tyler Bickford (Chair), Panos Chrysanthis, Yolanda Covington Ward, Mackey Friedman, Beverly Gaddy, Gary Hollibaugh, John Mendeloff, Melanie Scott, Juan Taboas, Adriana Maguiña-Ugarte, Gong Tang, Alex Sunderman (GPSG), Jennifer Jones (UPPDA), JC Lee (Secretary), Emily Murphy, Frank Wilson, Amanda Brodish, Richard Henderson, Thurman Wingrove, Stephen Wisniewski, Susan Jones

Absent: Immaculada Hernandez, Wesley Rohrer, Brian Smith, Ben King (SGB), Chris Bonneau, John Baker, Phil Wion, Dave DeJong

1. April Minutes: Approved

2. Matters Arising:

TB: Any updates on the salary increase policy?

SW: Will circle back on this.

TB: Concerning explicit written criteria for merit increases: SPBC has agreed to work with the administration on this.

BG: Keep in mind looking again at the appeals process.

TB: Yes, looking at the language, to tighten it, as well as get more insight into the appeals process itself.

Concerning an update on the subcommittee looking at Outlier: a draft is ready and being fact checked currently.

3. Committee business: Election of officers for 2021-22

BG: Asks about a vice-chair position.

TB: there isn't one in the by-laws, though there has been a co-chair in the past; suggest we take this up in the fall.

PC: A good way to train a successor.

BG: And to have someone to fill in.

TB: Voice vote for JC as secretary: no objections.

TB: Voice vote for Tyler Bickford as chair: no objections.

Tyler Bickford re-elected as Chair; JC Lee re-elected as secretary.

4. Fall 2021 Recruitment Update and FY22 UPBC budget recommendations update – Steve Wisniewski

SW: Deadline for freshman deposits were lagging until about two weeks ago; some other institutions pushed their deadlines back. There were a record number of applications, and we went test optional – 40-50% of students chose this route. As of 6p.m. May 1, 5150 deposits compared to the prior year's 4560. Our goal was 4315 incoming students for 2021-22. We usually have a melt of 6%; last year it was 12%; this year we expect around 12% again. Even with that melt, we'll exceed our target with a bigger freshman class than anticipated.

Our non-resident group is up to 44% of overall deposits (goal is 50%); international students are up to %5; under-represented/minority numbers are up overall but not percentage wise; there is an increase in Pell recipients.

PC: Asks if the acceptance rate by region changed.

SW: Early on, it hadn't.

PC: Notes the bias of SATs/ACTs.

YCW: If numbers are up, are there contingency plans to deal with housing, given we may still have a pandemic to deal with?

SW: The person who oversees residence halls isn't concerned.

Regionals always lag behind: Johnstown is up a little compared to last year; Greensburg and Bradford are a little down. Retention Numbers: We're looking at 92%.

TB: Is this usual in the fall?

SW: 93-94% retention is usual. Everything is delayed right now, so we're not worried about this.

BG: Given that the first-year test optional, do we have indication that this affects the quality of the freshmen class?

SW: No. They are all good Pitt students.

BG: Notes that her child is one of these students.

SW: Recalls the "Provosts Academy," which was geared toward first generation students and in particular, getting students acclimated to university life—this seemed to work well. Last year,

there was a remote version that didn't work as well, but Pitt is looking to continue with this sort of thing over the summer.

Says he will have grad data in the fall.

TB: Asks for an update on salary increases.

SW: The Parameters Committee makes recommendations to UBPC; in prior years, there was a way of "tiering" salary increases, and there's been much discussion about how to do this; perhaps money allocated rather than percentages.

TB: Asks Steve Wisniewski if he can share those recommendations with the committee (SPBC).

SW: Says he will look into this.

5. Chair introduces three newly elected member: Emily Murphy, long standing member who is pro-tem this year; JC Lee; and Gong Tang from school of Public Health

6. PBS Oversight: Resolution on strengthening shared governance as part of the University of Pittsburgh's budget model revision (See Appendix)

TB: Puts resolution in the chat.

BG: Notes language in #4— "should." Asks about more robust language to make sure these things happen; notes that the PBS document has been around for 3 or 4 decades, yet now we're saying "procedures "should be developed."

SW: This was updated about 4 years ago.

FW: Yes.

BG: It's clear this isn't being followed.

GT: Elected membership is a problem in many departments; there's no oversight at the school level, and many members are appointed by department chair.

TB: Agrees. This is one of several principles to strengthen in the PBCs. Gives overview of the Resolution: Preamble describes policies and priorities and is followed by three resolutions: transparency and participation; existing committees should be utilized rather than creating new committees; PBS system must have a structured strengthening of shared governance. This will also be complex, requiring much negotiation. PBCs should be involved in budgeting, not just in planning. Creating new structures is the failsafe—PBC members meeting with one another to share notes, etc.,

JT: Biggest marker of success in RCM model is when there is faculty and staff investment. Say this explicitly. Regarding 2nd resolution, using existing committees: we'll have to fix these committees, they're not working. We need to tell administration what we'd like the outcomes to be, and listen to what they say, etc., Get a back and forth going; suggests we consider separating resolutions from proposal.

AM: Staff Council has also presented a resolution, without a proposal at the end, that is focused on shared governance, noting they have been left out of the decision-making process. Asks about extending the stakeholders input period.

PC: Concerning the formation of unit PBCs, says we might need to give guidelines to standardize be explicit that all ranks, including AS, be involved; likewise, the diversity of committee members needs to be addressed. Perhaps if presented in a more explicit fashion, we can standardize this.

BG: 6-7 years ago there was a polling evaluation to see how well PBCs were following the guidelines--she recalls compliance wasn't great. Faculty concern is that there's much room for units not to comply and doesn't know this document helps this—we need more centralized compliance.

TB: Yes. If members of PBCs meet with one another and with the Faculty Senate. In this proposal, members are majority elected.

This is precisely the issue. We send surveys that aren't fine grained enough to tell us much, and there's no process for sending concerns up the ladder. This year, meeting with PBCs individually has been a start to address this; the goal is to use existing pathways (i.e., the University Senate) to send concerns up the chain. It's unclear how to enforce the guidelines, and so is the goal is to shift the culture.

BG: Recalls that many people didn't even know they were on these committees and weren't aware of these documents.

SW: Suggests looking at more recent surveys.

TB: The proposal is just that—a start.

AM: Note that we're talking mostly about the resolution; the proposal could be discussed later. The resolution clarifies the way staff and faculty want to be part of the decision-making process.

TB: Returns to the Three Resolutions: what if we added one additional resolution – “Resolved, a process be created as soon as possible to involve faculty assembly, staff council, and other relevant committees.”

JT: Asks about addressing some of the committee difficulties in #3.

TB: Notes that this happens in the preamble.

We can say they need to slow down, but they likely won't; nevertheless we can get them to sit down with us as they forge forward.

Chair calls for a vote to adopt the proposal: Yes votes: 8; No votes: 0

TB: At next faculty assembly, will talk about next steps. Asks Adriana Maguiña-Ugarte if staff Council will be ready to share the resolution on Wednesday.

AM: It's already in the *University Times*.

TB: Asks to touch base with Steve Wisniewski about bringing the resolution to the Faculty Assembly and continuing to work with the administration on shared governance.

SW: The plan is to redo the PBS Document—there's no problem doing this.

TB: Great. This may be the first we've heard of this; perhaps the RCM is an opportunity to re-enliven these structures.

PC: Suggests we schedule a meeting during the summer, rather than waiting until September.

TB: Good idea; asks Steve if we can hear in mid-June from the Steering Committee, to see if we might participate.

SW: Notes that Gary Hollibaugh and Chris Bonneau are our representation on the Steering Committee, so we should rely on them for information.

GH: Agrees to this.

AM: Staff council is not represented on the Steering Committee.

TB: We've passed the resolution and will bring to the Faculty Assembly.

3: 22 p.m. meeting adjourned

Appendix: Resolution on Strengthening Shared Governance

Passed by the Senate Budget Policies Committee on May 5, 2021

Passed by Faculty Assembly on May 12, 2021

Passed by Senate Council on May 20, 2021

Whereas, the University of Pittsburgh is in the process of transitioning to a Responsibility Center Management (RCM) or decentralized budget model,

Whereas, the Senate Budget Policies Committee consulted with faculty budget committee chairs and others in similar roles at ten public AAU institutions that have adopted RCM budget models,

Whereas, we find that robust shared governance is the most significant factor in the success of RCM budget models at peer institutions,

Whereas, RCM budget models create cost centers that are not subject to the same revenue and cost incentives as the RCM units, which can create internal monopolies and undermine trust in the budget model,

Whereas, RCM budget models devolve decision making to the units, increasing the importance of unit-level governance,

Whereas, Pitt's [Planning and Budgeting System](#) (PBS) provides for collegial and representative structures for planning and budgeting at the school and university levels,

Whereas, the PBS requires that every unit has a Planning and Budgeting Committee (PBC) that is composed of a majority of elected members who participate in unit-level planning and budgeting (1.3.1),

Whereas the PBS does not clearly require that PBCs include staff and students in addition to faculty in their membership,

Whereas, recent surveys of unit-level PBC members raise concerns that not all PBCs are majority elected and that members are not always fully informed of their role in the larger University Planning and Budgeting System or fully included in budgeting activities,

Whereas, unit-level PBC members do not interact with PBC members in other units, with the University Senate, or with the UPBC, and there are no structures in place for PBC members to share best practices or to have concerns addressed beyond their unit,

Whereas, the PBS provides for the University Planning and Budgeting Committee (UPBC), which includes top administrators, deans, regional campus presidents, and representatives of faculty, staff, and students,

Whereas, the PBS encourages the UPBC to "consult with all members of the University community" (1.3.2) and to "solicit written comments and hold open meetings" (1.4), but in practice it has not undertaken such activities in recent years,

Whereas, creating new committees to manage the RCM budget model risks duplicating effort, diluting representation of faculty, staff, and student participants, and undermining clear lines of responsibility,

therefore be it

Resolved, that a revised budget model must prioritize transparency and robust participation throughout the budgeting process, especially with regard to cost centers and strategic investment funds, and

Resolved, that a revised budget model should make use of existing committees, including standing Senate committees, the UPBC, unit PBCs, and other established collegial structures for budget governance, rather than creating new organs for budget model governance, and

Resolved, that as part of the budget model reform process, and prior to the implementation of a new budget model, the Planning and Budgeting System should be reformed to strengthen shared governance and representation of all constituencies in unit-level planning and budgeting and to support connections across Planning and Budgeting Committees and between PBCs and the University Senate, and

Resolved, that a process be established as soon as possible to include Faculty Assembly, Staff Council, the Senate Budget Policies Committee, and other relevant groups, to develop mechanisms to address these priorities.