Budget Council Minutes  
March 23, 2021  
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.  
WebEx

Members:  
Terry Leist  Robert Mokwa  Chris Kearns  Michael Trotter  
Kim Obbink  Mark Ranalli  Bradford Watson  Jason Carter  
Chris Fastnow  Craig Woolard  Tia Brown  Matt Bissett  
Conner McCollum

Guests:  

Absentees: Matt Bissett, Bob Mokwa, Mark Ranalli, Kim Obbink, Conner McCollum

I. Call to Order  
The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Leist.

II. Approval of Minutes  
The February 23, 2021 meeting minutes were unanimously approved

III. Assessment Presentations  
a. Sophomore Surge – Dr. Chris Kearns, Vice President for Student Success
   1. History
      • Challenged by President Cruzado to come up with a low cost, highly effective program that would cause no disruption/turmoil  
      • Addresses two strategic planning goals: retention and graduation  
      • Fastnow, Haskins, and Swinford all worked on this  
      • Originally targeted students with 50/50 risk of dropping out, then expanded to all freshmen
   2. Current Status
      • Back to targeting 50/50 students  
      • Expanded to include Strategic Goal 1.3 (e-portfolios tied to academic experience in classrooms)
   3. Assessment measures
      • Program began in 2017; retention up 6%  
      • Second year (2018) – retention up 9%  
      • Third year (FY19) – didn't pay mentors, about 25% of freshman participated  
      • FY20 – mentor stipend was $500 each ($133,815 budget), expanded target audience, 50% freshman participation, retention up 3%  
      • FY21 – awarded half of what was requested, moved target back to 50/50 students
   4. Lessons Learned
      • After trying several models, most impactful mentors are those associated with academic curricula  
      • Co-curricular activities make students better learners  
      • 6-point increase in retention will go away without this funding
   5. Discussion
      • Construction jobs pay well – tailored support is key to keeping students enrolled – CLS course taught citizenship and helped students see their path at MSU
• Retention is important and cost-effective – very expensive to recruit, less expensive to incentivize to remain enrolled
• Why did the program return to 50/50 students rather than remaining open to all freshmen? Want to control variability, because adding a new dimension to the program with the portfolios (curricular and co-curricular)
• 50/50 students aren’t weaker, just have hurdles that make returning questionable

b. MSU Debut – Marianne Brough (Director for Office of Student Engagement), Molly Lammers (Assistant Director for Office of Student Engagement), Chris Pruden (Advisor for Office of Student Engagement)
   1. History
      • Bobcat signature experience, 6 weeks of activities, equips students for successful transition to MSU, focuses on co-curricular events
      • Goals: sense of community, belonging, preparedness and involvement
      • Began in 2015 as a pilot project; requested OTO funding in 2017 and every year since
      • In non-COVID years, 35 events with 26,000 participants
      • FY17, FY18, FY19 - $22,000 OTO each year
      • FY20 - $34,329 OTO
      • ASMSU adds another $22,216 toward MSU Debut
      • $15,000 from student fees goes toward M photo
   2. Current Status
      • 2020 COVID adjustments – 55 events with 2,700 participants (more small events)
      • Virtual events are labor intensive, attendance has been at maximum capacity for small events
      • Socially distanced line dancing on new turf field
      • Challenging to keep contract staff due to hiring moratorium
      • Innovative events: Battle of the Bands, digital photo mosaic, Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) open houses, BIPOC meet ‘n greet, LBGTQ meet ‘n greet, Outdoor Rec helped with climbing clinics, ice skating clinics, cross country ski track, etc.
      • Fall planning – events will be at 50% capacity, want to maintain D&I focus, want to maintain small group opportunities (like hikes), event timing will be flexible because the move-in period will be staggered this fall
   3. Assessment measures
      • No surveys last year but data from previous years
      • High satisfaction rate – community loves Catapalooza
   4. Lessons Learned
      • Learned about engagement
      • Both students and parents value MSU Debut programming
      • Events can be scalable
      • Engagement contributes to student success and retention
      • D&I focus was valuable
      • Large-scale traditional events attract significant engagement (like M photo)
      • Meaningful collaborations across campus, especially Rec Sports

IV. University Information/Announcements
   a. BOR - All items approved at recent meeting

V. Public Comment / Member Feedback
   None

VI. Action Items
a. Vote – Hilleman Scholars
   1. Woolard motioned to approve $350,000 OTO and $356,043 base funding, Trotter seconded
   2. Unanimously approved – 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

b. Vote – 1893 Scholars
   1. Fastnow motioned to continue $50,000 OTO each year, Kearns seconded
   2. Unanimously approved – 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

c. Vote – Return2Learn
   1. Fastnow motioned to continue $100,000 OTO funding, Trotter seconded
   2. Unanimously approved – 10 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstentions

VII. Informational Items
a. President’s Strategic Funding Processes – Megan Lasso
   • Decisions typically based on enrollment, so tougher to make decisions this year
   • Will be conservative
   • Legislative session pushed back to May so won’t know state appropriations until later
b. MSU Budgeting Process – Megan Lasso
   • Budgets are more than numbers; they are plans – it is important to make them meaningful
   • Budget cycle was presented – Megan will send this slide out to council members

Meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.  Next Meeting: April 27, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. via WebEx