

Budget Council Minutes
November 24, 2020
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
WebEx

In Attendance:

Terry Leist	Chris Kearns	Michael Trotter
Kim Obbink	Mark Ranalli	Bradford Watson
Chris Fastnow	Craig Woolard	Tia Brown

Guests:

David Singel (Provost Office), Leon Costello (Athletics), Thijs Goossens (Athletics), Megan Lasso (Budget Office), Mackenzie Seeley (Budget Office), Brittany Thompson (Budget Office), Leslie Schroeder (meeting minutes)

Absentees: Bob Mokwa, Jason Carter, Matt Bissett

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Leist.

II. Approval of Minutes

The October 27, 2020 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

III. University Information/Announcements

- a. November BOR meeting update
 1. Lease extension and expansion for MSU research space was approved
 2. Brick Breeden Fieldhouse roof repair project was approved
- b. Grad Student Conner McCollum will be joining Budget council

IV. Assessment Presentations

a. Athletics Student Support – Leon Costello, Director of Athletics

1. History
 - Critical areas of need were identified to support student athletes, as outlined in the Athletics Strategic Plan and keeping in line with other Division One schools
 - Initial base funding request of \$160k
 - Three position descriptions created: additional Strength & Conditioning Coach (\$50k), Athletics Learning Strategist / Academic Coordinator (\$40k), and Director of Student Athlete Wellness (\$70k - serves as counselor and coach)
2. Current Status
 - Used funds for all positions
 - With 3 assistants and 350 student athletes, ratio was 1 assistant per 116 athletes. Now, with the three additional staff, ratio has dropped to 1 assistant per 58 athletes. This has allowed students to focus more on competition, because their academic and personal advising needs are being met.
 - Learning Strategist works with 25% of most at risk athletes
 - Wellness Director has been bombarded during COVID
 - Strategic planning works, but takes time – plan started in 2016/2017 and now seeing fruit
3. Assessment Measures
 - Success in the classroom: Last spring's 3.52 cumulative GPA for MSU athletes was the highest in MSU history
 - Success in the Big Sky Conference: first All American in cross-country, women's basketball had best conference record at 19 - 1, football team made it to semi-finals – first time in 35 years

- Improved morale among staff, coaches and students
4. Lessons Learned
 - Ask for help sooner!
 - These positions are necessary; students expect them now. If funding goes away, Athletics will have to figure out a way to come up with the money.
 5. Discussion
 - Will need an additional athletic trainer once Bobcat Athletic Complex is open
 - Wellness Center will take pressure off the training facilities – student athletes will use it
 - Athletics benchmarks against other universities constantly, especially North Dakota State, James Madison, South Dakota State, and Northern Iowa. MSU is on par with peers regarding number of Strength & Conditioning coaches, but our Wellness Coach puts MSU ahead of the curve. Big10 and SEC teams have one, but no other FCS team does (including the Griz).
 - Wellness Coach - great tool to say to parents that we can take care of their sons and daughters while they are with us
 - Additional academic support in Athletics has lightened the load for general academic advisors

b. Academic Analytics – Chris Fastnow, VP for Planning & Analysis, and David Singel, Sr. Vice Provost

1. History
 - Requested \$80k base funding for FY20 plus additional \$25k this year (FY21 request is \$110k) for subscription to *Academic Analytics* (academic database – faculty success tool)
 - Only academic analytics database of its kind, because it breaks down data at the unit level to allow for apples-to-apples comparisons
 - Proposal had 3 assessments in mind: use for Strategic Plan metrics, use tools to move the metrics, and identify usage (how many and who)
2. Current Status
 - Not able to effect positive change yet – takes time – want to see increase in scholarly productivity and scholarly reputation (reputation is looking pretty good right now)
 - 6-month data lag
 - 530 log-ons and hundreds of hours from 75 credentialed users – main users are Office of Academic Affairs, Center for Faculty Excellence, VPREDGE, and Planning & Analysis
3. Assessment Measures
 - Database allows us to drill down within metrics to look at individual institutions and even individual faculty so gives granularity about opportunities for growth and improvement
 - MSU incorporated these metrics into department dashboards which feeds department reviews and allows department heads to see where they sit within their ecosystems in higher ed
 - Systematic third-party data, gathered and analyzed the same way for every institution (rather than self-reported data) – eliminates arguing about the data and allows focus on improvement
 - Crucial point – faculty success is institutional success is student success
 - MSU needs to maintain our competitive posture in research
4. Lessons Learned
 - More than a department head tool
 - Most effective when integrated with recurring processes, department program reviews, and built into our strategic plan
 - Promotes faculty success – broad impacts on teaching and service
5. Discussion
 - Have not taken this to faculty yet; cautious about asking them to do/learn one more thing; spring semester is revised starting point
 - Not all universities use this, but all the great ones do (U of M doesn't)
 - Metrics show that we are behind in publications – not grants and funding – we can use this to talk to faculty about program prioritization

- Award nominations – data stares us in the face – there are outstanding faculty (by objective measures when compared to their peers) who have not been nominated for prestigious awards, but we are changing that!
- Expensive subscription, but part of the cost of doing business
- Vendor wants to learn, is engaged with clients

V. Action Items

a. Vote – Diversity & Inclusion Funding Request for \$285k

1. Discussion

- \$230 initial investment + \$55k to complete the salary for Sr. Diversity & Inclusion Officer
- \$150k earmarked for faculty hires has been put on hold due to hiring moratorium
- Approving for perpetuity? Some of this has to be worked out of the budget eventually
- Requirement for established success limits ability to hire young diverse assistant professors – a little extra money would help incentivize recruits to choose MSU
- Maybe the Dean and Provost together can figure out a way to find additional money – Provost could have a slush fund for this purpose – seems messy to go through D&I instead of Provost Office
Example: Ranalli currently trying to land a candidate but \$10k off, so now has to move on to 4th choice
- The requirement for success was intended to “pick” senior hires from other universities
- Fastnow recommended approving use of funds for “general diversity needs”, not necessarily two faculty lines. D&I sits under Academic Affairs - pass this discussion on to the Provost Office.

2. Unanimous approval

b. Vote – Advising Commons Funding Request for \$70k

1. Discussion – none

2. Unanimous approval

VI. Public Comment/Member Feedback

None

VII. Informational Items

a. Financial KPIs and Budget Metrics

- Working group will figure out how to think about KPIs and bring ideas back to the council
- Contact Megan if interested (Ranalli, Fastnow, Woolard, Trotter and Leist signed up)

b. President’s Strategic Funding Process Timeline – Megan Lasso

- Moving forward, process and timeline similar to last year
- Info available in December to allow a couple months for people to think about it
- Unsure what will happen in legislative session, want to set realistic expectations
- Decisions may be pushed a little later

VIII. Training and/or Data Review

Small group training will be provided to new members who may not be familiar with the budget model. Training will also be available to continuing members who may want a refresher course.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Next Meeting: January 26, 2021D at 3:30 p.m. via WebEx