

Budget Council Minutes (by Chair)  
December 15, 2008

Present at meeting:

David Quillen, Chair  
James Klausner, member  
Pradeep Kumar, member  
Naomi Young, member  
Kathy Price, member  
Regina Bussing, member  
Joe Glover, liaison  
Ed Popple, liaison  
Matt Fajack, liaison  
Paul D'Anieri, Dean CLAS, guest

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

David Quillen called the meeting to order and welcomed Dean D'Anieri to the meeting. For the record, CLAS has approximately 670 faculty, a faculty council and faculty finance committee. Professor D'Anieri has been dean since July 1, 2008.

Item 1:

The primary issue was the potential future budget cuts and faculty input in the process. Dean D'Anieri has held a number of meetings with faculty at large, department chairs, division heads, the faculty council and the faculty finance committee. He expressed his commitment to transparency and discussed the pros and cons. Data has been shared with the faculty as well as data from the Provost office. Discussion of budget cutting principles have been discussed with faculty of CLAS.

Dean D'Anieri noted that the faculty have had difficulty moving past last years cuts and the controversy created. He noted that there is difficulty in forming a strategic plan democratically. He noted that there were potential negatives with too much transparency, particularly with bad news such as budget cuts and potential job loss.

The issue of department performance was discussed. The council and the Dean discussed the difficulties of comparing departments and noted that a poorly performing department may remain an essential part of the teaching mission of the college. In what ways should we look like our peers and in what way should we be different?

Dean D'Anieri wanted input from the faculty and their willingness to help make the difficult choices. In the end, he would make the necessary cuts, but much preferred a shared process with faculty.

The council thanked Dean D'Anieri for his time and willingness to discuss these issues with us.

Item 2:

Information about the University “reserve” has made the local press and Matt Fajack provided clarity on the issue.

There is no “reserve”. There are “unrestricted net assets” which are the monies in hundreds of separate accounts within departments, units and individuals. This “unrestricted” is theoretically accessible by the University President. Currently there is about \$80 million, which also represents 2 weeks of UF operating money. \$40 million is unavailable because that is the state required 5% reserve (5% of state appropriation money).

The number of \$140 million has been noted and that is the \$80 million plus around \$60 million that is from the self insurance trust fund. The \$60 million self insurance trust fund money has always been restricted, but had not been accounted as such. The \$60 million is for potential medical liability from the clinical activities at the health science center colleges. There has been a rumor of \$250 million dollars in reserve, which is not accurate.

Item 3:

Review of the Budget Principles document and web documents.

There were expressions of dissatisfaction and controversy over the document and several of the items from committee members. There was agreement on only a few items. The committee agreed to change the words “adjunct professors” in section 1f to “instructors” because of the different interpretations of what constituted an adjunct professor.

We agreed that section 2 probably did not need to remain in the document given the recent decisions from Governor Crist and the state legislators.

We agreed that section 3 needed to be re-worded to reflect that faculty are consultative to the budget process. An expanded introduction may eliminate section three.

The new version will be drafted by the chair and reviewed at the next meeting January 12, 2009.

The meeting adjourned at 3:32 pm