

Notes on the Shared Governance Forum, Tuesday, November 17, 2015

3:00 to 4:00 in Russell 300

Topic (chosen by the Faculty Senate): The Procedures and Recommendations of the Presidential Advisory Committees (PACs)

The Forum topic and format were introduced by Steven Emge, Faculty Senate Chair. Each PAC will be given a fifteen minute time-frame with questions following as time permits.

Academics Committee ([presentation Power Point](#))

Presentation was given by the committee chair, Christopher Moretti

There were no questions

Enrollment/Recruitment Committee ([presentation Power Point](#))

Presentation was given by the committee chair, Tristan Eggener

Question from faculty: Do we have any information on why prospective students choose not to attend Southeastern?

Committee: We don't. Nor do we know how such information might be obtained.

Question from faculty: Was there any work done or information obtained about the role of alumni in recruiting?

Committee: No, but that would be important to explore in the future.

President Burrage briefly addressed the attendees. He thanked the committees for their work and explained the process of meeting with the committees to discuss their reports. The reports were forwarded to and will be discussed with the Vice Presidents. President Burrage noted that the longest report was from the Academics Committee, coming in at over fifty pages.

Burrage mentioned the Retirement Incentive Program (RIP) that has been approved by RUSO, and also a new agreement with Academic Partners regarding an online MBA program to be offered by SE. (see the post-forum emails below for more details)*

Burrage commented that SE seems to be out front on these budget issues in comparison with the other regional universities, and he sounded a confident note that we will emerge from this budget crisis leaner and faster!

Fundraising/Grants/Alumni Committee ([Power Point presentation](#))

Presentation was given by committee chair, George Jacox

Jacox asks if anyone knows how much SE got in grants last year. Answer: about six million dollars, which is only up one million dollars over the last seven years, and most of these are for the same programs and from the same sources.

Question from Faculty: Do we know how many SE students—apart from those residing in the dorms—live in Durant?

Committee: We don't have that information.

Question from Faculty: Are there rules or requirements for freshman to live on-campus?

Committee: There are no such requirements.

Budget Committee ([Power Point presentation](#))

Presentation was given by committee chair, Glenn Melancon who praised the hard work of the committee and thanked President Burrage for the transparency of the process and for ensuring that the committee had access to all the information it requested.

Question/comment from faculty: What specifically are the recommended cuts in professional staffing? Can we assume that these cuts will affect people's livelihoods, is there more specific information in the reports, and will this information be made public?

Committee: A detailed report was provided to President Burrage with the committee's recommendations. It will fall to President Burrage to determine what information will be made public.

Question from faculty: Did the committee submit a list of specific positions that are recommended to be eliminated?

Committee: Yes, there is a detailed list.

*Email sent Friday, Nov. 20

These advisory committees – Academics, Enrollment/Recruitment, Budget, and Fundraising /Grants/Alumni – were composed of faculty, staff and students.

The focus of the advisory committees was to offer recommendations and ideas, with an emphasis on short-term implementation and outcomes.

I met with each advisory group during organizational sessions on August 28. At that time, I presented specific topics for each committee to address. Each group was instructed to submit a written report with recommendations to me no later than November 7. You may now access the committee's final reports at <http://carmine.se.edu/advisory/> - (you must log in and use your email password).

After having received all of the committee reports, I must say that the time, effort and dedication invested by these individuals resulted in many positive ideas that I believe will benefit the University. I want to thank each and every committee member for their work and belief in the process.

More than 25 recommendations were offered, with some common ideas and themes among the committees. I have reviewed all of the recommendations, received input from the vice presidents and directors concerning the reports, and this week, met with the advisory committees.

Several of the recommendations – particularly in Academics -- will begin to be implemented in Spring 2016 and be fully implemented by Fall 2016. In most instances, Academic Affairs will be responsible for coordinating this implementation.

Some of the recommendations offered by the Budget Committee (regarding process) and the Enrollment-Recruitment Committee will begin to be implemented once we fill the vacant positions of Vice President for Business Affairs and Director of Admissions and Recruitment in the near future. Interviews are currently underway for both vacancies and we hope to have the positions filled in January.

An improved website and the need for an annual giving campaign were among some of the common concerns voiced by more than one committee. Dr. Larry Acker, our director of marketing, is currently working with the IT department on the website, and we hope to have a new look up and running in January. This will include a new virtual tour of the campus. Mark Webb, our recently hired director of development, will be conducting a needs assessment across campus next spring to lay the groundwork for an annual giving campaign.

Many other committee recommendations are still under review and may require further study before a final decision is made.

We will periodically provide updates and status reports as we continue to work through this evolving process.

-- **Sean Burrage**

Email sent Wednesday, Nov. 18

We are continuing to monitor our budget situation very closely, not only for the current fiscal year (2016), but for fiscal year 2017 as well. As you know, the combination of reduced state allocations and a decrease in our fall student credit hours made it necessary to make reductions in departmental operational budgets and impose travel restrictions earlier in the semester.

For the past two months, our Budget Advisory Committee, comprised of faculty and staff members, has spent countless hours analyzing the entire operation of the University. Their charge from me was to help prioritize the needs of the University as it related to the possibility of different levels of budget cuts, now and in the future. They have been meticulous and thorough in their work, and have offered some viable recommendations that are still under review.

In the meantime, after much thought and deliberation, we have decided to take the following steps, which we believe will result in significant cost savings. Please understand that it is extremely difficult to make significant budget cuts this far into the fiscal year, therefore, we are looking ahead to see what impact can be made in FY 17 (July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017).

The steps we are taking revolve around (1) the introduction of a Retirement Incentive Program, (2) the consolidation/elimination of offices/programs, (3) an additional 5% reduction in departmental operational budgets, (4) and leaving 10 currently vacant positions unfilled – one faculty, nine staff.

A total of 54 full-time Southeastern employees (a combination of faculty and staff) will be offered the opportunity to apply for the Retirement Incentive Program. This week, we will notify those individuals and provide them with the specifics of the program.

For additional cost savings, we have also decided to combine the functions of the Business Office into other departments of the University. This consolidation will be phased in and should be complete by June 30, 2016.

Effective December 31, 2015, the Office of Continuing Education and the Center for Regional Economic Development will be discontinued. This will result in the closing of the swimming pool inside Bloomer Sullivan Gymnasium. For the past several years, Continuing Education and aquatics have not been self-sustaining programs.

Although there are many variables involved, we believe the combination of the Retirement Incentive Program and the consolidation/elimination of programs could result in a savings of at least \$1 million.

For the current fiscal year, the additional 5% departmental budget reductions will save approximately \$92,500; the consolidation/elimination will save approximately \$20,000; and the 10 unfilled positions saves \$440,625.

These are difficult decisions, and we have made every effort to minimize the impact on our students and core programs. Many colleges and universities across Oklahoma and the nation are dealing with similar budget challenges – it certainly is not a situation unique to Southeastern.

I would also like to note that the University is working on an agreement with Academic Partnerships (AP). This is a company that provides expertise in the areas of marketing, recruiting, and admissions. We will be releasing further details soon, but AP will be utilized to assist us with the online MBA program in the John Massey School of Business. We believe this partnership will allow us to double our enrollment in the MBA program next fall and also increase revenue.

At this point, it is impossible to forecast our future state allocations and enrollment, but there is a string possibility we will face additional cuts in the near future, as well as next fiscal year. In fact, on October 26, 2015, Gov. Mary Fallin issued an executive order to all state agencies to develop a plan for an additional 10% budget cut of nonessential expenses for this fiscal year and next fiscal year. This is due to the falling revenues amid the energy industry downturn in the state.

I appreciate your continued support -- as a University, we will continue to work together and I am confident that we can be more efficient and grow our enrollment at the same time.

-- Sean Burrage