University Senate Budget Committee
Thursday, August 26, 2010
718 General Classroom
3:00 pm

Members Present: Nicholas Alexander, JoAnn Bacon, Tim Bartness, Michelle Brattain, Jennifer Chiovaro, Jeremy Crampton, Julie Dangel, Dabney Dixon, William Downs, Peggy Gallagher, Hugh Hudson, Bill Prigge, Jerry Rackliffe, Lesley Reid, Mary Ann Romski, Sarah Steiner, Ellen Taylor, Jowanna Tillman, Volkan Topalli, Maryann Wysor, Katherine Willoughby

Meeting Minutes

Katherine Willoughby called the meeting to order and introduced Lisa Shepard, the SBC Administrative Assistant for 2010-2011. Katherine explained that on August 11, 2010 the BOR approved the FY 2011 budget reduction plans and the FY 2012 operating and capital budget requests. She stated that the cuts to this year’s operating unit budgets have been sent to colleges at 1.6%. On August 18, 2010, Katherine presented the SBC report on the role of SBC in the GSU budgetary process to FACP and it was accepted. The report indicates that SBC can be most helpful to this process by (1) meeting monthly during the academic year, (2) continuing to use ad hoc research subcommittees to analyze special topics and produce reports, and (3) upgrading the SBC homepage. Katherine noted that the SBC homepage has been improved to include easy access to BOR and FACP meeting minutes as well as SBC minutes and other relevant reports and documents. Katherine asked members to think about how the SBC homepage can provide additional means to secure ideas, concerns, and/or questions from the University community about the budget.

The MRRF is a joint subcommittee of SBC and the Senate’s Planning and Development Committee (SPD) that makes recommendations for major regular and regulatory repairs and renovation for GSU state buildings (~$5 million/year). SBC and SPD each provide a co-chair to MRRF. Volkan Topalli will serve as Co-Chair of MRRF from SBC this year.

Today an editorial column in the Atlanta Journal Constitution referenced a policy report issued by the Goldwater Institute that was published on August 17, 2010 regarding administrative “bloat” in American universities. Katherine sent this report, with an appendix of data to SBC members just prior to the meeting. She asked members to examine the report and provide any thoughts regarding appropriate or needed response. It was suggested that SBC recommend that a response come from President Becker and presidents from other USG institutions that were mentioned in the editorial. While no action was taken on this issue, given the short notice, members were asked to read and think about the report and possible future consideration of its content.
Jerry Rackliffe provided a budget update. He explained that the state’s revenues for the past two months have been up. Also, the University’s current budget plan to absorb cuts does not include furlough days. He provided a handout which showed the University’s tuition and fees for the summer semester, 2010. The data compares enrollments with those from summer semester, 2009 and indicates that the University is up by 2%. He also provided a handout indicating anticipated tuition revenue for FY 2011. He said that based on current trends, he expects to exceed budget for the next two semesters.

Jerry explained that the BOR does consider proposals for changes to current policies. He presented three issues in which the SBC might consider providing input. These issues include: (1) mandatory student fees that are charged at the off-campus centers, (2) current out-of-state tuition and strategic priorities, and (3) a GSU voluntary retirement plan. Jerry suggested that the SBC use sub-committees to research these issues, noting that reports should be ready by December 18, 2010 for greatest impact. Katherine stated that she would send a follow up email to the committee members requesting volunteers for each sub-committee.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.