Interinstitutional Faculty Senate

President’s Conference Room, 650 Kerr Administration Building
Oregon State University
Corvallis, OR
Friday, February 6, 2009

Present (Senators): Joel Alexander (WOU), Lee Ayers (SOU), Duncan Carter (PSU), Janet Crum (OHSU), Peter Gilkey (UO), Gail Houck (OHSU), Jeff Johnson (EOU), Starr McMullen (OSU), Robert Mercer (PSU), Ike Nail (WOU), Jane Perri (OIT), Ron Reuter (OSU), Ellen Siem (SOU), Paul Simonds (UO)

Present (Visitors/Guests): Donna Chastain (OSU), Lynda Ciuffetti (OSU), Paul Duescher (OSU), Stan Gregory (OSU), Dalton Miller-Jones (OUS), Jock Mills (OSU), Deb Pence (OSU), Rosemary Powers (OUS), Bob Turner (OUS), Becky Warner (OSU)

IFS President Gilkey called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM

Introductions and Welcome to OSU
Paul Doescher, OSU Faculty Senate President, and Becky Warner, Acting Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and International Programs (1:00-1:30)
Attendees introduced themselves.

Warner welcomed IFS to OSU. Warner has been at OSU for 18 years, about half that time as chair of the Sociology Department. OSU is one of only two US universities with land grant, sea grant, space grant, and sun grant designation; the other is Cornell. OSU’s current enrollment is 20,300, about 18,300 of whom are full-time. OSU includes 12 colleges with 200 undergraduate and 80 graduate programs. Their largest enrollment is in engineering. They operate two campuses--Corvallis and Cascades.

OSU’s major undertakings are:
1. Updating their strategic plan. They are in phase 2 of this process, identifying their signature areas--understanding and sustaining earth’s ecosystems, improving human health and wellness, and driving innovation in engineering and business. They will redesign their baccalaureate core with these areas in mind and also develop new degree programs around these areas.
2. Diversity. OSU just passed a new degree program in Latin American Studies. They are looking to attract a more diverse student body and create a place where students from diverse backgrounds can be successful. They have partnered with Into University Partnerships to develop a program called Into OSU. Into University Partnerships has over 1000 agents around the world. OSU’s goal is to double their international student body in five years. International enrollment is currently at 5%; they want to get to 10%, which is where they were 10 years ago. Into OSU includes the Pathway Program, in which undergraduate and graduate students attend OSU for one year for intensive English reading and writing plus some baccalaureate core courses. Undergraduates who complete this program are automatically admitted, while graduate students who complete the program successfully are allowed to apply for admission.
Budget concerns: The University of Arizona and the University of Idaho both announced that they have closed 32 programs on their campuses. OSU will be realigning. They are discussing offering degree programs jointly across all campuses. Warner asked us to consider how we can collaborate with our colleagues at other institutions, maintaining programs by working together. The OSU Faculty Senate is asking that faculty be informed as part of the budget process.

Paul Doescher welcomed us to OSU. He acknowledged Vickie Nunnemaker, "the heart and soul of shared governance" at OSU. She has supported the Faculty Senate at OSU for over 20 years. Providing this kind of staff support to the Senate shows OSU's commitment to shared governance. OSU doesn't have university-wide policies for shared governance, so they are forming a task force to address the issue.

Doescher introduced the PERS project, to be discussed later in the meeting.

Doescher reported that the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) are working with some faculty on campus as part of an effort to unionize faculty. They are in the information-gathering phase now. AFT and AAUP may do a joint campaign for unionization. Doescher would like to know our experiences with faculty unionization, especially as it affects faculty senates.

Discussion

Does the OSU Faculty Senate have contingency plans for meeting in the summer or some other way to keep faculty informed/involved in the budget process this summer? The budget process will be delayed this year, because the Legislature is waiting for the May revenue forecast before finalizing the budget. At OSU, the Senate Executive Committee serves as the Faculty Senate during the summer. Doescher recommends having forums and/or focus groups for faculty who wish to participate in the summer. In the past, the OSU Faculty Senate has met on the last day of the term (6/15), so there might be opportunity for input then. OSU Senate terms begin in January, so there is continuity through the summer. Other IFS members shared their procedures regarding senate terms and activity over the summer. Gilkey recommends that we stay involved with decisions over the summer, since major decisions will likely be made then.

Shared Governance Model at OSU

Lynda Ciuffetti, 2008 OSU Faculty Senate President, and Vickie Nunnemaker, Special Assistant to the Faculty Senate President (1:30-2:15)

Ciuffetti and Nunnemaker showed an organization chart, which shows where the OSU Faculty Senate fits into the structure of the institution. The Faculty Senate President reports to the Provost. The OSU Faculty Senate represents faculty in all academic and administrative units. In 1978 the Faculty Senate Office was established with the current reporting relationship. First College Council created in 1909. This information is available on the Faculty Senate page in the OSU Handbook.

The Faculty Senate President does not have a budget. The Provost provides funds as needed and also provides the Special Assistant to the Senate President, currently Vickie Nunnemaker. The President is a .5 FTE position. The Senate President chairs the Executive Committee and meets regularly (usually every 2-4 weeks) one on one with the Provost. The Provost and OSU President are both available to the Senate President when needed.
The Senate President serves on several committees, including

- University Cabinet. The Cabinet includes the president, provost, vice presidents, vice provosts, Senate President, OSU Foundation president, and president of the Associated Student Body.
- Athletic Advisory Committee. The President-Elect is also on this committee.
- Campus Planning Committee. The Past President is also on this committee.
- Undergraduate Admissions Committee

The Senate Executive Committee consists of the Senate President, Past President, President-Elect, and seven members elected by the Faculty Senate. OSU’s senior IFS representative also sits on the Executive Committee. The Provost or his/her designee attends when possible. Members of this committee serve as liaisons to various Faculty Senate committees. The Executive Committee sets the agenda for Faculty Senate meetings and discusses issues that come to them from various venues or from individual faculty members. They set up task forces and ad hoc committees as needed, which are often jointly appointed by the Executive Committee and Academic Affairs. Currently they are developing a task force on shared governance. The Faculty Consultative Group is a standing committee of the Faculty Senate charged with consulting on program reductions and closures. Final decisions on these matters rest with the OSU President.

The Faculty Senate consists of 132 elected senators. The faculty is defined as members of the unclassified academic staff, which includes professional faculty and professorial faculty. Meetings with each of these groups revealed that the needs and desires of these two groups are often very different. Professional faculty didn’t see how discussions of instructional issues related to them, yet they are asked to vote on them. Professorial faculty thought shared governance needed to be more consistent across the university, especially with regard to promotion and tenure. The Senate includes about 40% professional and 60% academic faculty. The professional category includes lots of different types of staff – the football coach, office managers, advisors, etc. There is concern that some academic faculty are not participating in the Senate.

Senate meetings are open to everyone. Guests are also welcome to speak on the floor of the Senate.

Is there any reward for being on the Senate? The President gets .5 FTE devoted to the position, but other positions do not receive any special consideration.

The Senate includes 27 standing committees plus the Executive Committee and various ad hoc groups. They sometimes have trouble filling all their committees.

The charge to the Senate is to review and recommend policies and actions for the university.

Vickie Nunnemaker described her duties. She oversees the day-to-day operations of the office, schedules meetings and manages agendas for various Senate committees, attends and takes minutes for the Executive Committee meetings and meetings of some standing committees, and serves as a point of contact for faculty with concerns.

Discussion

- On one OUS campus, the Senate spends lots of time trying to figure out how something is supposed to be done.
- At another campus, some senators do not have tenure and are therefore reluctant to participate fully in the work of the Senate.
At OSU, the Senate has an official channel, so they know how to get things done.

Do other schools have dedicated Senate support? PSU has a Secretary to the Faculty who has a course release to provide some support to the Senate. No one else indicated that their campuses provide this level of support to their faculty senates. Having this support, plus the committee structure, helps the OSU Faculty Senate get things accomplished. They can track projects and ensure that progress is made.

Do they have time to discuss general issues? Yes. They have a spot on the agenda for the President so she can raise issues, and they also have a slot called “Matters Arising” which provides a place for issues to be raised.

Have there been cases in which the Senate voted on something, and the Provost or President didn't accept the result? Ciufetti can't think of an example in the last six years. She thinks that's because they work together to create buy-in on issues before the Senate votes.

Legislative Issues
Jock Mills, Director, OSU Government Relations (2:15-3:00)

Current Biennium
The December revenue forecast made governor's proposed budget obsolete; the money in that budget for OUS won’t materialize. Money for the current biennium is also declining. The next revenue forecast will be released Feb. 20. We can expect a continued downward trend, probably down another $300-600 million for current biennium. OUS has already taken a 1% cut to address a shortfall of approximately $140 million. A $300 million shortfall would amount to about a 5% cut if taken over the whole biennium, but because we're in the last months of the biennium, it's really much greater than 5% over the remaining months. The OUS web site provides a general sense of the cuts.

Fund balances: To the Legislature, fund balances represent money we said we would spend but have not spent yet. For administrators, fund balances represent money they have kept for upcoming expenses or money saved through prudent management. Mills is asking legislators not to look at fund balances as way to accomplish reductions but instead to make the needed cuts and let OUS figure out how to take them.

Another revenue forecast will be released in May, which may show further declines. By then it will be too late to take more cuts, so the Legislature may overextend cuts after the February forecast to address potential additional declines in May. Otherwise, they'd have to go to reserve funds—the Rainy Day Fund and the Education Stability Fund. Both have triggers that determine when funds can be accessed. The Rainy Day Fund was set up with corporate kicker money last year and represents one-time funds. The Education Stability Fund is funded with lottery revenues, which are declining.

A series of Ways and Means hearings will be held next week. The education hearing is scheduled for Wednesday, February 11, from 4:30-6:30 PM.

State stimulus package: Mills has concerns about what is being funded and the level of oversight and reporting required.

Federal stimulus package: Federal funds will come to the state with formulas for distribution to K-12, community colleges, and higher education. The Governor and the Legislature will have some influence.
on how level of effort is calculated and therefore how funds are distributed. These funds will affect this biennium and the next one.

A 5% cut is the best case scenario for the current biennium, but it could change.

All the shortfalls add up to about $800 million.

**Next biennium**
If we retained our current level of service, next biennium we would have about a $3 billion reduction out of $17 billion in total expenditures.

There is concern that legislators will dictate how cuts should be taken.

6 "levers," i.e. aspects that can be adjusted to address funding:
- enrollment
- how much general fund will be there (now our funding is about 40% general fund and 60% tuition)
- tuition (and tuition remission for lower-income students)
- opportunity grants (based on tuition, so increase in tuition increases demand for opportunity grants; Legislature therefore doesn't want to increase tuition.
- Federal funds
- Foundation funds - donors don't want to see their dollars supplant state funding but enhance it

We need the right balance among all these.

Mills anticipates one or more special sessions of the Legislature to address changes in the economic situation.

Mills’ key points:
1. Macroeconomics more than advocacy that will control the budget we get
2. Continued uncertainty about federal stimulus money and how it fits
3. Potential for special sessions down the road

His message to legislators: give us the budget number and let us figure out how to meet it.

**BREAK**
*(3:00-3:15)*

**Impact of Legislative Decisions on PERS Issues in the Last Five Years**
*Stan Gregory and Donna Chastain, OSU Executive Committee (3:15-4:00)*
Gregory presented the confidential initial findings of a working group at OSU on PERS/retirement issues.

**Report on OUS Board Meeting**
*Peter Gilkey and Dalton Miller-Jones (4:00-4:10)*
In his presentation to the Board, Gilkey asked the Board to let institutions manage their own personnel cuts rather than dictating the percentages of cuts that have to come from various personnel areas (administration, service, etc.)

Miller-Jones reported that the board is trending away from micromanagement, meeting less frequently, and focusing on policy decisions. Gilkey's comments fit in with their move away from micromanagement, but the Board is also concerned about the survivability of various campuses and potential legislative action.

Miller-Jones wants to focus on accessibility, especially for first-generation college students, immigrants, and others who now seem less likely to consider higher education. This trend is nationwide. He's concerned about decentralization, letting campuses manage their own cuts, etc., because he doesn't want to lose possible synergies and benefits of cooperation across institutions.

Powers said that students are concerned about presidents implementing cuts with no oversight.

Powers reported that the US is low-ranked w/r/t 25-35-year-olds with degrees.

**Chancellor's Report**

*George Pernsteiner (4:10-5:15)*

We should expect a shortfall of between $850 million to $1 billion between the February and May revenue forecasts, which is causing concern about how to get through the current biennium. No one has seen numbers come down this fast in living memory. Oregon unemployment was 9% in the last report and is expected to approach double digits in the next report, due out in next week or two. OUS has already taken a 1.1% reduction. It is too late in the biennium to find much more to cut. We will probably have to reduce accumulated fund balances substantially. He hopes we can use those funds to address our own reductions, but there's concern that the state will use some of it to address other shortfalls. OUS has notice provisions for all employees; in contracts or by past practice, we give from 90 days to one year notice for layoffs. If the Legislature seizes fund balances, they could drive us into exigency unintentionally.

The Legislature is afraid and may do things they wouldn't otherwise want to do. OUS is trying to calm people down regarding the current fiscal year. The Legislature isn't considering next biennium yet at all.

Regarding the federal stimulus package, it is unclear how much we will get, how it may be used, and when it may be used. As of now, the bill specifies that money will be available July 1, which is too late for the current biennium. Lots of states want that changed. OUS is talking with the Legislature about issuing revenue anticipation notes, i.e. borrowing against those future funds.

Portland Public Schools is talking about closing the schools May 1. That discussion seems to have triggered panic re: the current biennium.

According to one estimate, Oregon will face a $600 billion shortfall. There is a recommendation to pro-rate that, which amount to about a 5% cut. That would put us at the edge of solvency. But some are saying that revenue could be more than $3 billion (about 30%) below what is needed to operate state services.
Federal stimulus money should provide relief to the state in the following ways:

1. Construction jobs will be created: OUS should see some construction, which will help the capital side of the budget.

2. The health care pool: It is hoped that stimulus money for health care will plug a $400 million hole in health care demand in the Dept. of Human Services. That would reduce the deficit directly, because the health care money would fund things the state would otherwise have to fund itself.

4. General government pool: Restrictions and recipients for this money remain unknown, but none of it will go to OUS.

4. Education pool: The House version of the stimulus bill includes money for Pell Grant increases and funds for education to replace some money lost through budget cuts, including money for postsecondary education. The Governor would allocate this money based on the share of state investment in the past. The Senate version does not include money for Pell grants, and the federal government—not governors—would determine where the money goes. Private colleges are lobbying the federal government for some of this money. Conference committees are trying to harmonize the two versions even before they are passed.

The Governor’s Office has said that no agency should expect any money from the stimulus package. The money will go to the state, and the governor will allocate it. Pernsteiner thinks the governor will try to keep education as whole as possible. The Legislature wants to come back into session in July to either ratify or undo the governor’s allocation, so we won’t know for awhile who will allocate the funds or how much we will get. The federal bills include a floor and ceiling for higher education money, but both are considerably lower than our allocation for the current fiscal year. Pernsteiner wants to measure the level of effort based on state investment per student rather than overall state investment. That way we wouldn’t have to take a cut, because our enrollment grew considerably this year. It’s possible that we could take a 20-30% cut and still be within the range prescribed by the bills.

We know that we will face big reductions in the state general fund. Even if the stimulus package backfills part of that, it will do so for only two years, and everyone is saying that this is a five-year recession.

Almost all of our campuses do not want to reduce enrollment, because they will lose more by doing that than they get from the state.

Strategies

• Co-chair Buckley advises that OUS recruit out of state students. We can only serve as many Oregonians as we do, because we bring in so many out-of-state students who pay more. That strategy, however, only works for a relatively small number of students, because a) the UO already brings in lots of out-of-state students; and b) most other campuses haven’t ramped up for that yet, and it takes time. This strategy won’t save an institution but can help one get by.

• Tuition increases may be necessary to preserve quality. If tuition goes up, however, that will price some students out of the market, especially first-generation students and students from minority families. OUS wants to provide financial aid to cover 30% of a tuition increase. If we could do that, we could increase tuition 7-9% or so for some campuses. Jay Kenton thinks we could make up about a 10% cut through increasing tuition intelligently, with different strategies on each campus to suit market niche.
Are there things we can do to reinvent how we do our core business -- instruction? The way we do it now, we can't afford to serve the number of students we need to serve at the prices we can charge. We need to provide instruction more collaboratively. Provosts are looking at offering courses simultaneously on multiple campuses through distance technology.

Discussion

• Can we shift students from high enrollment to low enrollment campuses, e.g. students start at SOU and transfer to UO in their junior year if they wish? That would be part of a system approach, behaving as one system rather than separate institutions.

• In keeping with the system approach, someone suggested that students apply to the OUS system and identify campus preferences, rather than relying on campuses to work out their own cooperative agreements.

• We could rotate students through programs at various schools to increase capacity, but that would be a problem for many students with families who are not mobile.

• PSU is growing fast in part because students are living at home to save money. If we shifted enrollment to other campuses, we would have to offer something to counter that benefit.

• We should look at online and/or community-based programs.

• Comment from IFS member: as courses per faculty member have decreased, tuition has increased. Is there a relationship? Course releases are now provided for work that faculty used to do as part of their regular work. This change is making it difficult for students to complete their degrees in four years, because courses aren't offered often enough. Pernsteiner thinks the reduced course load was part of an attempt to increase/improve research, but it happened at all campuses, whether or not faculty have a research load.

• Can we offer online those classes students need to graduate? Faculty would be available to answer questions, but we would only update class content every couple of years.

• Could we increase faculty teaching load significantly in exchange for time off for rejuvenation?

• Faculty would want a guarantee that if they make this sacrifice, campus cuts would be reduced.

• Can we provide alternative routes to tenure for people who get their greatest rewards from teaching, so they could carry a heavier teaching load? But would colleagues view them as second-class citizens? There's concern that doing this as a stopgap to deal with the budget would put us at a long-term disadvantage, especially with regard to attracting faculty.

• It makes sense to ask people who aren't doing much research anyway to teach more. A blanket policy increasing all teaching loads wouldn't work.

• Course loads vary dramatically across schools.

• We should consider weekend courses with faculty from different campuses collaborating.
Pernsteiner would like from us:

• A compendium of ideas
• Discussion with our senates about these issues

He will meet with us again in April to provide feedback we receive from our senates. He would like us to e-mail ideas earlier than April, because he is meeting with campus presidents about two weeks.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Crum
Secretary, Interinstitutional Faculty Senate