Hello Denise,

Below is the collective feedback from our Budgets & Fiscal Planning Committee on your abbreviated category I proposal (to create a School of Public Policy). Please send us your responses to these questions.

1. What will be the compensation (salary + OPE) of the Director of the School of Public Policy? As noted in our budget, the plan is during Year 3 we will be moving from a Transitional Director to a Full time direction. We have budgeted $132,000 salary + OPE for that position. What will be the compensation savings stemming from elimination of the three department chairs? As you know, this is not a required information for the Category I proposal, but we did consider these costs. We estimated that the costs of the compensation for the three chairs was about $85,000/year + OPE. Will the cost savings from the elimination of the three department chairs cover/offset the projected incremental compensation costs of the director? These savings more than off-set the incremental costs for the Transitional Director (~$52,000 + OPE) for years one and two, but are only about 2/3 the cost of the Full-Time Director (proposed for Year 3). Again, these costs were discussed with our Dean who approved the increase, including a permanent line for the Director of the School of Public Policy in Year 3.

2. Will one director be able to adequately cover the administrative workload currently being performed by three department chairs without the addition of staffing beyond what is indicated in the proposal (the one support staff and the four nominally-compensated Program Liaisons)? We believe we have created an administrative structure that allows for everything to be covered; this includes not just the support staff and Program Liaisons, but the Undergraduate Program Coordinators, again, self-funded through e-campus revenue.

3. Will the amounts earmarked for the four Program Liaisons (just $12K total per year for two years) be sufficient to compensate the Programs Liaisons for the workload they will be covering? This was the agreed upon stipend among the Program Liaisons. Is two years enough time for these nominally-compensated Program Liaisons – who will cover their administrative workload after two years? We believe that when we move to a full-time Program Director (Year 3) that our policies and procedures will be in place. At that point, serving on the Advisory Committee for the School (i.e., the Liaisons and Grad Program Director) is expected to revert to a service position rather than a compensated position. If this doesn’t work and the Program Liaison position requires extensive commitment from a faculty member, we will continue to fund Program Liaisons through revenue raised from e-campus as we are currently doing.

4. Is the shift from three department chairs to a single director primarily a financial decision, a policy/strategic decision, both, or neither? Please explain. Although the CLA realignment discussions began as part of the early budget conversations, it quickly became clear that the creation of a School of Public Policy made great sense given the OSU Strategic Plan and our existing programs. As proposed, the School is primarily a policy/strategic decision and was determined as the best way to move forward with building a multi-disciplinary policy effort that is based in three different undergraduate
programs with a single common graduate program. The school is designed to leverage existing and growing strengths of OSU as outlined in the Strategic Plan.

5. Your proposal mentioned a plan to “re-locate all faculties and staff to a common building and this cost will be done in coordination with the CLA reorganization over the next several years,” but no costs for a move were itemized in the text of your proposal or in your four years of budget forms. What would be a rough/ballpark estimate of these relocation costs (including renovations, infrastructure/electrical upgrades, painting, asbestos remediation, etc.) specifically for the School of Public Policy? Would you still proceed with this proposal if no common building space can be found or if the costs of renovating a common space are cost prohibitive? We have seriously discussed a move with the Dean and determined there is no way to estimate the costs of moving without an actual target location. As you may know, space inventories are being conducted this year with decisions to be made at the end of this academic year with priorities given to realigned units. At that time, we may be offered a common space that will work for us. We have set aside e-campus revenue for normal costs of moving (e.g., painting, paying for packing and moving). If there are more extensive costs, we may reappraise a move; however, even if a suitable common space is not found quickly, we will still go ahead with the realignment and continue to search for common space.

6. Are there any miscellaneous costs (website updates, updating recruiting materials, updating stationary/business cards, etc.) that need to be added to the budget text or budget forms for this proposal? Those costs have been subsumed in our normal operating costs as we don’t have stationary/business cards printed any longer – we run everything on our color printer. We plan to use up any existing stores of stationary, using labels to cover changed information. Website updates are a normal operating cost, and recruiting materials are a part of our existing Graduate Program budget. As you know, the budget information for this proposal requests information about additional or new expenses, not a defense of existing budgets.

7. What are the key identified opportunity costs associated with this proposal (i.e., how would the same amounts of resources, time, and money be spent on other initiatives/students/research/outreach/etc. if you did not proceed with this proposal)? We are not asked to consider opportunity costs when developing a budget or a Category I proposal and did not do so. After further clarification from the Committee about what they’re thinking about with this question, I can report that there are no existing or planned initiatives in all of the three programs that are being set aside to plan and implement the reorganization. As described in the proposal, we are planning to continue to offer our undergraduate and graduate degree programs. As a matter if practice, it has turned out that by combining the three undergraduate and graduate programs into a single unit, we have actually been able to take on new initiatives such as undergraduate engagement programs like the model UN and taking students to conferences.

Cheers – Denise