

University Budget Committee
Minutes
December 1, 2022
Connecticut Room
9:30 a.m.

Attendance:

Julia DeLapp, James Howarth, Christine Hutchison, Drew Hyatt, Stephen Ferruci, Lyndsey Lanagan-Leitzel, David Mariasi, Elsa Núñez, Heidi Paradis, William Salka, Andrew White, Janice Wilson

Absent:

Karyl Bulmer, Brendan Cunningham, Kenneth DeLisa, Riley McConnell, Christine Nietupski, Jean-Pierre Roberts

Meeting commenced at 9:05 a.m.

1. Previous Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the October 21, 2022, meeting were approved. S. Ferruci and L. Lanagan-Leitzel abstained from voting.

2. Welcome and General Update – E. Núñez

E. Núñez stated that all ad hoc committees have been abolished. The Ad Hoc Budget Committee will now be called the University Budget Committee.

President Cheng has requested our plan to achieve a balanced budget and address the two-year \$17 million budget deficit. ECSU's revenue-generating ideas include:

- Offering summer school/camps.
- Recruiting out-of-state students.
- Partnering with BISK to offer online graduate courses.
- Offering, potentially, a nursing program set up with external funds and using labs at Windham Hospital.

3. "Big Ask" – E. Núñez and J. Howarth

E. Núñez stated that President Cheng has requested \$4 billion from the Governor and legislature. Most of this is bond money for new building, deferred maintenance, and technology.

J. Howarth said Eastern's mid-year budget update is due to the System Office on January 17. He stated that:

- Utility increases, enrollment, and housing have impacted the budget.
- The System Office has requested additional state support from OPM to replace covid funds and other one-time payments.

- OPM is suggesting a new way to handle fringe benefits which would involve the state paying the retirement fringe benefit for all employees.
- Eastern would bear the cost for other fringe expenses such as health insurance.

E. Núñez requested committee members talk to their unions to see if they will ask the legislature to add funds to our base.

4. Academic Programs: Budget Savings – W. Salka

W. Salka presented PowerPoint slides, “Opportunities to Address Budget Issues through Academic Programs” (Attachment A). He stated that the University is conducting a deep review of its curriculum to ensure all academic resources are deployed as effectively as possible.

W. Salka has been meeting with department chairs to explore potential savings which might include using fewer part-time faculty and revising/streamlining curriculum. E. Núñez said there will be no layoffs or cuts of full-time faculty.

L. Lanagan-Leitzel suggested holding a collaborative brainstorming session for the department chairs.

The meeting adjourned at 10:50 a.m.

Submitted by,

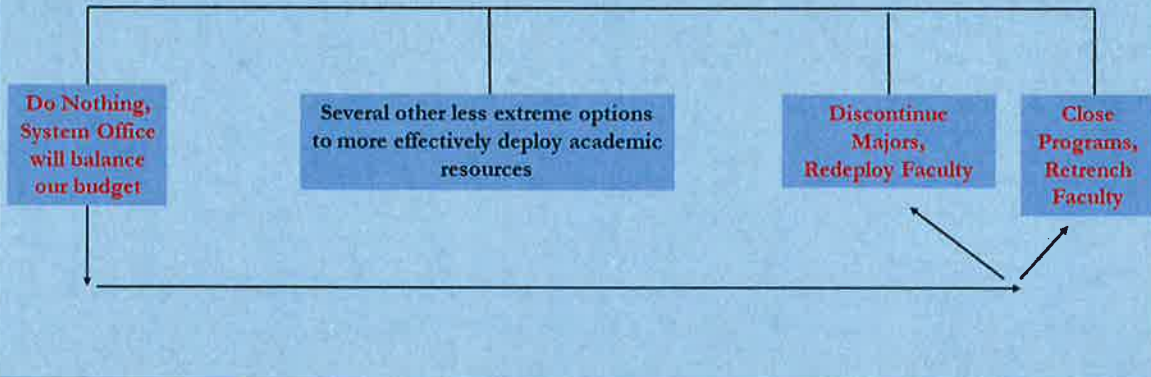
Rebecca Davis



Recent History

- Eastern has faced lean budgets since 2008: Enrollments were up but state funding was declining
- Vast majority of budget reductions were outside of the academic core:
Primary objective to protect our educational mission
 - *Enrollment has declined without a comparable reduction in personnel costs*
- Eastern now faces a significant budget deficit
- It is time for a deep review of the curriculum to ensure all academic resources are deployed as effectively as possible

Options for Addressing Budget Issues in Academic Programs



Less Extreme Options

- Streamline Majors to focus on departmental Strengths (not an R1)
 - Reduce the number of part-time faculty
- Reduce the number of credits in large majors
 - Reduce the number of part-time faculty
- Suspend low enrolled concentrations and minors
 - Reduce the number of part-time faculty
- Examine low course enrollment caps to ensure they are necessary
 - Reduce the number of part-time faculty

Theme 1: Use Fewer Part-Time Faculty

- Fall 2021/Spring 2022 Part-Time Faculty Expenditures
 - *\$5,057,460 Spent on Part-Time Salaries only (not fringe)*
 - *Part-Timers taught 2,496 Credits*
 - *535 Part-Time Positions*
 - *Spending by major ranged from a high of \$638,739 to a low of \$13,734*
 - *Part-Time Faculty Utilization across majors ranged from a high of 67% of all credits taught to a low of 8%*
- New LAC (ELAC) will be primarily taught by Full-Time Faculty

Less Extreme Options (Continued)

- Update major curriculum to ensure it is relevant to the 21st Century Student
- Embed ELAC/Employability Student Learning Outcomes in the major to attract more students

Theme 2: Revise Curriculum if Needed

- Some majors have outdated curriculum that is not attractive to today's students
- All programs need to embed the ELAC student learning outcomes throughout their major to ensure students are prepared to go to graduate school or enter their careers
- *As we expand recruitment of out-of-state students, must be able to deliver a liberal arts education – students will not come to a Regional Comprehensive University*

Example of Potential Savings

- Example A: Suspend a low enrolled concentration
 - Assume the concentration requires 5 courses to be offered each semester, but there are only 4 students in the concentration
 - Not offering those courses means full-time faculty can teach other courses currently taught by part-timers and no part-timers are needed for the concentration
 - The average cost of an adjunct for a 3-credit course is \$8,022
 - ***Suspending the concentration saves \$40,110 each semester or \$80,220/year***
- Courses taught by full-timers go into ELAC so more students are actually exposed to that discipline.
- The same idea applies to suspending low enrolled majors

Conclusion

- We will not be able to cut enough from Academic Programs to save \$17 million
- But there are savings that could be realized in virtually every major and these savings add up quickly
- We will be changing the way course schedules are created to better project the courses students need and reduce unneeded course offerings