Budget Council Minutes
Tuesday, October 27, 2020
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.
WebEx

In Attendance:

Terry Leist	Robert Mokwa	Chris Kearns	Michael Trotter
Kim Obbink	Mark Ranalli	Bradford Watson	Jason Carter
Chris Fastnow	Craig Woolard	Tia Brown	Matt Bissett

Guests:
Ariel Donohue – Diversity & Inclusion Director, Emily Edwards – Advising Commons, Tami Eitle – Senior Vice Provost, Megan Lasso – Budget Office Director, Brittany Thompson – Budget Office, Leslie Schroeder (meeting minutes)

Absentees: Grad School representative

I. **Call to Order**
    The meeting was called to order by Chair Terry Leist.

II. **Approval of Minutes**
    The September 22, 2020 meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

III. **University Information/Announcements**
     a. Introduction of new member Matt Bissett, ASMSU undergraduate representative – Matt is a fifth-year senior studying Civil Engineering, originally from Georgia.

IV. **Assessment Presentations**
    a. **Office of Diversity & Inclusion, Ariel Donohue**
       1. History
          - $60k initial investment to be used to create a new office and establish initiatives
          - Ariel wasn't hired into the role until December 2018. From there, she spent eight months developing a plan, trying to determine how to leverage funds to support diversification.
          - In FY19, funds weren't used, so money was returned to the Provost's Office.
          - In FY20, unused funds were returned to the institution.
          - Portion of funding is for new faculty lines: While hires haven't been made, funding has been used for other diversity initiatives including hiring someone to support Indian Education for All. These two new faculty lines are available to any college to make submissions. Program was live for six months before COVID halted it. When the current hiring moratorium lifts, deans will be notified that proposals will be reviewed again.
       2. Current Status
          - Ariel serves as MSU's Director of Diversity & Inclusion, and this position is first one like it in Montana, so Ariel (MSU) provides DI leadership around the state. Accomplishments include establishing the new office, the 3-Year Institutional Change Plan, developing metrics for diversity-equity-inclusion, approval for establishing a new Diversity Council, and the development of DI trainings available to all faculty and staff.
          - $20k operations budget has been fully utilized every year.
            In FY19 – hosted campus-wide diversity showcase, supported campus speakers, events, trainings, and workshops
            In FY20 – indigenous mentoring and research symposium, cultural graduation ceremonies, campus celebrations, Tribal College Presidents meeting, iChange network
       3. Assessment Measures

- DI partners in each college
- Increasing engagement and growing awareness of key issues on campus
- Progress has exceeded original assessment measures
4. Lessons Learned
- How long it takes to get a new program off the ground and vetted
- Build in short-term ways to bolster initiative
- Number of programs is hard to keep up with, so would request funds for additional staff
5. Discussion
- Funding for two tenure track lines cannot be dialed back. Does Budget Council still support moving forward with the hires, or could the money be divided in other ways to get more diversity in our faculty?
- An alternative is to use the money to provide additional protective time to develop scholarly research so (underrepresented) faculty can get tenure.
- Difficult to evaluate this request for two faculty lines. Is this a flexible pool of money for hiring? Since the proposal came out of the Provost Office, it would be good to verify with them what we are evaluating.

b. **Advising Commons, Emily Edwards**
1. History
- Diane Donnelly launched the Advising Commons.
- FY20 $70k request for two new positions
- 28 advisors, flex advisors, and admin support
2. Current Status
- Advisors serve every college, but not yet every department
3. Assessment Measures
- How to define success? Are student needs being met? Is information available and accurate? Partners across campus should have their needs met also.
- FY20 funding for two advisors:
Elizabeth Donald for Natural Sciences – 340 advisees, logged 1,677 advising notes, coordinates EdReady program (digital academy for struggling math students)
Laurie Grusonik for Engineering – currently serves 565 students (because an advisor left)
- National average is 285 caseloads per 1.0 FTE advisor. MSU average is higher: 340 caseloads per 1.0 FTE and 228 caseloads per 0.75 FTE.
- Without continued funding, 700 students will be without an academic advisor.
4. Lessons Learned
- Would like to improve professional development opportunities for advisors, expand cross-training, and strengthen collaborations with Center for Faculty Excellence (CFE)
- Important to foster belonging among advisors
- Communication is key to partnerships on campus – advisors and departments need to meet regularly

V. **Public Comment/Member Feedback**
a. Carter – In November, BOR approval will be requested for additional leased space for research (in the Molecular Bioscience Building at the MSU Innovation Campus), which is unusual in these uncertain fiscal times. Two areas of rapidly expanding research are Health Sciences and Biomedical. More hoods and gas lines are needed. MSU has funding through NIH grants and COVID grants, but not enough space to conduct the research. Opportunity to lease MVB spaces at $19 per square foot. This is a short-term

(two-year) lease and provides time to come up with a strategy. The lease agreement will be paid for using Facilities and Administration funds from grants.

VI.   Informational Items
    a.   Budget Council Role in Accreditation – Tami Eitle, Sr. Vice Provost
1. Institutional Effectiveness Council (comprised of all council chairs) met last month. They would like more budget information from units and Budget Council. If groups worked together it would minimize duplicate assessment presentations. Collaboration or a common template between Budget Council and the Institutional Effectiveness Council would improve efficiency.
2. Units submitted assessment reports to three different teams, but the investment information was missing. MSU makes huge investments for years, and some investments are never assessed to determine if they still benefit MSU.
3. Continuous Improvement Process – identify strategies to meet objectives, ask programs to make reports about success of program, submit reports to Planning & Analysis for feedback, post reports on webpage

    b.   President's Strategic Funding Process – Megan Lasso, Budget Director
1. Reallocation portion is 2%, based on current split between base and OTO. This percentage was decided upon because MSU was in growth mode, so all units were struggling to keep up with demand, and 2% is a manageable number. Many institutions use 98% budgeting.
2. Questions, comments, insights?
   - Ranalli – gaming process allows departments to give back an unfilled tenured line, which doesn't force departments to change their budget. Ranalli has never had to justify his $6M budget at MSU. Other institutions have required quarterly and annual budget discussions.
   - Trotter – Strategic implies long-term vision and view. To have funds for the future, departments may have to give up something from the past to get something new.
   - Leist – Planning Council process is ahead of Budget Council; not sure what resources will be available.
   - Fastnow – All departments should be thinking about what they want to look like in the future, carry priorities from last cycle.
   - Lasso – Think collectively about the larger, broad goals (long-term vs short-term, cross-college vs departmental). If the same requests are being made year after year, then these may be truly important.
   - Ranalli – Do units looks at the multiple things they do? Process could be implemented that ties back to the Strategic Plan.
   - Kearns – Departments are under-incentivized to adapt. Need balance between local knowledge and guidance from Montana Hall. It is in everyone's best interest to demonstrate return on investment, but from a centralized committee comes a centralized solution.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 p.m.   **Next Meeting: November 24, 2020 at 3:30 p.m. via WebEx**