

**BUDGET PLANNING COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES**  
**April 13, 2007**

**Present:** Wendy Merb-Brown, Gail Houlette, Gary Neiman, Phyllis Bernt, Joe McLaughlin, Dominic Barbato, Bill Decatur, Greg Shepherd, Morgan Vis, David Thomas, Kathy Krendl, Morgan Allen

**Staff:** Darrell Winefordner, John Day

**Absent:** Dennis Irwin, Rich Carpinellie, Aimee Howley

**Guests:** April Henderson, Steve Flaherty

**General Fee Reductions** – Handouts:

- 1) Control Total spreadsheet is broken down between General Programs, General Fee, Departmental Activity, and Resource Distribution to show how all funds for planning units fit together.
- 2) General Fee Control Totals, Exemptions, and 1% reductions for General Fee areas. General fee reductions are being examined at 1, 3, and 5%.

When general fee supported groups come before the committee they can ask for new money, ask to be exempted from cuts, etc. ICA hearing is Monday at 6:00 and is open to the public. General fee committee is working to have recommendations to BPC by first week in May. The end result of how general fee is distributed will be made public via website, budget book, etc.

**Cost Savings & Revenue Enhancement Priorities** – Long-Term Potential Savings List  
- Expenditures

- Early Retirement Program for Faculty – various plans have been examined. Most don't have a lengthy period of service. Kathy suggests a study group/task force to look at our program and look at the strategic priorities and position of the University. This program is part of the Faculty Handbook and would need to involve faculty input...other forces impacting this issue – quarter vs semesters, is there an implied benefit that may have influenced faculty to come to OU
- Purchasing Power – leveraging purchasing power implies some kind of standardization – culture change issues; some colleges have engaged in standardization of replacement purchases; standardization is a maintenance issue also – computers, software, etc.; copiers – departments can go out and negotiate own with no oversight or leveraging.

- Hiring a new Director of Purchasing and plan to modernize our purchasing practices.
- Idea of pulling purchasing cards back was discussed – where should responsibility for PCard use/abuse reside? Where is happy medium on how many cards to issue vs the cost/benefit? This is a control issue as well as a workload issue since the budget and staff cutting. BSCs could address these workload issues also.
- Elimination of University College – other strategies for retention and undecided students? This is an academic issue that needs addressed from the academic side.
- Telecommunications pricing/sourcing – on Brice Bible’s priority list. LD rates have been set up to subsidize everything else...how is this money really being used...it isn’t LD anymore. Voice is subsidizing data. Partnerships with vendors on cell phones are an idea. Standardization, again, could be a way of cutting costs. RCB transparency will contribute to illuminating this issue.
- Reduce EE fee waiver benefit to be more in line with others – will they enroll and will they pay. Possible to reduce benefit but still make it a benefit for dependent’s tuition savings. Is this a recruitment tool? Should there be a timeline on benefit – available 1 year after employment until retirement. We have lots of data on peer policies. Be clear on what true benefits really are to EE and institution – are there areas of our curriculum that would be beneficial to EE and institution. There are also costs of this benefit to the institution – waived students tie up seats and can result in need for additional sections, sometimes there is little commitment to following through and getting a passing grade because there is cost – should there be a tuition paid and then variably reimbursed upon successful completion of course. This is a benefit that will probably appear on the total compensation statement being developed.
- Web design – estimated \$250-\$500K / year on outsourcing web design. Different designs, different software...there is discussion of moving responsibility to MarComm as a means of standardizing. This could be an easy shared services opportunity offering internship opportunities, consistency and standardization. Our web presence as a University is very uneven based on money available within individual colleges/units. Our culture has been to develop this expertise within our units or outsource it to get timely service. If ‘centralized’, how would the baseline of service to all customers be developed? – this will be an ongoing discussion for many service units as we move to RCB.
- Regional campus relationships with Athens and COM – need a study group.
- Reduce utility consumption –Do we advertise ongoing programs well? Residence Hall challenge, energy conservation initiatives, and results of metering buildings? We need an education campaign and plans to invest

where we can make real progress – with this generation of students we need to engage regularly in dialogue and advertising.

- Idea of summer / winter break and utility savings – is that real or an urban legend
- Bus services to airport:
  - o Service not well advertised.
  - o Taxi is expensive and bus more reasonable but not at convenient times.
  - o International students now have a buddy system which is not cost effective. Faculty would also be inclined to use.
  - o There must be a more cost effective solution – how can we get to/from airport – study opportunity. Could we have volume to entice a rental agency to provide a one-way drop service?
- Reduce consulting fees – outside consultants used in many instances – examples include 1) IT was studied over and over; 2) have already done marketing / Branding study once before; we seldom ask our in-house experts for consulting;
- Reduce/eliminate food and entertainment for staff only meetings – general consensus that we should not be feeding staff; some discussion about whether we ought to allow exceptions for meetings held over lunch??
- Outsourcing of services provided by facilities – custodial, maintenance, food service; clearly would be strike issue with union based on current contract; could be an easier conversation in three years, at next contract time, when there is cost / performance data. Suggestions of a menu of services provided by Facilities and costs for additional services.

Need to get something out to the University community on the health benefits costs and possible changes to the plan and how it relates to salary increases. Health benefits group is meeting next Tuesday to hash out the plan changes.

Budget Planning and Analysis will edit the list of Revenue Enhancements and Cost Savings Priorities to eliminate duplicate items and to group ideas and distribute it to BPC members for voting. Suggestion made to keep the short term and long term nature of the lists.