

Minutes for the Budget & Finance Committee Meeting of Dec. 7, 2023

The Budget & Finance Committee last met on November 9, 2023.

1. Meeting called to order: E. Kondratieff (3:45 pm).

Attendees:

Eric Kondratieff, Chair (PCAL)
Kurt Neelly (At-Large)
Sean Kinder (Libraries)
Daniel Boamah (CHHS)
Jeremy Maddox (OCSE)
Julie Shadoan (PCAL)
John Erickson (GFCB)
Provost Bud Fischer (non-voting)

Absent:

Ben Dinan (At-Large)
Martha Day (CEBS)
Tanner Blood (SGA)
Faculty Regent Shane Spiller (non-voting)

Positions currently unfilled:

Alternates for CEBS, GFCB, PCAL, SGA

2. Chair Report – E. Kondratieff

A. Minutes from 11/09/2023 meeting – approved

3. New Business:

- a) Kondratieff: Discussion about developing metrics to assess Academic Affairs spending that does not directly support WKU faculty and academic mission; to be discussed further in upcoming meetings.
- b) Current financial, budget, and staffing issues and changes reported:
 - i) Some difficulties with separating out faculty support when support staff serves multiple departments and/or in specific areas of endeavor, not just faculty within their home dept.
 - ii) Maddox: (OCSE) his department suggests that college create a college-based budget committee.
 - iii) PCAL support staff are being reassigned to provide specific support services across multiple departments as opposed to covering multiple areas of support for their home dept.
 - iv) Maddox: (OCSE) reports high performance computer lab being de-commissioned due to pending maintenance and replacement expenses, which then requires researchers to find external resources.
- c) (Shadoan) Should this Committee develop a resolution to increase faculty representation on the BEC? (Maddox) Is there a different avenue for this committee to have a voice in budget priority issues? should we explore this avenue as it is unlikely that Admin. would allow increased faculty representation on BEC? (see also section 7, below)

4. Old Business: N/A

5. Faculty Regent – Shane Spiller (unavailable due to schedule conflict; no report)

6. BEC Rep - Neelly

Neelly presented general overview of recent BEC meetings, primarily budget based reports on Enrollment & Student Experience, Philanthropy & Alumni, President's Office, Strategy & Operations, etc.

Future BEC agenda items in the Spring to include discussion and decisions regarding the 2-year trial of the BEC-OAC combined committee. Committee members expressed interest in learning more about the BEC committee structure, charter and formal charges of the committee, and membership makeup.

As has been discussed previously, Shadoan emphasized importance of increasing faculty membership and participation in the BEC.

7. Provost – Bud Fischer

Provost Fischer provided the following Historical perspective of the BEC combining with the OAC: Two years ago, the OAC and BEC were combined to be more efficient and less duplicative. At the time the committees were combined, it was understood to be a 2-year trial period, which will come to completion in May 2024. There will be discussions in

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Spring 2024 regarding make-up, purpose, structure, bylaws, etc. The BEC does have formal charges from the beginning of AY 23-24 (intend to share these with this committee). Provost Fischer stated his opinion that the current structure has matured and works much better than it did the first year (AY 22-23).

Maddox asked the Provost's opinion on whether each college should have a budget committee to discuss college financial priorities.

Provost Fischer replied that his office distributes money to College Deans who have 100% responsibility for how they spend their funds on faculty, staff, etc.

Shadoan followed up, asking whether all colleges should discuss forming college-level budget committees; first step would be informal discussions with Deans to get their take / opinion on increased faculty involvement with budgetary decision-making.

Provost Fischer is in support of such discussions.

8. Meeting adjourned (4:35 pm).