

## **YSU Budget Advisory Council**

Meeting minutes – February 19, 2018

9:00 a.m. – Kilcawley Center, Esterly Room

Members in attendance: Dr. Martin Abraham, Dr. Jeffrey Coldren, Carly Devenburgh, Dr. Bruce Keillor, Dr. Thomas Wakefield, Amy Gordon, Eddie Howard, Lisa Mudryk, Elaine Jacobs, Rayann Atway, Ernie Barkett, Neal McNally.

Members absent: Len Schiavone, Ted Roberts, Connie Augustine-Thompson, Dr. Jeff Tyus, Dr. Charles Howell, Dr. Ken Learman, Dr. Tomi Ovaska

Guest: Karla Krodel

- 1) The meeting convened at 9:04 a.m. The minutes from the 1/22/18 meeting, which had been distributed prior to today's meeting, were accepted as final without changes.
- 2) Karla Krodel briefed the Council on YSU's summer Jump Start program, which she proposes to be renewed and expanded, effective summer 2018. Whereas the current Jump Start program allows incoming freshman students to enroll in select summer courses for a \$500 flat rate for a 3-credit hour course, the new Jump Start rates would include three additional flat rates of \$650 for a 4-credit course, \$850 for a 5-credit course, and \$200 for a 1-credit lab. This expansion would help address course bottlenecks, particularly in some STEM disciplines, which sometimes occurs when class sizes during fall and/or spring semesters are at maximum capacity. Another proposed change to the Jump Start program would be to apply the Affordable Tuition Advantage (ATA) surcharge for nonresident students, even for those who are from outside the ATA region. Ms. Krodel estimated that the Jump Start students could save a maximum of 45% (during summer semester) by participating in the program, but conceded that the immediate return on investment (net revenue to YSU) probably isn't great. While Jump Start is intended to help improve student retention and matriculation, Ms. Krodel reported that limited data exists to discern a relationship between Jump Start and retention rates. Neal McNally said that the Jump Start program represents another form of tuition discounting. Mr. McNally noted that YSU's tuition discount rate last year was 24%, one of the highest among public universities in Ohio. On the other hand, the summer Jump Start program serves a limited number of students, is part of YSU's overall enrollment strategy, and provides opportunities for students to earn a degree within a shorter timeframe.
- 3) In response to the December 2017 call for proposals, the Council received 30 requests for strategic investment funds, totaling \$4 million, and which are available to view [online](#). With less than \$1 million in strategic funds available to distribute, the Council

discussed ways to organize, rank and prioritize recommendations. Ernie Barkett said that some of the proposals don't seem particularly strategic but rather seem routine and should already be part of the regular budget. Neal McNally said that due to limited resources, spending needs always outpace available funding and that none of the proposals submitted are currently part of the university's budget. Mr. McNally cited the Facilities Department's campus sign replacement project as an example, noting that the \$5 million in state capital funding YSU receives each year from Columbus (for building maintenance and repairs) does not come anywhere close to covering the university's \$220 million deferred maintenance backlog. Capital dollars that YSU receives from the state of Ohio are often used for less glamorous and less visible projects, like roof replacements, elevator maintenance, and HVAC systems—not to replace exterior campus signage. Without supplemental funding, such maintenance may never be completed, even if it appears routine. Elaine Jacobs asked whether there are alternative ways to fund some of these requests, and whether it would be feasible, for instance, to tax the various colleges and administrative areas to provide centralized funding to replace the exterior signs in their respective buildings. Provost Abraham responded that there are limited funds to do so, noting that the college budgets are strained in the same way as the university's overall budget. Neal McNally said that such funding reallocations could be an alternative approach in some cases where an institutional priority is identified. He noted that the IT shared governance committees are reviewing that type of model to support university-wide IT refresh initiatives.

Rayann Atway, Eddie Howard, and Amy Gordon all voiced support for the proposal submitted by Undergraduate Admissions to make cosmetic improvements in Sweeny Hall. This proposal requires a relatively small investment of approximately \$54,000 but could have a big impact by improving first impressions among prospective students and other guests to campus whose first stop is often the Welcome Center in Sweeny Hall. Eddie Howard also cited the YSU Police Department's proposal to fund an enhanced communication system as being another noteworthy investment that would clearly make campus safer. Provost Abraham suggested that the Council use a rating system to rank each proposal, with ratings based on the various criteria included in the template used to collect proposals, such as alignment with the 2020 Strategic Plan, return on investment, etc. Lisa Mudryk suggested a rating matrix that would facilitate and organize how Council members rank each proposal. Bruce Keillor suggested that follow-up information be requested of submitters whose proposals are deemed worthy by the Council. Such supplemental information could include, for example, the impact of being awarded partial funding for a particular proposal. Jeff Coldren reminded the group that the Council's role is advisory to the president, and that President Tressel would ultimately have the final say in how funds are allocated.

There was a discussion about the timeline associated with making recommendations about funding, and when funds would actually be distributed. Although there is no apparent time-sensitivity associated with the distribution or utilization of funds, which are sitting in a designated reserve account, the group felt that funding recommendations and decisions should be made sooner rather than later. Neal McNally agreed to send a campus-wide e-mail to update the campus community on the status of the process, including a [link to where the proposals may be viewed online](#).

4) The meeting adjourned at 10:00 a.m.