**Faculty Senate Budget Committee Minutes**

**September 26, 2019, 2 p.m.**

**Memorial Union, Meinecke Board Room**

Present: D. Miller (Chair), K. Grafton (Provost), N. Dochtermann, S. Zhong, S. David, M. Petersen, J. Glower, M. Secor-Turner.

Since it was the first meeting of the year introductions were made. Miller reviewed the history and charges of the committee, noting that all relevant documents and old meeting minutes are on the committee’s Blackboard organization page. Priorities for the committee are to share information from meetings with their faculty and to provide input to the Provost’s Office as part of shared governance. Final minutes of each meeting can be shared with any faculty.

Grafton provided updates on the University’s financial position. Final numbers for fall enrollment are in (see attachment) with a drop of over 600 students (4.5%) from last year. This will reduce tuition income by about $5.5 million for the year. Reasons for lower enrollment may include fewer high school graduates, fewer transfer students, fewer international students, fewer on-line students, and Minnesota being aggressive in trying to keep more Minnesota students in-state with targeted financial aid. On the positive side, our 4 year graduation rate is now 40%, up from 28% a few years ago.

Preventing a further slide in enrollment will require us to be creative in realigning course and major offerings, developing new programs, and teaching more on-line courses and programs. We need to increase our appeal to nontraditional students. A major strategic planning process has begun and is essential to organize budget priorities. Our committee should be involved in developing the plan and encouraging faculty input through that forum.

At this time we have about $1.8 million per annum in vacant position salary lines. We do not have a hiring freeze but a slow-down that will allow much of that vacancy money to fill the shortfall. Deans will be asked to prepare 90% budget exercises. In addition, potential cuts are being considered in athletics, student affairs, and the finance office, and another VISP program will be offered. There is no intention to have lay-offs of faculty or staff. At this time, committee members can have the most influence on budget savings by working with each of their Deans.

Last academic year there were also late cuts of 1% to colleges and 3% to non-academic units in order to have a balanced budget for 2018-19.

Next meeting is scheduled for October 24.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Miller