Minutes

Committee members present: Chair Jim Middleton, Jill Eiland, Brittany Kenison, Emily Plec, and David Yaden. Committee members absent: Jim Francesconi.

Chancellor’s staff present: Interim Chancellor Melody Rose, Interim Vice Chancellor Karen Marrongelle, Joe Holliday, and Charles Triplett.

Campus representatives present: Steve Adkison (EOU); Brad Burda (Oregon Tech); Sona Andrews (PSU); Mary Cullinan, Jim Klein, Craig Morris, and Karen Stone (SOU); Scott Coltrane (UO); and Steve Scheck (WOU).

Chair Middleton called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Approval of January Minutes

Chair Middleton called for a motion to approve the minutes as presented in the docket; Director Brittany Kenison and Jill Eiland made the motion and second, respectively. Motion carried.

2. 2015-16 Undergraduate Admissions Policy

Chair Middleton called upon Dr. Joe Holliday, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Student Success Initiatives, to discuss proposed language modifications to the 2015-16 Undergraduate Admissions Policy. It was pointed out that this is the final year for OSBHE approval of the large universities’ undergraduate admissions policy. Holliday highlighted the following changes: the elimination of the automatic admission section, institution-specific changes to the process for reviewing applicants that do not meet the minimum threshold for certain majors and the strategies campuses use to ensure to support these students, elimination of outdated Department of Education terminology, and the inclusion of an updated GED table.

ACTION: Directors Jill Eiland and Emily Plec made the motion and second to approve the 2015-16 Admissions Policy, respectively. Motion carried.
DISCUSSION ITEM

3. SOU Retrenchment Preliminary Plan

Chair Middleton called upon President Cullinan to provide the update on the preliminary retrenchment plan. Dr. Cullinan, in providing background, advised that she recently met with the faculty union in compliance with the retrenchment schedule and responses/ideas will be solicited from the affected academic programs during the 20-day comment period following the distribution of the plan to the campus community. It was emphasized that the retrenchment plan focuses upon contractually-related issues and other strategies to reduce the university’s budget are supplemental to that plan.

Discussion focused on the proposed program reductions and the timeliness of notifying those affected by these reductions, clarity of messaging, attention to mission as it relates to core liberal arts, and the implications of the inherent underfunding of liberal arts within the resource allocation model. Caution was expressed that it has not been apparent the administration has “embraced the paradigm shift required to tackle these problems in a systemic way”; although this comment was noted, President Cullinan stressed that the University is preparing for the worst contingencies without causing a mass exodus of currently-enrolled and prospective students. Restructuring efforts have been made—to include combining of student affairs and academic affairs into one department, eliminating departmental chairs, and creating a more accountable academic structure—and resulted in a cultural shift in administrative areas. With the retirement of approximately 29 tenured faculty, part-time and/or adjunct faculty will be hired on case-by-case, term-by-term bases in order to provide increased flexibility.

Chair Middleton offered that the retrenchment process is focusing attention on what might or will be cut, but encouraged the president to give attention to what remains by providing the metaphor that “this process is like a sculpture wherein a big block of stone is cut away to release the beautiful figure hidden within. Attention to and celebrating what is the core to which [Southern] is returning or creating—the thing of distinction—can help guide the way forward and balance the angst and pain of what the retrenchment elements are.”

OTHER ITEMS

4. Other items put forward by the Committee

No other items were addressed by the Committee.

5. Adjournment

With no further business proposed, the meeting was adjourned at 2:39 p.m.