Faculty Assembly Report

Faculty Assembly (<http://www.uncfacultyassembly.org/>)

The Assembly passed three resolutions: a) resolution of ‘thanks’ to outgoing President Erskine Bowles for his support for higher education and work with the Assembly; b) resolution of ‘thanks’ to outgoing Assembly Chair Judith Wegner; and c) amended resolution that the UNC system, Board of Governors, and General Administration support UNC Code statements regarding academic freedom.

We listened to presentations from General Administration:

1. Ernie Murphrey, Vice President for Finance, discussed the budget. The 2011-2013 projected budget has a 3.2 billion dollar gap due to expiring temporary taxes, expiring stimulus money, and weak economy. The Governor has asked UNC system for 5 and 10 % cut scenarios. Although 2.5 % of the budget can be carried over the fiscal year, GA advises campuses to not be sitting on a lot of money at the end of this year.
2. Anita Watkins, Vice President for Governmental Relations, discussed implications of flux in the Legislature on several items of interest to the UNC system. Tuition authority: will that reside with the Legislature or Board of Governors? Financial aid – in past, has been coming from unclaimed money in controllers office, which goes away fast; this year was plugged with lottery money; next year, will have to find the money. Enrollment: beginning to flatten, but not much; initiative to tie enrollment growth money to retention and graduation. State health plan and sustainability of the state retirement system: ongoing studies to examine these. Salary increases: highly unlikely, even for equity concerns. Looking for ways for UNC system faculty to interact with and educate the legislature; for example, forensics experts could advise on emerging SBI lab issues.
3. Alan Mabe, Sr Vice President for Academic Affairs, discussed GA’s academic agenda. *Biennial degree program/productivity review*: Standards set by BOG on number of majors and number of degree produced; will be sending out instructions for this review. *Relationship between enrollment, retention, and funding*: Retention and growing the number of transfer students will be examined alongside freshman class size in determining enrollment growth funds. Over the next decade, the UNC system is projected to have 50k more students; working with campuses on 8 yr projection plans and investigating the possibility of limiting freshman class sizes. GA is asking campuses for 10 year projections of target baccalaureate degree (e.g., 60 % of regional population will have degrees).

Four discussion groups reported on potential topics to be discussed this year:

1. *Budget*: Recommend tuition waivers, and instate status for TAs; evaluation of funding formulas – incorporate language to include startup costs and infrastructure costs; suggest campuses have budgetary committee that involves faculty; bond 2000 only met 1/3 of needs to bring campuses up to date. Now have 61k more students and need the other 2/3 to bring campus into present (time for another bond?).
2. *Furloughs*: current year furloughs may be campus decisions; possible ways to handle furloughs (e.g., faculty not attend graduation); possible alternative such as voluntary furlough
3. *Workplace innovations*: Possible topics for further discussion include sustainability, employment options (4 day work week, shared positions), technology – what benefits teaching?, faculty support and operation (virtual offices), academic policies – e.g., come up with best practices?, identifying administrative flexibilities; suggest putting useful to the campuses on the FA website
4. *Healthcare:* Ask the GA to assemble a panel with faculty and outside experts to study the state health plan. Must include an effort to make more efficient use of state resources; Have forums on overall compensation, including health care on each campus. Develop a list of talking point for campus discussion; Consider not paying insurance administrator on a cost + fee basis. Note: These points were endorsed by the Assembly

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