

Minutes of March 28th 2016 Meeting

The meeting convened at 3:01 p.m. in room 817 Cathedral of Learning.

UPBC members present were: Livingston Alexander, Patricia Beeson, Jeanine Buchanich, Richard Colwell, Tony Gaskew, Nasreen Harun, Pat Kroboth, Monika Losagio, Dean Nelson, Arthur Ramicone, Lindsay Rodzwick, and Frank Wilson.

Also present were: Amanda Brodish, David DeJong, Rich Henderson, Paul Supowitz, and Steve Wisniewski.

UPBC members not present were: Larry Carr, James Cassing, Timothy Folts, Beverly Gaddy, Jonathan Harris, Jerry Holder, Zsuzsa Horvath, Ron Larsen, Arthur Levine, Kathleen Musante, Andrew Rose, and Chad Zutter.

Minutes of February 8th 2016 Meeting

There was a motion to approve the minutes of the February 8th 2016 meeting. There was no discussion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Report of the Chair

Provost Beeson noted that the FY16 commonwealth budget has finally been funded and Pitt is budgeted to receive a 5% increase in its appropriation. A rescission is still possible, but the 5% increase amount serves as the baseline for discussions on the FY17 budget. Beeson lauded the campus-wide effort to lobby representatives on behalf of Pitt, highlighting that Governor Wolf announced his intentions not to veto the budget the day after Pitt Day in Harrisburg.

Republicans and Democrats in Harrisburg continue their entrenchment, as budget concerns remain. Beeson remarked that it is hard to see how both sides will agree on a FY17 budget in advance of the new fiscal year. Accordingly, she noted that the committee will need to be flexible in their recommendations to the chancellor, providing guiding principles rather than fixed parameters. Beeson noted that Pitt will be ambitious in moving forward with the new strategic plan, identifying creative ways to focus resources. However, continuing concerns about affordability and student debt will be a limiting factor in tapping tuition as a revenue stream.

Beeson shared that we are on track to bring in a great incoming freshman class on the Pittsburgh campus. The 2016 freshman class will be smaller than the last several freshman classes due to the extra capacity afforded by the new Nordenberg Hall now bringing us to a steady state. Beeson noted that the regional campuses are also doing very well, receiving 20% more applications relative to last year, with 50% more applications made directly to the regional campuses. The regional campuses are working together in a coordinated effort to convert these applications into paid-deposits. Frank Wilson notes that on the Greensburg

campus, there has been an increase in faculty outreach that is likely playing a role in these positive admissions numbers.

Beeson noted that Pitt ranked 29th in Forbes Magazine's America's Best Employers Survey. Among colleges and universities, Pitt ranked 3rd behind MIT and Duke. Pitt was the highest-ranked employer in Pennsylvania.

Parameters Subcommittee

In Dean Larsen's absence, David DeJong provided an update of the activities of the Parameters subcommittee. DeJong noted that in the subcommittee's first meeting, they discussed the advocacy efforts being made in Harrisburg on behalf of Pitt and the other state-related institutions. Key budget parameters were quite preliminary at this meeting, but more budget parameters are expected to be available at the next meeting.

Update on the Commonwealth Appropriation

Paul Supowitz noted that the fight in Harrisburg is not about support for higher education; in fact, Governor Wolf has expressed support for higher education and has talked about restoring our funding levels to FY11 levels. Supowitz reiterated that Pitt's FY16 commonwealth appropriation reflects a 5% increase over FY15. However, to date Pitt has not received funding to support capital projects; in FY15, funds totaled \$20 million.

In the next few weeks, Supowitz will put out a call to action for members of the Pitt community to advocate legislators on behalf of Pitt for the FY17 commonwealth appropriation. Frank Wilson suggested that the Pitt administration utilize the talents of Pitt faculty members to develop positive messaging around higher education and to counter negative perceptions of higher education.

The meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.