

2013-14 UPBC annual report

In the 2013-2014 academic year the UPBC had significant discussions about the Transform CSU proposals meeting with Presidents Gray and Miller to try to get their perspective on how the plan would unfold. We also held an open forum for the campus to share their concerns about the plan. We held budget meetings with each Division head to ascertain their priorities for the next budget year and made recommendations to President Miller on our concerns. Minutes of our meeting are available on the UPBC website as our any documents that we were given for review. The website can be located by accessing the webpage through the A-Z index on the CCSU homepage (University Planning and Budget Committee).

From: UPBC
To: President Miller
Re: Recommendations of the University Planning & Budget Committee following the Budget Presentations of February 19, 2014.
Date: March 10, 2014

UPBC key recommendations

Departmental reliance on one-time funding

UPBC has in the past recommended that departments plan for the future reduction in one-time funding as more full time, tenure track faculty and full time staff are hired. This year looks like it will finally be the “bubble” year where that one-time funding will be expended as CCSU continues to hire faculty and fill the holes created by fringe benefit changes and ARP to SERS migrations. The committee, with the support of the CFO, has made an overall suggestion to all divisions to reconsider one-time requests for inclusion in capital should they qualify for that type of funding.

Overall recommendations pertaining to most or all budget presentations follow. Following the overall recommendations we present recommendations related to the budgets presented by each division.

Overall Recommendations

Working Out of Class

UPBC agrees that all requests pertaining to staff members working out of class should be reviewed and properly addressed. In recent years, with budget reductions and continued increases in workload, staff members have been asked to do more and more work beyond where they are often classed. The allocations requested are reasonable.

Revenue enhancement

Creative revenue enhancement ideas seem to have lessened this year as the focus turns toward general enrollment increases. Yes, an enrollment increase IS revenue enhancement. The committee however would still like to see more ideas and support for them come forward to build revenue at CCSU. The innovation grant program instituted by the Provost is a good example of one of these initiatives.

Recommendations Specific to Departmental Budgets

Academic Affairs

The committee is supportive of the proposals put forward by the Academic Affairs division. Many smaller items that are requested and prioritized UPBC trusts have been vetted by the department chairs, Deans and Provost to the point where none stand out to us as needing further review. We do believe that the ability to satisfy these requests using one-time funding will be hindered this coming fiscal year and that alternative solutions will be needed to try and implement at least some of these proposed items. The continued hiring of full time, tenure track faculty is also heavily supported by UPBC.

Administrative Affairs

UPBC has, in recent years, received guidance that new position funding was to be allocated solely to teaching positions. With that understanding, the CAO may want to consider using reallocation to fund the Public Safety Administrative Coordinator should no base budget increase be approved. UPBC is generally not opposed to the position and we were pleased to see fringe estimates included in the proposal.

A few items on the capital request list stood out to the committee.

Parking management system increases - \$70,000. UPBC understands that parking management will be implemented in the Welte garage and that these proposals will constitute an expansion of that system. At this time UPBC would recommend a review of the system in Welte prior to any further commitment of funding to expand the system. The \$70,000 request can be used elsewhere to fund higher priority items in the CAO's request.

Football Stadium Sound System - \$80,000. At this time, the sound system upgrade is not something supported by the UPBC.

Perimeter Fencing Soccer/Track - \$100,000. UPBC believes that this item should have been included in the larger reserve funded field upgrade project that occurred in recent years. It seems that this is a carryover of that work. UPBC was concerned these additional requests would occur when the initial proposal to upgrade the fields was proposed. At this time, the fence is not something supported by the UPBC.

The committee is supportive of the remaining one-time and capital funding requests.

UPBC would caution against further reducing any deferred maintenance on the CCSU campus. The Transform CSCU 2020 plan offers some solutions to the deferred maintenance issues within the system and we hope that CCSU would be assigned a fair share of that funding to address these ongoing issues.

The committee continues to be pleased by the strong effort made to recognize cost savings from personnel control (PCN) before any proposals to eliminate positions.

Student Affairs

UPBC is supportive of the request to fund the additional time or personnel needed within Student Disability Services. Part time AAUP or part time SUOAF lines should be considered ahead of University Assistants for this work. Our counseling and disability services units need to be properly supported to respond to the growing needs of the student populations that they serve.

Nutmeg/Laurel Room Renovation- \$200,000. UPBC believes that this is not the year to request this renovation project within Memorial Hall. Funds will be very limited and the spaces are not in dire need of refurbishment. Projects such as these should be considered for inclusion in the CAO's budget and prioritized by that unit. Ultimately the CAO will minimally need to assign a project manager to oversee outside contractors, or at a higher level, provide qualified workers to do the project in-house. UPBC is concerned that facilities projects are proposed across divisional budgets.

North Entrance Awning - \$10,000. Again this item should have been included in the CAO's budget. It is referenced as a safety issue and would certainly rank high when prioritized. Within the Student Affairs budget the item is 13th in prioritization. UPBC is supportive of the replacement should there be a true need with regard to safety of the people using that entrance.

Alumni/Bellin Semesters Sound System - \$221,700. UPBC is not supportive of the project using limited one-time funding and would suggest a migration of this proposal to capital funding for consideration. Generally, the overall project ranked low in the eyes of the committee.

Alumni/Bellin Mixing System - \$23,500. Our response is identical to the one listed for the above item.

UPBC was told in the past that we banked recreation fees that were used for the field and recreation upgrade projects. Going forward since that time, where have the recreation fees been going? The request for \$5,398 for a power rack in recreation seems like a perfect use for the funds accumulated under that fee structure. The committee recommends a review of the recreation fee allocations to allow for projects such as this one to be funded from that pool of money.

The committee is supportive of the remaining one-time and capital funding requests.

Information Technology

The committee supports the request by the CIO for funding of the additional position to address the growing data security needs of the campus. Clarification of the reallocation funding accounts and inclusion of fringe estimates should be in the final approved version of the proposal.

Classroom Enhancement Pool - \$150,000. It is the understanding of the committee that the Provost, CIO and CAO have combined to address this need. The UPBC is pleased to see the CAO's support of the project however recognition of such projects should still occur somewhere within the CAO's proposal in order to provide a level of understanding that there is a

commitment of facilities management's time and personnel to manage these projects when they get off the ground. Facilities staff is already handling multiple large building renovations and construction projects and these classroom upgrades will require their involvement. The upgrades requested to rooms in years past have often been denied while other facilities projects including increased media technology spending is favored. The UPBC is supportive of a return to focusing on classroom improvements (segmented lighting, darkening blinds, chalk board replacement, etc.) ahead of spending on hallway technology increases by the CAO.

The committee is supportive of the remaining one-time and capital funding requests.

UPBC agrees with the IT reduction strategies as they appear to not cause considerable operation impairment to the division.

Institutional Advancement

The Institutional Advancement request received much discussion this year. After approving of a move to a new web site and content management provider 5 years earlier, the time has come for a new renewal of services. Additionally the VP of IA has requested a larger increase in marketing dollars for the University in support of enrollment increases.

Web (CMS) - \$199,750. The UPBC recognizes that we cannot be without a web site. The funding allocation number is less of a concern to the committee as where it will be paid from and the manner in which that funding is applied and carried forward. In the current proposal before the committee, the item is requested as a base budget increase. UPBC does not support an annual increase of this amount. Should the contract be paid over 5 years, UPBC is supportive of a \$31,000 base budget increase with an allocation from one-time funding in year one of the agreement in the amount of \$44,750. Should contractual rules and discounting allow for a single upfront purchase of the 5 year CMS, then the item needs to be moved to one-time or capital funding.

Recruitment and Admissions - \$200,000. UPBC is concerned about the large number presented here. We understand the idea is to spend marketing money while the enrollment is down in order to mitigate our enrollment declines. The plan shared with UPBC at a later date details the specific areas in which this funding would be applied. The President will need to take a hard look at the availability of funding to allocate for this purpose versus using it to assist with current programming on the campus. UPBC would encourage that the VP of IA seek additional support from the system office for funding for this purpose. Enrollment increase is a system wide issue that the BOR has secured funding to address. An example might be that the BOR offer to produce radio and TV ads that each University can "tag" as their own and then pay for the ad air time, saving considerable dollars using efficiencies of scale. Additionally in-house production utilizing CCSU operations and students must be considered to effectively maintain the costs. UPBC will not recommend the exact level of funding support needed here, but will request that any allocation be reported back to the committee in FY 15 with updates on the data to support the success or failure of this approach to increasing our enrollment.

Reallocations to fund positions are supported by UPBC. The committee has asked the administration to continually track these new or renewed lines as they do minimally incur some overall increased costs to the University in terms of healthcare support versus the single position that they once came from.

President's Office

Victim's Advocate - \$55,000. As with the similar item in the CAO's budget, the committee is supportive of the position should base budget funding be available. Should that not be the case, reallocation of funding should be considered. The committee again would like to see a breakdown somewhere of fringe costs and recognition of this cost overall to the University when new positions are added.

Fiscal Affairs

No specific budget recommendations.

The committee would again request a forecast of the impact the minimal wage increase in 2015 will have on University operations. Many part time staff (students) will qualify for this increase and divisions should be prepared for that change.

Human Resources

No specific budget recommendations.

HR continues to manage their operations well in the face of reductions in staff due to departures.

Dear Members of the University Planning and Budget Committee,

I have now heard the budget presentations made by each of the Division Heads, and have carefully studied your recommendations of March 10th in relationship to those presentations. At this juncture, we are still dealing with a few unknowns concerning the upcoming fiscal year, the greatest of which is enrollment. That said, we will need to make tentative decisions recognizing that the allocation of some resources may need to be made, but approval to spend can depend upon more information. Given this, I will respond briefly to each of the recommendations UPBC has made.

1. I agree completely with the comment that divisions reconsider one-time requests for inclusion in capital funding should they qualify for that type of funds.
2. In regards to the comments about working out of class, I agree; however, some of these problems may be resolved by revising downward the work assigned so that people are currently properly assigned. Some of these requested revisions are not because of increases in workload due to unfilled positions and thus, may not be warranted.
3. I agree that we should continue the practice of hiring full-time, tenure-track faculty when it is possible; however, it is also important to note that most of the additional resources we have received in the last few years have come as a result of initiatives in specific academic areas, so our flexibility is not as great as it has been.
4. I agree that we should be extremely cautious about the expense of the Nutmeg/Laurel Room renovation. We must look at how that might fit into an overall approach to Food Services and our upcoming contract.
5. I am unclear about the necessity, considering the total dollar amount requested, for the Alumni/Bellin, Semesters sound system.
6. I am not certain what you mean by “banked recreation fees.” That is not my recollection of what was explained when we started into the field project. In fact, I believe what we specifically said was that it was almost impossible to go back and determine exactly where all of those fees had been utilized. They were taken in, they were included with other overall fees, and there were expenses incurred against them. They were not dealt with in a separate account. I remember Larry Wilder explaining this. That being said, I tend to agree with you about the cost for the power rack. I would similarly note the information about fencing. Although some fencing costs were anticipated in the initial project, now that the fields have been used for several years, it is clear that some additional fencing work needs to be done, both for safety and for preservation of the surfaces. Similarly, the resurfacing of the football, lacrosse, and recreation field was not required nine years ago; it is now becoming an issue.
7. I agree with your comment regarding clarification of the reallocation funding in IT.

8. The Classroom Enhancement Pool needs to be considered for funding from a whole range of sources, and that will occur. There may also be some funding coming from the Smart Classroom Initiative proposed by the System, and hopefully, funded in the Governor's budget.
9. I share the concerns of the UPBC with regard to the web management system. Obviously, the web management system is critical. How we are able to fund it, whether in one piece or annually remains to be seen. In either case, the commitment has to be clear. We can't pay for two years of the project, and then quit. We will need to be able to identify where we find the overall funding, even if it is paid out over a period of time. Furthermore, I don't know whether we should include such funding into the base as an ongoing a cost for every year in the future. We don't know how much will be required in the future. For example, the amount requested for this five-year term is considerably lower than what was expended for the last five years. It probably will continue to be a cost, but it will vary annually.
10. It is important that we begin to make a range of investments, both in terms of human capital and in actual funding, to complement an ongoing plan to increase enrollment. I think a number of things can be done that don't require advertising and marketing, such as adding faculty resources, through reallocation, to areas where we have current unmet student demand. Nevertheless, a concerted multi-year process to raise our overall profile is important, and will be examined.
11. The Victim's Advocate position in the President's Office will be funded through reallocation, as suggested.

Again, thank you very much for all of your work. I can assure you that I will pay close attention to all of your recommendations as we move closer to constructing a final budget for the upcoming fiscal year.

Sincerely,

Jack Miller
President