

CLAS Finance Committee Minutes
Friday, September 10, 2021
3 pm

Present:

John Palmer, Chair
Galia Hatav*
Jorge Valdes Kroff*
Daniel Talham*
Matt Felt*
Thomas Knight*
Tarek Saab
Catherine Tucker (secretary)
Uma Sethuram (Dean's office)
Chris McCarty (Associate Dean)
*new

Absent:

José Miguel Ponciano Castellanos

1. Call to order and approval of minutes from previous meeting.
Meeting called to order at 3:03 pm
2. Introductions.
First the second year members introduce themselves, followed by the new members.
3. Election of a member to serve as Committee Secretary for 2021-22.
Catherine Tucker volunteers to serve as secretary.
4. Charge to Committee from CLAS Dean's Office (McCarty)
 - The Committee should provide recommendations on how to make a \$2.8 million cut from the OPS \$17 million budget.
 - This will involve figuring out criteria for reallocating OPS budget funds across departments to achieve the cut across a three year time frame.
 - The College will make the final decisions for allocation.
 - *Background on OPS budgets and the overall situation:*
 - OPS funds serve to support undergrad education, which is mainly accomplished by funding Teaching Assistants (this supports Grad student funding -- GSFs)
 - some OPS funds must be set aside (reserve) for enrollment management and adjustments including last minute TA needs, etc.
 - This adjustment process started about 2 years ago. Then the rules governing distance learning fees (previously part of OPS) were changed and no longer allowed to cover grad student stipends or tuition.
 - This change created a large deficit for the College (\$2.8million), especially for departments whose budgets depended significantly on distance learning fees for funding grad students who taught many of these courses. (These departments had been particularly entrepreneurial and progressive in offering

online classes to meet distance learning demand, thus also benefiting from the distance learning fees).

- Moreover, GSF funds are overexpended and will need to be cut overall.
- Loss of distance learning fees and GSF funding affects all colleges in UF.
- Last year the Finance Committee requested Excel spreadsheets on OPS budgets from all CLAS department chairs. The spreadsheets revealed a wide range of Teaching Assistant (TA) responsibilities and compensation, with a general FTE of 0.50.
- Then the committee examined and synthesized the information to identify a set of workload profiles to encompass the range of diversity in legitimate TA workloads and OPS fund use
- Finance Committee will soon receive the OPS requests from all departments in the form of a spreadsheet. The request total is likely to exceed the total of \$17 million available for OPS.
- Meanwhile, the Provost is temporarily helping:
 - Distance learning back stop is \$2 million for 3 years (supports costs of stipends for distance learning teachers)
 - GSF \$1.35million block grant will be for 4 years (to help departments meet existing contractual commitments to grad students and continue to offer packages to new grad students).
- The \$17 million must be reduced by the \$2.8 million over the next three years, when the Provost will cease to provide support funds for the CLAS shortfall due to loss of distance learning fees.

Chair Recommendations for Procedures and Principles (Palmer)

- We should start by establishing guiding principles
- One size fits all is not appropriate for budget adjustments
- Given information acquired last year, there are some OPS expenditures which seem less relevant than others for undergrad education. Identifying such expenditures for targeted cuts is one approach for reducing OPS budget allocations.
- This challenging task will require thoughtful and systematic work on the part of the committee.