

Meeting Notes

Integrated Planning Committee Meeting

October 30, 2017

9:00pm – 10:00am

A-2029

Attendance:

Dr. Noreen Golfman, Provost & VP (Academic) (Chair)
Dr. Donna Cox-Hardy, Social Work
Dr. Aimée Surprenant, Graduate Studies
Dr. Donald McKay, Medicine
Dr. Laura Robinson, Arts & Social Science, Grenfell
Jillian Kavanagh, Marine Institute
Matt Barter, MUNSU
Younis Abdalla, GSU
Keith Matthews, Associate Director, Academic Budgets
Lori Pike, Budget Office
Paul Chancey, CIAP
Réanne Kinsella, CIAP

Unable to attend:

Dr. Ian Sutherland, Music
Dr. James Feehan, Humanities & Social Science

1. Review of meeting notes from October 16, 2017

The meeting notes from October 16, 2017 were reviewed and accepted by the committee.

2. Preliminary Budget Gap Review 2018-19

Ms. Pike provided an overview of the *Budget Submission Summary 2018-19, 2019-20 & 2020-21* which will be submitted to the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour on October 31, 2017.

In regards to the upcoming year (2018-19), revenues show a reduction of \$3.9 million in the Provincial Operating Grant, an adjustment previously communicated to Memorial during the 2017-18 budget process. MUN anticipates an increase of \$1.5 million in tuition revenue in 2018-19 as result of the 30% increase to non-Newfoundland student tuition, as well as an increase of \$2.3 million resulting from the campus renewal fee and an increase of \$760,400 resulting from the Student Service Fee (both reallocated under expenditures).

Under expenditures, a decrease of \$3 million is noted due to government-mandated attrition. An additional \$2.3 million has also been added to cover graduate fellowships. A number of expenses have been adjusted for inflation. This includes library holdings, utilities, water grant and municipal taxes, insurance, maintenance and software contracts and snow clearing. Professional fees have also been adjusted by \$810,000 in order to cover unanticipated CRA fees. It was noted that many of these adjustments are beyond the control of the university.

The total current budget deficit for 2018-19 is anticipated to be \$6,679,320. It was noted that the proposed deficit may increase if government implements further cuts beyond what was put forward during last year's budget process. The budget submission will provide a foundation from which to begin discussions with government officials.

3. Key Strategic Issues related to budget

A discussion followed the budget submission presentation, during which the following key issues were brought forward:

- In light of the projected deficits for the three-year period, many felt that across the board cuts are no longer sustainable or sufficient to address the long term budget shortfalls. Further cuts will only undermine the integrity of programs. It was felt that MUN is nearing the point where the university should consider more drastic measures such as program review and rationalization or tuition increases.
- A question was asked whether there is anything that Memorial can do to oppose the increasing costs of library holdings. Dr. Golfman explained that a nation-wide conversation is currently occurring regarding this issue, but adjustments are unlikely in the short term.
- The Committee discussed several options regarding tuition such as increasing the fees of professional graduate programs or adopting a progressive income-based tuition system whereby the tuition of students with lower income would be subsidized with bursaries and tax credits. Some felt that such a tuition model could address the issue of access as well as Memorial's fiscal challenges. If such a model were implemented Memorial would administer and regulate the tuition structure and over time may be less dependent on Government funding. Such a tuition model has been implemented in universities in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. The Committee felt that such progressive ideas should be presented during the budget consultation process in order to gain reactions and feedback.
- The Committee discussed the idea of encouraging attrition among senior level staff and faculty in order to focus on the hiring of individuals in the beginning stages of their career in the hope that they may bring increased productivity and innovative ideas to the university environment. It was noted that this would not likely be feasible due to current collective agreements; however such a conversation among the university community may be useful.
- The idea of incentivizing revenue growth at the unit level was brought forward, such as incentives to increase enrolment or to seek new and innovative opportunities.

It was suggested that some overarching themes and questions such as those discussed above be developed and posted online during the consultation process.

The committee felt that a significant amount of misinformation continues to exist among the wider community, making discussions regarding the university budget and strategic directions challenging. Clarification regarding specific aspects of the budget in particular is still needed in order to encourage more meaningful and productive discussions. It will also be important to effectively communicate the severity of the current situation and the specific issues that must be addressed.

Dr. Golfman indicated that university enrolment and the budget will be brought forward for discussion at the November Special Meeting of Senate. This will provide a foundation for the upcoming consultation process.

4. Dean's Council Consultation

In the interest of time, this topic was not discussed during the October 30 meeting.

5. Other Business

No other business was raised. The meeting adjourned at 10:00am.