

Program Prioritization Meeting Summary of October 28 Meeting

Brian Payne reminded the group about its charge, the goals of the task force, and the tenets they agreed to. He reviewed the questions that have been sent through the anonymous link with the group.

The group discussed the feedback they provided to a survey distributed by Tisha Paredes. The group agreed that they need to use different sets of criteria in evaluating academic programs and administrative programs. Criteria to be included will be consistent with the faculty handbook.

The group discussed how they will be prioritizing programs. Ideas that were rejected included individual rankings, ranking as pillars, and ranking by investments. Ideas that were supported included ranking by tiers and using categories that identify specific recommendations to be made (e.g., expand, retain, etc.). Strong preference existed for the latter approach. It was suggested that the various pillars of the institution (e.g., Arts, Sciences, etc.) guide the discussion. The group agreed to continue to discuss this as the discussion unfolds.

Nina Gonser, interim associate vice president for academic affairs, provided an overview of the budget process at ODU with specific attention to the Academic Affairs budget.

The 2020 to 2021 provisional budget passed by the Board of Visitors included anticipated reduction and savings strategies of \$40 million. The anticipated reduction in resources was connected to a projected decline of tuition revenue based on historical trends and the potential for further decline in tuition revenue and state support as a result of the pandemic.

As part of the reduction and savings strategies, academic affairs reduced its budget by \$14.2 million, which included a \$3.7 million reduction in base funding. Academic affairs addressed the reduction by freezing or eliminating vacant positions, reducing NPS expenditures, reducing adjunct expenditures, and reducing travel.

Ms. Gonser provided an overview of the connections between enrollment, tuition revenue, and the budget. Between fiscal years 2016 through 2020, total student credit hours declined annually, resulting in reductions of tuition revenue. In the same time period, academic affairs received \$5,000,000 for new faculty positions.

Looking ahead at the forecasted nationwide decline in the college going population, the pool of potential undergraduates will be decreasing. The task force will need to consider this drop going forward.

Additionally, if recent trends hold, new state funding support will likely be focused on targeted degree production or specific disciplines and research thrust areas. Even independent of the

pandemic, these changes are coming and academic affairs needs to position itself to respond to those changes.

The task force discussed the role of adjuncts in helping the university meet its mission.

Brian Payne provided an overview of different available data including five-year enrollment data from the Factbook, organizational charts, summaries of meetings, and the SCHEV Productivity Review report conducted in 19-20.

Tisha Paredes will provide a deep dive into data at the next meeting. Chairs, deans, and others will be asked to provide additional information and data. Task force members were asked to review the available data highlighted above. In addition, a draft template for asking for information will be shared prior to the next meeting. Task force members were asked to review the template prior to the next meeting.

The task force agreed that the program prioritization website should be updated regularly by including summaries of the task force discussions and answers to frequently asked questions. In addition, the co-chairs will facilitate open forums to hear from faculty, faculty administrators, and staff and to provide feedback on the process.