

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA. GRADUATE & PROFESSIONAL STUDENT COUNCIL

General Council Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, November 5, 2008

Meeting called to order at 6:05 pm by Bridget Barker

Present: Stephen Bieda, Bridget Barker, Emily Connally, Alison Betts, Brittany Perkins, Jessica Gerlach, Jed Laver, Stephanie Levitt, Lauren Sekora, Robert Jacobi, Sanket Unhale, Erica Cirillo-McCarthy, David Lopez-Negrete, David Talenfeld, Helena Morrison, James Johnson, A Quadir Khan, Kunal Ramani, Tim Chambers, Roeland Hancock, Tucker Peck, Jim Collins, Tiffany Goforth, Sandra Nameth, Mabel Crescioni, Jennifer Kruse, Sarah K. Smith

Directors: Carol Elliott, Jessica Gerlach

Proxies: Boris Glebov, Chizanya Mpinja

I. Call to Audience - Questions for President Shelton.

Ryan Paul, English Department: The transformation process seems sudden and rushed, the rapid pace seems unreasonable, with vague guidelines. We do not know what types of budget numbers need to be met, and the process seems guaranteed to incite anxiety and panic. Seems unnecessary.

Hope Jones, Biology, President of Graduate Student College of Science Council: We want a definition of what grand challenge means from you. My impression of meeting these grand challenges would be the idea that we were focused on how to generate finances and medical school appears to be the top focus there. Many bringing in research monies are meeting grand challenges, and I am thinking of how to meet these challenges. Do we do this by meeting a dollar amount, when we tell the students who come here to think about UA or faculty candidates? We continue to cut back to meet challenges and lose the community and culture that makes the UA competitive. Why will students stay if we become another big machine without community? How do we convince them to stay or not to leave to maintain community? I would like to hear more about workload. Money that follows students, funding for TAships, should be immediate. Class size and course options are also concerns. We see burden on faculty, and this limits their ability to teach graduate courses. How can we get more courses by meeting these challenges so we can leave here with the career preparation we wanted when coming here?

A: President Shelton: I have slides with some data. I would first like to thank you for having me. First, the transformation process and what we hope to get out of it. When I came to the University we were \$20 million out of alignment in terms of expenditures and income. We had a three year plan to correct this, and instead did it in one year. At the end of the second year, we needed to ask whether we were delivering education opportunities, engaging in research, and reaching out to our communities in the best ways possible.

The answer was no. We set up a few task forces to address this, but a severe budget situation imposed itself. We are fortunate we have a transformation plan to consider. I am convinced budget changes should follow academic priorities. Nothing was dictated in the beginning, we asked everyone to come up with white papers. We also received input and comments. We had to take 440 million reduced to 418. I wish I knew what numbers would be for mid year cuts and 2010 cuts. We could be hit with another 5% again this year and another the year after. We must understand what we can stop doing and what we can enhance. We should be contributing to issues that are important to our communities, nationwide as well. This university has many areas of strength. To me the core reason for a public research institution must be to delve into those questions and engage in questions of great import to society.

The question of community is very important. I hoped that by having an open process people would get engaged. Society does not fund education and so this trend has happened for some time and we see it all coming together with the larger financial issues in this county. How do we maintain a sense of community here? Openness is important so people feel as though their voices are being heard. The next step takes time, in deciding what to do with all these white papers. We need an algorithm for how to make money follow the students more effectively. Different models range from 25-75% of tuition earned. How do you get money for common activities if money follows students? I think we will not have a better plan until 2010-2011. From an undergraduate perspective, they are saying: we would rather have larger classes than not have slots open, and that puts more burden on you. What we must do is make sure people feel they are being heard.

Some numbers for you. Slides will be sent by Bridget Barker. The take home: We spend much time talking about tuition but it makes up only a small portion of the total budget.

I think we could review curriculum and make it more flexible. For instance, we should never have students completing internships for no credit. We should see also if we are teaching in a way that is more efficient. Faculty own the curriculum, and that does not change easily, if ever. Things going on transformation process may help, like task forces to look in depth at white papers and to review curriculum. We are coming up with algorithms for tuition funds force with a recommendation of 18-24 months to complete a plan.

II. **Guests -**

a. **President of the University of Arizona, Robert N. Shelton:**

Q: Robert Jacobi: To come back to the grand challenges as they are defined in our current strategic plan. Many of them have not been addressed in white papers. How will those areas be handled during the process? Will there be a task force designed to look at those areas that should be doing well but did not submit any sort of white paper?

A: Areas that did not submit white papers will be looked at separately we have collected people to look at how health services can be more integrated. Certainly in education we need more communication. In the process we will review financial issues as well. Strategic plan reflects where we are positioned well to be extraordinarily good. Those are areas that will have consideration for

new funds. One of the parts of this plan is to eliminate activities to allow us to invest in others. No one recommended eliminating activities. That is where deans must come to the front and say maybe these programs can be merged or would be even better together. One did come about, but we must be aware that we are doing some things we are not good at right now and don't need to do. Some of these are on administrative side. Joe Valdez let 15 people go. First thing we want is to launch task forces for collections of white papers to ask, does it really make sense to merge colleges? We can then go back to SPBAC and ask, what additional work do we need? In January we will get a mid year budget decision. All of the deans and VPs are thinking about how they can deal with anything from 5-10% in January.

Q: Erica Cirillo McCarthy: The things we do to decrease costs in offices, reducing staff and employing more students. Is this transformation going to be enacted where it affects our most vulnerable employees. What are we doing to not affect Tucson dramatically by laying off these people?

A: I wish I could say that we won't have fewer employees. Throughout all of this we must maintain commitment for a diverse staff, faculty and student body. We set aside significant funds to recruit faculty from underrepresented groups. That money is not going to be reduced at all. Layoffs of staff, there is no simple answer except to impress upon everyone that as you consider layoffs you must consider who is doing quality work and how to ensure maintaining diversity in your unit. We will keep an eye on it, but it will be a hard year.

Q: Alison Betts: Many constituents are concerned about GA. Already more than 60% in Humanities work 5-10 hours more per week. Now we are looking at increased workloads. What is administration planning to do to address this and make graduate workloads more manageable? Can we market ourselves as research when students come here to teach and be staff?

A: When students come, we need to be realistic about expectations of students. I am familiar with long hours students put in. We must insist at every level, department heads first, that workloads be reasonable. Officially 20 hours a week, I don't mind if someone works 23 or 24, but I am concerned with 30. How do we allocate necessary resources to keep workloads within reason? The only quantitative solution is in tuition funds flow because so many of these jobs are connected to student credit hours.

Q: Tim Chambers: There is something to be said about number of TAs. Evidence that faculty will leave. Any idea that number of students might have to decrease?

A: I was speaking with Comrie about this, and the direction that the numbers will go is uncertain. The number of many types of students increases as the research profile increases and the need to have more classes taught by students grows. I wouldn't predict a large change up or down in the number of graduate students. Don't think you should assume a dramatic drop there might even be an increase.

Q: Sanket Unhale: In my college we are very worried because the degree requires accreditation. People are wondering how UA will keep engineering as one of the priority programs in this restructuring. How will we keep these programs safe, how will mergers affect undergraduate accreditation? How can students expect to have same competitive edge across nation to motivate them to come here with all the changes?

A: The general perspective is that for graduate programs, it is essential that that identity not be lost, even if we were to merge two colleges or put them into a school, the identity of graduate programs must be maintained to be competitive. We lose ranking and drawing power otherwise. There has been much discussion about engineering. and merging. I think these are long shots, we must look at it carefully. ABET (and professional schools) becomes a pain, We must make sure these programs are strong and pass ABETs, but would it be better if you have 6 departments to remove one and make sure the remaining 5 are strong. We will look very carefully. I think it is a real long shot, from reading and meeting with department heads and input from deans and white papers.

Q: Robert Jacobi: The number of VPS in your administration increased from 40-56. In this process, there should be same cuts at lower as at higher ends. I think administrative and business restructuring should be similarly transparent as the academic one. It should have a bottom up component in the restructuring because, to be blunt, right now at lowest business level no one will trust a head that doesn't know how to sweep funds because they do not understand the old computer system. A similar process, akin to white paper process, might regain that trust. So that people believe their input will be heard, and the administration will not push ahead with their plan in spite of input, the process must be formalized. Direct feedback for all input also helps.

A: I am surprised the number of VPS has increased in number over the past few years. I agree there should be more cuts at the high end. Let's talk about this. Every year I put out a budget I give every dean all the numbers for all colleges. Properly the administrative support units take larger cuts. The finer tuned question, though it is hard. What should business and finance put in as a white paper? What they are doing now is giving me a list of how each would absorb a 5% cut, then a 10% cut. Putting that level of precision into a white paper requires identifying specific people. What if the cuts are different from the projections? At what level of detail do we get that out without saying the academic equivalent needs the same?

The funds sweep memo was a huge screw up. One good thing did come out of it. People's attention is now focused on limiting spending. I think we fixed it operationally. We handed it in a terrible way, but it did work. The number of signatures. Any way we can beat down the bureaucracy, we will try. If there are ideas to get rid of two or three of those five signatures, share them.

What we have now is process that says we have forums, meetings, etc, and the message still isn't getting through that I want input. Somehow on the business side departments did not make any suggestions. What was to prevent someone from doing it? Maybe we should issue a separate call. Bright ideas program: an electronic suggestion box.

Q: Jim Collins: What's being done to prevent sacrificing our role as land grant university that is

supposed to be educating the general public?

A: Still in the early days; think most important guard is the commitment I have. The core understanding this university has derived from a rich land grant history and location in the American southwest, something we all need to keep in mind.

Q: Jed Laver: I have an accreditation question. We need more faculty. We've been under our faculty ratio for past 7 years. Before the hiring freeze we had new lines taken, we are wondering what the chance is of getting those lines back. We need 4 or 5 faculty for accreditation.

A: Lines were not taken. Dean still has money in lines, but if she wants to fill them she has to make a special request. Granting requests will be in rare exceptions to hiring freeze. Law school and nursing deans are exceptions. We (provost and I) know some of these lines will have to be filled if not this year, then soon for other reasons as well as accreditation.

Q: Erica Cirillo McCarthy: I think given the contradiction between increasing enrollment, and the report that 500 faculty may leaving it is hard for everyone to see how world class education fits with larger classes.

A: Our predictions for class sizes are not terribly accurate. In terms of faculty leaving, with the economy like it is, most everyone is rethinking retirement now. How much should we grow? When I came we had flat and decreasing enrollment and were losing money because of it. Enrollment increases are the only thing the state is giving us money for. Is it better to get no money or get a cut and have a flat number of students or to get more students and have to deal with having more students? Technically we are limited to 30% out of state. What do we do? Out of state undergraduate students bring us the most money. There may not be enough with qualifications to fill the roster anyway, so how do we balance this?

Q: Alison Betts: Our endowment is small. What is university doing to bulk up endowment?

A: We have a number of strategies: During campaign the emphasis was on expendable money, not on endowment. I emphasize endowed chair and endowed scholarships. We had 25% increase in endowed chairs, continuing to talk to alumni whom we've never contacted. I have had more meetings with alumni who could give 10-100 million dollars who have said, no one has ever talked to them before. We are trying to expand the people we ask. Other thing we're doing is looking at small donations, the lower end, how can we be effective in garnering these dollars to build the endowment? 600 million is a sad number for an institution this great. We need more endowed chairs. Now is not optimal time to do it. We must expand the number of potential donors. Thinking through how we can use internet, electronic connections to bring in more money. Cannot fundraise way out of a crisis, must look at long term.

- b. **Dean of the the Library, Stuffle:** Planned to be here about increasing fee. Not going to be on proposal for regents this year. Timing did not make it possible to do consultation we wanted to do. Here today to talk about how we are dealing with budget. 1.2 million, 14% of our budget was cut, so we are cutting expenditures. We will cut thousands of journals, down to buying almost no print books. We are negotiating with several companies to put most of their publications online. We won't buy them, we will rent them. You will have

access and if they are used a lot we will then buy them. We are trying to make our dollars go as far as we can make them go. We must look at big packages, business REF. look at overlap for these subscriptions, maybe LexusNexus. Looking at these packages to determine where cuts can be made. Part of consultation is to make you aware of it now. and find ways to make you aware of what you're considering. Leverage buying, interlibrary loan we recently signed up research library groups shares program with University of Toronto, Columbia, Michigan, etc. Now we have more access to all of those collections, so we will be able to get things.

Q: Sarah Smith: How do you determine which online journals to get rid of? Will this affect small departments?

A: We must start by looking at use, then look at areas of less use. I am hoping that for large sets of things that cover same subject area so we can zero in on core journals in that field, overlap.

Q: Sanket Unhale: Not related to budget. I am wondering if there is a process in place to collect thesis and dissertations in electronic format.

A: We have them online and in a national database that we buy access to to get other people's as well. Any dissertation must be given electronically. Not true for master's thesis because only some departments require masters to deposit thesis.

II. Officer Reports:

President – Stephen Bieda – (1) SPBAC moved some things forward. 20 of 80 papers. Selected proposals are posted. Those proposals that did not move forward will need to reassess.

(2) Faculty senate: 75% rule has changed. If 75% of combined affected faculty and majority from each affected unit approve transformation it will go through. Smaller units are more protected in this proposal because two small units can "out vote" larger ones.

(3) TA talk time. 11/18 and 11/19 are our options for days to speak with Dr. Shelton. Have received 12 for Wednesday and 10 for Tuesday. There is still plenty of room. Any TAs interested please tell them to put in RSVP. Roundtable discussion, about an hour addressing TA concerns specifically.

(4) 11/14 3pm: We have a meeting with the higher education chair who requested we forward questions ahead of time. Politician, trying hard to screen questions and get answers. Representative Burns was chosen because she is on her way out.

(5) State Legislature: Republicans gained 2 seats in House and 1 in Senate. Very likely that a budget cut will come down. Proposition 105 failed. Prop 400 as well. Citizens do not want to stomach property tax increase, initiative failed.

(6) Tuition proposal has come through. I will forward electronic copy to you. Graduate resident tuition will go up \$659 10.9%, 11.2 with fees. Nonresident increased 13.8%. New fees proposed in journalism (100 extra dollars). Distance learning, \$450 additional per academic unit. Executive MBA. Proposal is 54,000 instead of 50,000. These are on top of tuition increase. Will e-mail memo, please look it over and recommend.

Vice President – Boris Glebov – none

Assembly Chair - Bridget Barker - We have cancelled last meeting of the year, 12/3. That leaves us with a compressed schedule. Date for Phoenix Showcase is 2/24 Tuesday. Leaving sometime before lunch. Not limited to showcase winners. would like as many GPSC reps as possible to attend.

Treasurer - Sanket Unhale - Request that if you have not sent student id's to me, please do so as soon as possible

Secretary - Emily Connally - Election Night at the Shanty brought in 164 people. We have a Poker Night on 12/10. Look ahead. Communicate with your collegemates about forwarding e-mails out.

III. Representative and Director Reports –

- a. **Erica Cirillo McCarthy:** GEN ED committee: one of white papers that came back from SPBAC said provost is appointing a committee to independently review foundations and GENED. Those of you who teach, now committee to look at that. Direct comments to me for a 11/19 meeting.
- b. **Lauren Sekora:** Will get e-mail of draft of what the graduate commencement will look like. Biggest change is greater recognition for Masters students. Deciding whether they can call out names of Master's students, will require registration process. I will send out, if you have questions or comments let me know.
- c. **Jessica Gerlach:** Showcase went down, looked good, went well.
- d. **Tim Chambers:** our Student Union is better than ASU.

IV. Questions for Officer, Representative and Director Reports

V. Consent Agenda Item: reading and approval of minutes.

- a. **Tabled for 11/19**

VI. Committee Non-Consent Agenda

- a. **Appropriations: Library Fee Proposal - withdrawn**

VII. New Business

- a. **UA Transformation-** Robert Jacobi - SPBAC transformation SPBAC has asked for hard numbers from some colleges before approving white papers. Technically all proposals should have received e-mail with feedback before it went public. If you know somebody who made a proposal and did not receive feedback like this, let me know.

Q: Bridget Barker: What is the new timeline?

A: The full proposals are technically due in the first faculty meeting in december. Only realistic for white papers given go-ahead without much further consultation, other proposals will be decided in spring, in particular college level ones.

Q: Do they have any estimates on how much the cost of transformation will be?

A: Good question in SPBAC no body has asked, I will note it. Discussed moving people from UA south up here. Didn't account for cost of moving whole lab. Issue is space. If you combine units, what happens to space, though?

Q: Tucker Peck: Have we determined how much this is saving?

A: Not more than 10 million at most. Doesn't address budget at all. The Larger SPBAC issue is that parallel to academic restructuring there will be administrative restructuring starting on vice presidential level. SPBAC will review VP white papers. Business restructuring as well, but no one knows anything yet. Tuition funds flow task force: shall be determined in next 9 months. Also switching to peoplesoft system soon. New GENEd committee charged to save money and determine how tuition funds must flow to make this happen.

Q: Jim Collins: Is all the savings from transformation, or is some from business restructuring, etc?

A: We have a numbers only from academic. don't know the rest of the estimates yet.

b. Discussion of UA President's Visit: The council entered general discussion of the guest's visit. We also made further speculations on how we can impress our needs on him, especially that land grant universities must increase access and decrease limitations of research.

c. Approval of Chief of Staff - Stephen Bieda: The executive board chose to pursue the route of chief of staff because we were very busy and do not see the workload decreasing. Some members are stuck in the office quite a bit, and we feel we need an office manager. We would like to appoint Alison Betts. We are recommending keeping her responsibilities intact but adding responsibilities of running the office for the executive committee increase from 2400 to a half time RA position.

Bridget Barker: we will keep an eye on the dual positions so that if director duties become too demanding we will go ahead and hire a new research and policy director. We will make a full report in January as to what is going on, and whether the duties seem to much.

i. Stephen Bieda moved to approve the appointment and Jim Collins seconded the motion, which carried with 5 abstentions.

d. Other Business - none

VIII. Motion to Adjourn – at 8:04 pm Emily Connally moved to adjourn; the motion was seconded by Alison Betts and carried unanimously.