Fiscal Advisory Committee to the President (FACP)

Minutes of October 11, 2017

Attendees:
Sonda Abernathy, Anne Dries, Michael Eriksen, Chris Goode, Chip Hill, Nancy Kropf, Risa Palm, Unil Perera, Jared Poley, Jerry Rackliffe, Tim Renick, Sara Rosen, Rose Sevcik and Wade Weast

Call to Order:
Dr. Palm called the meeting to order at 1:30 pm.

Approval of Minutes:
The committee approved the minutes from the April 26, 2017 meeting.

Summer 2017 and Fall 2017 Enrollment Update:
Dr. Rackliffe provided an overview of summer and fall tuition receipts compared to projections in the fiscal year 2018 budget. Many factors, such as residency status, level and program, determine the tuition rate for a specific student. In summary, the university collected less tuition revenue than anticipated for the summer semester and more tuition than anticipated for the fall semester. When combining the two semesters, the university is currently about $300,000 below the tuition projection of $135 million for the same period. Spring tuition revenue normally tracks at 92%-93% of fall semester tuition. If this pattern holds for the upcoming spring semester, the university should finish with a slight positive variance in total tuition revenue collected for the fiscal year.

Dr. Eriksen inquired about the possibility of a budget redirection in the current fiscal year. Dr. Rackliffe replied that he does not anticipate a mid-year redirection requirement from units during the current fiscal year. Due to enrollment declines in the prior year, the university will likely face a reduction in state support during the FY 2019 budget cycle. When combined with additional program growth and multi-year funding commitments, there will likely be a redirection requirement in fiscal year 2019. More information will be available after the legislative session convenes at the start of the new calendar year.

Dr. Kropf asked for guidance on strategies for maximizing the financial benefit for graduate student waivers. Dr. Rackliffe explained that the funding formula used by the Board of Regents includes a sizeable funding premium for graduate credit hours. While a waiver accrues a delayed financial benefit to the institution, there are no strategies for allocating waivers in a manner that would produce differential financial results.

Dr. Eriksen asked about the practice of charging graduate research assistant tuition to a sponsored grant if the student is working on the sponsored project. Dr. Palm, Dr. Rosen, and Dr. Rackliffe indicated that this is a normal and legal practice at many other institutions but that historically has not been the practice at Georgia State. Dr. Sevcik stated that the Research Committee has discussed this topic and faculty sentiment coalesces around the concern that including graduate research tuition in grant proposals will make grant proposals from Georgia State less competitive. Dr. Palm stated that the university leadership should review this practice at other peer and aspirant peer research universities to determine whether a change in Georgia State practice is in order.
Dr. Renick shared several pages of data regarding summer and fall headcount enrollment. Atlanta campus summer enrollment grew to slightly more than 15,000 students, which marks a return to the level last seen during the final summer in which Pell grant funds were available to students. Perimeter College enrollment was down for the summer, but is up for the fall semester. Fall enrollment at the Atlanta campus is up overall due to an increase in undergraduate students. A slight decrease in graduate enrollment for the fall semester dampens the overall increase.

Dr. Kropf asked about the Summer in the City program. Dr. Palm indicated that Mr. Scott Burke is attending the next Deans’ Council meeting to help coordinate messaging and other logistics for summer 2018 programming. One of the goals for the summer 2018 session is to provide better guidance regarding financial aid requirements. Dr. Palm also stated that new systems and processes are coming online under the leadership of Dr. Armistead. These items will assist with growing enrollment in graduate programs. Dr. Renick noted that prosperous economic times tend to depress enrollments in graduate and associate degree programs, while those enrollments typically surge during economic recessions.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:06 pm.