Attendees: Andrew Butler, Laura Burtle, Elena Del Rio Parra, Andrew Gewirtz, Dennis Gilbride, Glenn Harrison, Shuguang Hong, Jan Ivery, Archana Iyer, Nadine Kabengi, Candace Kemp, Stacey Mitchell, Anne Murphy, Martin Norgaard, Jerry Rackcliffe, Maggie Renken, Ed Rigdon, Sally Robertson, Maryann Romski (Acting Chair), Erin Ruel, Susan Snyder, Kelly Stout, Jelena Subotic, Kris Varjas, Gangli Wang, Jack Williams, Brett Wong, and Aleksandr Zelikovskiy

Absentees: Charlie Benson, Margo Brinton, Lisa Marie Casanova, Dabney Dixon, Trae Johnson, Sabrina Freeney, Tony Lemieux, Remus Osan, Ashli Owen-Smith, Don Reitzes, Shannon Self-Brown, Bill Robinson, Vjollca Sadiraj, Rose A. Sevcik (Chair), James Weyhenmeyer, and Yusen Xia

Minutes: Rose Baldwin

1. The October 15, 2018 minutes were approved.

2. Dr. Jerry Rackcliffe, Senior Vice President of the Office of Finance & Administration, provided a presentation to the research committee giving a general overview of the university’s FY18 general fund budget which totals $1.02 billion (i.e., salaries/retirement, healthcare, tuition capital, and state appropriations). He described the state appropriations (Fund Code 10) as well as redirection of those funds from the past five years. Such funds are weighed significantly on student enrollment numbers. This segment have been negatively impacted in recent years; however, the university was financially challenged upon the post-acquisition of Perimeter College campus. Presently, the university is trending positively to avoid another iteration of redirection of state appropriations for next year. In addition to this, he shared the completed building infrastructure projects and future projects planned at GSU. An example provided was the proposal of $5-11 million slated for the demolition of Kell Hall next year. The PPT presentation is available upon request.

Dr. Rackcliffe reported the university’s merit pool was affected earlier this year, because GSU experienced a redirection of state appropriations of a total of $11.5 million that includes the $3.5 million due to decreased student enrollment numbers. He then announced a 2% merit raise is going into effect beginning next year January 2019. Dr. Butler interjected that state legislators will approve merit raises but not necessarily offer the money for it. Dr. Rackcliffe replied that a formula of three-fourths from state money and one-fourth from tuition capital allows merit increases and also shared that the university provides monetary support to faculty raise pools for promotions at $250,000 annum, approximately.

Dr. Kabengi inquired about the strategy used in monetary reallocations for academic colleges who perform the most activities in tuition and credit course hours. Dr. Rackcliffe replied that the summer semester is the only time when reallocation is reviewed centrally where colleges have the opportunity to keep a large portion of the revenues. Dr. Gilbride queried about the possibility of a tuition increase for next academic year. Dr. Rackcliffe responded there is a possible chance and this will be determined at the BOR’s March meeting.

3. Dr. Romski brought up the current challenge of having one HR representative to manage the entire hiring process for new research staff on sponsored awards at GSU and made a request to hire another HR representative to alleviate the pressing administrative burdens felt by researchers, as this will appropriately align with the current research growth too. Dr. Murphy added this lack in support has delayed distribution of external awards to several faculty members already and one research faculty lost the entire grant award. The research members present fully supported this proposal. Dr. Rackcliffe responded that he will meet with the President to recommend increasing HR support for new hires on sponsored awards.
4. Dr. Norgaard brought up one of the problems in the research trajectory is the available internal seed funds for faculty and strongly recommended to increase funds in the Research Initiation and Scholarly Support grant mechanisms that are attached to the OVPR’s URSA Internal Grants Program. This initiative is very instrumental in supporting diverse faculty with research funding. Dr. Stout added she can provide report metrics on the return-on-investment stemmed from the past three years that has been as high as 300%. Dr. Rackcliffe requested that this information be emailed to him and he will meet with the President to discuss investing more funds to this program.

The next meeting will be held on December 10, 2018 at 3:00 PM in Room 365 of the 58 Edgewood Avenue Building.