

Senate Growth and Development Committee
November 19, 2015, 10:00 A.M.
Hall Dorm Bldg. Rm 123

AGENDA

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. Approval of Minutes of 10-30-15 (attached)**
- 3. Discussion with Vice Provost for Libraries Martha Bedard***
- 4. Next meeting December 11, 10:00 A.M. (Guest to be determined)**

***Relevant information: <http://bit.ly/207HDYZ>**
(Provost's response letter attached following Minutes below.)

Senate Growth and Development Committee 2015/2016

Meeting Minutes 10/30/15

10:00-11:15 am

Senate Conference Room, Hall Dorm

Members Present: Larry Renfro (Chair), Joseph Crivello, Andrew Moiseff, Lyle Scruggs Faquir Jain, Michael Accorsi, Robert Bird

Members absent: David Benson, Maria Gordina, Kristen Schwab, Suzanne Wilson, Greg Bouquot, Larry Silbart, Kathy Hendrickson, Tracie Borden, Alec Calva (GSS)

Guests: Kent Holsinger (Vice-Provost, Graduate School), Joanna Hawryluk (Grad Student guest)

GA Fee Bill Concerns: Discussion centered primarily on concerns raised by the graduate student guest and the support of the University for graduate student education. Ms. Hawryluk, a graduate assistant, described the fact that GAs are considered full-time while taking 6 credit hours per semester and employed on an assistantship. Because of this the Bursar raises their fee rate to the 9-credit level which raises the rate from \$782 to \$1135. The fact that the GA is considered full-time with only 6 credits means that the student loan deferment is lost until the Bursar notifies the lender that the student is considered full-time. Because the Bursar is taking up to 8 weeks to do the notification, deferments are lost for about half of the semester. Dr. Holsinger agreed to look into the matter. Ms. Hawryluk was thanked and excused.

Status of Growth of Graduate Student Population: Discussion turned to questions of growth of the total enrollment of graduate students at UConn, which the Dean reported has risen to 7,000 an increase of 900 since 2004. The committee discussed our concerns about the high costs of supporting graduate students on external grants, which is between \$50,000 and \$70,000 per year, and our concern that the University could replace graduate students if In-Residence faculty were used to teach labs and undergraduate classes as a cost-saving measure. There is no indication that this has occurred. Dr. Holsinger related that the new UAW-GA contract does not measurably increase graduate student costs to faculty grants. Everyone agreed that departments, the university and the Foundation need to look for external fundraising opportunities to increase support for graduate students.

Tuition Charges to External Grants: The Committee thanked Dean Holsinger for the recent decision to return one-half of the graduate student tuition charge to research grants to the PIs. We then discussed ways to increase graduate student travel funds, which are part of the monies raised by tuition charged to external grants. Grant tuition charges generate about \$1.1 million/year. Dean Holsinger reported that the FY15 tuition-generated funds had accumulated to \$2.4 million. About \$700K was used by the Provost for deficit mitigation – leaving ~\$1.5 million for FY15. He predicted that by FY18, the account will be in a \$0.4 million deficit.

Graduate Student Housing: On-campus graduate student housing was discussed. Dean Holsinger reported that there were no plans to provide on-campus graduate student housing; however, Michael Gilbert will make 80 on-campus beds available if a need arises.

Provost's letter to petition signatories

Dear Faculty Colleagues,

I write in response to your letter about the University Library dated October 30, 2015. We are all very concerned about University finances and the cuts to our operating budget due to the state fiscal challenges of \$82 million. Our budget situation has been very challenging and prospects for the near future are worrisome with predictions of state deficits as high as \$250 million for the current year. In this environment, we've all had to make difficult choices and sacrifices. We have, however, done our best to protect critical academic and research programs. For example, over the last four years, we hired 260 faculty across all disciplines, increased the number of undergraduate course offerings by 33%, and added 7,000 seats to ensure that our students have access to the classes that they need to graduate on time.

I appreciate your thoughtful letter and the concerns you have raised about the reductions in funding for the University Library, which is a critically important resource for research and scholarship for our faculty and students. I also want to correct some inaccuracies in your letter so that we have a consistent understanding of the situation.

- 1st - **Acquisitions have not been reduced by two-thirds this year in the humanities, social sciences, and sciences.** In fact, during the current fiscal year, the projected acquisitions/ collections cuts a total of \$115K (which is less than 2% of the total collections budget) across a variety of material types and disciplines. This process has been informed by faculty, department and school input. Vice Provost Martha Bedard and her team of library liaisons developed a collaborative, metrics-informed approach to examine collections use (<http://lib.uconn.edu/services/collections/uconn-libraries-collections-review/>) in consultation with faculty in each disciplinary area. For the current year, this team began by identifying a target amount of \$300K to reduce the collection that was subsequently adjusted to under \$200K, after further review. Each librarian liaison then shared a list of collections being considered for cancellation with the disciplinary faculty for their input for high priority collections. The Library Collection Steering Committee also met to review faculty input and collated and created a list of potential journals, databases, and society memberships to discontinue. After discussion with deans, the total amount of cancellations to subscribed collections was reduced to \$115K.
- 2nd - **Acquisitions will not be eliminated.** The library staff reduced the book acquisitions budget this year by \$121K as a stopgap measure while they conduct a comprehensive review and discuss priority acquisitions with disciplinary faculty.
- 3rd - **Major electronic journal packages that are critical to faculty research will not be eliminated.** All major electronic journal packages will be examined during the comprehensive review as described in item one above. No decisions have been made about elimination of any major package at this time.

- 4th - **Reductions in staffing have not cut essential services.** Given the fiscal challenges faced by the University, the Library eliminated 7.5 positions. The elimination of a three-quarter position (.75) in Inter-Library Loan (ILL) was a result of a careful analysis of the ILL staffing and changes in ILL technology resulting in greater efficiencies. Therefore, the capacity to borrow materials from other institutions will not decrease due to this change.
- 5th – **We are not aware of any denial of service to faculty for ILL requests.** The maximum cost (beyond normal processing) that the Library will pay to meet an ILL request remains at \$40 and has not changed during this year. The Library leadership will continue to work with faculty and staff to ensure that the Library’s ILL services meet their research and teaching needs.

We share your collective concerns about the very difficult budgetary environments that we’ve faced during the past 8 years and the continuing financial setbacks we will undoubtedly encounter in the future. I ask for your support, for it is only through working together that we will develop solutions. And although I appreciate your thoughtful letter about the Library, I also urge you to meet with me the next time you have concerns such as these, for I believe an earlier conversation would have clarified misunderstandings about the process and the outcome.

Final decisions about the FY17 budget rescissions for the Library have not yet been made and we will ask for your input to address increasing costs and declining state support. I look forward to meeting with the faculty and the Deans in the coming weeks to discuss future funding for the Library and identify collaborative solutions. Thank you for caring about our Library and our academic mission at UConn.

Sincerely,

Mun Y. Choi

Provost & Executive VP