

**MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 20, 2024**

Present: David Agard, Ryan Alverson, Janel Bloch, Nicholas Brummer, Kinsey Bryant-Lees, Alina Campan, Nathan De Lee, Irene Encarnacion, Lynnissa Hillman, Jennifer Kaiser, Edward Kwon, Kevin Munte, Shawn Nordheim, Reiko Ozaki, Patrick Schultheis

Absent: Amy Gillingham Culligan, Jack Harrison, Carrie Hipple, Ken Jones, Lou Manchise, Hardik Patel, Catie Shelton

Guests: Diana McGill (Provost); Chris Calvert (CFO/Vice President - Administration & Finance); Karen Mefford (Associate Vice President - Financial Services); Chad Ogle (Asst. Vice Pres. For Acad. Affairs & Budget Ops.); John Farrar (Faculty Senate President); Grace Hiles (Faculty Senate Office).

Chair Janel Bloch called the meeting to order at 3:17 p.m. via Zoom. It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes from the 2/21/2024 meeting, with some corrections identified. Motion carried.

Chair's report.

New CFO Chris Calvert introduced himself. He is coming from Cincinnati State, where he successfully directed budget corrections in a similar setting to NKU's (several years of budgetary deficit, declining cash flow, and declining enrollment.) Chris is still getting acclimated at NKU.

The state legislative session is still ongoing, and there still are various budget bill versions put forward from the House and the Senate. President Short-Thompson has shared the prior week updates on significant investments proposed in higher education and particularly NKU; these are not a done-deal until adopted, which must be done before the end of the legislative session on April 15. Non-budget related, the post-tenure review bill has not materialized, and a DEI bill is still under discussion.

NKU Budget/State Budget.

A question was asked about raises for faculty, administrators, or athletics. Provost McGill confirmed, and the CFO concurred, that while raises are not planned for faculty, the same is true for administration; there are no raises planned, other than the contractual raises. No raises are planned in the athletics department. At the same time, there will be no increase in parking fees either, based on last year's agreement that the parking fees will be flat for 2 consecutive years, following last year's increase.

NKU 2025 budget: We are in a holding pattern, until the state budget outcome is known. At that point, the NKU budget can be formed, which the Board and the president asked to be balanced. Units were asked to prepare for possible reductions, so we do have a plan for reductions if needed.

NKU 2024 budget status: Karen Medford reported that units have been very conscientious about spending, we made the projected spring revenue, and we have more course offerings this summer than last summer so hopefully we'll not be short on tuition for summer. Under these circumstances, the projection is that we will come in a few millions under the planned budget, although still in deficit.

Enrollment.

Karen Medford reported that the overall projection is that our tuition revenue is flat for fall 2024, even with a possible 2% tuition increase. Chris Calvert noted that there is another factor that could negatively impact fall enrollments, specifically the FAFSA changes and continued delays in DOE's processing of the FAFSA applications. In absence of the aid information, NKU's financial office is not able to package and make offers to students. This problem is not unique to NKU.

SBS and YSA.

A question was asked about updates in the state legislature regarding budgeting for programs such as the School-Based Scholars and the Young Students Academy; while good avenues for students to earn college-credit early, these are also costly for NKU to continue to support at discounted tuition rates. Provost McGill reported that no stipulations were made in any of the proposed bills for these programs, but it is possible that provisions could be made as amendments. NKU will continue to offer SBS, which is part of our engagement with the schools in the commonwealth, but we do have some choice in what classes and in what format we offer in the program. YSA will continue to run next year, based on our prior agreements. Provost McGill noted that the YSA program also has a positive impact on our enrollment, as 50% of the YSA students are typically retained at NKU where they pay full tuition for their 3rd and fourth year. Also, negotiations with the individual school districts benefiting from the YSA program might be the necessary avenue to obtain better tuition rates for the YSA students, rather than state legislation.

New building for Chase College of Law. The timeline of a possible move of the Law School to the Covington site was discussed, if the construction budget will be approved in the Congress. The process will take 4-6 years, and the pre-law students will not have to move. If the move will materialize, new uses can be assigned to the current Law building that is undergoing renovations, in particular the new court room. Some suggestions were functions like mock trial room for the undergraduate law students or social work students, theater, judge meetings.

Direct Admit.

Provost McGill talked about our recently announced Direct Admit practice, about which the community was very excited. She wanted to make clear and have everyone send the same message in the community that Direct Admit is not equivalent to having open admissions, and NKU did not lower admission criteria.

Direct Admit essentially means that students can be admitted without applying, if meeting the admission criteria; the goal is to streamline students' admission process. The admission fee will be waived in this new model. Provost McGill does not know if this model will be applied for the AOL programs too.

Discussion continued on the Direct Admit rollout. In fall 2024 NKU will only have a pilot targeted to some high schools in the region, for checking the process. It will have a broader rollout in fall 2025, for some parts in Indiana, the southern part of Ohio, and the entire KY; it will not proceed at national scale, because of the cost to acquire information to assess admission criteria satisfaction. It is unknown what the sources and cost for NKU will be to acquire this student information; one possible source could be EAB.

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm.

Submitted,

Alina Campan