

AAUP-Faculty Senate Joint Forum on the PSU Budget

Tuesday February 4, 2020, 4:00 – 6:00 PM

SMSU 238

Faculty, academic professional, staff, and graduate student audience questions about the budget, finance, and planning record of the PSU Administration

Administrator salaries

- Compared to national averages, what do PSU administrator salaries look like when adjusted for cost of living for the cities in which people live? What do PSU faculty salaries look like in from the vantage point of PSU administrator salaries?
- Do we have 'administrative bloat'? How many more people do we have in administration and how much more are they making than they have in the past?
- What is the cost of hiring firms to fill positions in the upper administration? Shouldn't the administration be running these searches themselves?
- Can we cap administrative salaries (e.g., at the level of salaries of the Governors of Oregon or California)?

Athletics

- Students of color will be affected if subsidies to athletics are changed. Will an equity lens be applied to any changes to athletic support and scholarships?
- Do students get what they need from the University in order to get a good education? (An advisor suggests that student athletes are unable to major in some programs due to scheduling conflicts.)

What sorts of cross-subsidies exist within athletics? Do programs such as basketball and football (mainly populated by students of color) subsidize other sports?

Augmenting Our Voice for Real Influence in Planning Budget Priorities

- Where are the spots in which faculty can contribute to University-level budget decisions? Do we have meaningful, substantive input at those times? Key steps in the slide from the PSU Budget office, outlining the budget development process, seems to only have meaningful administration input.
- If we feel we don't have input in shaping of the overall PSU budget and spending priorities, , do we want it, and if so, how do we get it?
- How might we shift resources from some of the expensive issues (Foundation, athletics, administrative salaries) to academics?
- How can we work toward longer-term planning, instead of going from one budget cut crisis to another? Are Deans working long-term, or only on short-term crisis management?
- What can we do to create better communication and solidarity between unions?

Consequences of PSU's "Budget Pessimism"

- Has budget pessimism led to unnecessary increases in student tuition?
- Are we just reacting to a 'culture of job scarcity' that the administration has manufactured?
- De facto elimination of programs: how can we get a conversation going about these through Senate?
- Why is the university not replacing tenure-related faculty? Graduate assistants?
- Is the decrease in tenure-related faculty going on all over the University, or more in some colleges than in others?
- Where are the hiring freezes being implemented? Is the impression correct that some colleges have such freezes and others don't?
- What implications do these (informal) policies have for faculty and staff workloads?

Depreciation

- Where does the money that "disappears" when PSU makes a depreciation deduction from its revenue ledger go? When it comes out of the budget, where does it go? When it is removed from the pool of available resources, where does the impact go? The E&G budget?
- Do we only depreciate buildings, or do we depreciate all of our property?
- Is the money kept somewhere in a fund for deferred maintenance? Is that fund actually used for large business repairs, or does that come from a separate stream of State funding?

Foundation

- Why have salaries increased so rapidly in the Foundation?
- What is the rate of return on investments in Foundation staff salaries?
- Who sets the salaries? Who approves the raises?
- How much money comes in from the Foundation and how do we use it?

Reserves

- Where are reserves kept?
- How much is in that account?
- Is there a target number?
- Is the PSU's current bond rating impacted by its current level of reserves?