

## ERAC Committee Meeting February 2013 Minutes

Periodic Review Report- Jerry Lennon

The Periodic Review Report (PRR) is a retrospective, current and prospective analysis of an institution and should be useful to the institution, not just to satisfy MCHE. There are six sections. Some may be very interested in number 4 – Enrollment and finance trends and projections. Feedback is welcome especially for number 3 – Narrative identifying major challenges and/or opportunities. Ainsley Lamberton offered to coordinate ERAC's response. Please send Ainsley any comments and/or edits by March 15th. Comments are due to Jerry no later than March 20, 2013.

Peggy Plympton and Pat Farrell

Comparing our budget position to that of other schools – Lehigh's budget process is both bottom up and top down. It is both decentralized and centralized. Lehigh's budget process is top down in that there are some major strategic initiatives that need to be identified related to the strategic plan, major institutional decisions (financial aid) - major in that it is critical for students and the significance of the dollar amount. Lehigh's budget process is bottom up in that individual departments and units have responsibility for the merit increase decisions for faculty and staff and for the planning of departmental activities as it relates to non-personnel costs and other kinds of personnel wage employees as it relates to overtime or something like that. Lehigh's budget process has components of both top down and bottom up. With these centralized/decentralized characteristics, Lehigh would be considered hybrid. An example is that undergrad tuition is the same for everyone whereas graduate tuition is set on the basis of the market competitiveness of the graduate programs. In addressing how this compares to other schools, good examples are Harvard and Yale who are very much decentralized. In those instances all significant decisions are made at the individual unit level. The schools are setting their own tuition rates, calendars, class schedules etc. Yale isn't quite as bad as Harvard due to its size. Wellesley is much smaller in size and very centralized. Bucknell is similar to Lehigh except that there are fewer masters programs.

In terms of our budget position, for all of our well-placed enthusiasm for increasing the amount of our budget supported off the endowment, Lehigh took some strategic initiatives to ensure little was affected upon the down-turn of the economy. Other schools experienced much more difficulty due to the fact that more of their budget is supported from endowments.

Major parameters – we typically look at expenditures. What revenue are we realizing? What tuition can we expect? The merit increase proposed to the trustees that was approved was 3%. The undergrad tuition increase was proposed and approved at 3.1%. Even though the merit increase communication and the undergrad tuition increase is generally communicated around the same time, there is no correlation. It is a rare circumstance that the merit increase and the tuition increase are approximately the same. In order for that to happen, savings were found elsewhere.

The budget submission process was different this year as far as what the colleges and department stems provided to the budget office. The whole picture was looked at including the strategic plan. Where would incremental support be most valuable?

Is there correlation between the upcoming tuition increases and the capital campaign? Is any money collected through the capital campaign used to help with the tuition increases? Yes, capital campaign

funds can help offset the tuition increase. If we can pay for faculty through endowment funds, that frees up the operating budget.

Online Courses. The main difference is delivery from that of in-class courses. Currently, no one has a model to break even financially. With Massive Open On-line Courses (MOCC's), there is typically no interaction with the professor and no feedback. Within 5 to 6 years, we expect to be using some of these large online courses. If we are smart, the large online courses won't really be a threat to us because we will understand what it is that we do really well and how that has value for students.

Administrative Bloat – the process for identifying where there needs to be incremental positions whether its faculty or staff has been a thorough, comprehensive and detailed process addressing: What are the needs? What are the priorities? Who are the sign offs? What's the position description? Positions aren't just added without very careful consideration and review at many levels.

HR Update including exempt/non-exempt

The university has had a University Ethics Hotline for a number of years. At the recommendation of the trustee audit committee who had first suggested the hotline, Lehigh has now decided to go to an outside/external firm to do the hotline. The company is called Ethics Point. That will be announced within the next week or so.

There will be an announcement coming out about the university Master Plan. On March 22nd there will be two sessions – one in the morning and one in the afternoon – each session will be two and a half hours and will be a world café format and it's going to give an opportunity for faculty, staff and students to have questions answered. The concern the planning committee has is they want to make sure they have broad participation; they want to make sure staff feel they can attend should they want to. Vice presidents and college deans and other leadership have been asked particularly on the staff side to emphasize staff involvement.

Non- exempt time reporting – Human Resources met with General Council. Their concern ended up being a very technical one about the Pennsylvania state law vs the federal state law. A communication will be sent to all supervisors clarifying the non-exempt time reporting – basically how compensatory/over-time works. Then an article will appear in Spotlight as a follow-up.

Susan Christy faculty/staff relations committee met. The committee is still interested in pursuing having Dr. Christy interview faculty and staff pairs who work well together. Through research, Dr. Christy is looking to gather best practices.

The Susan Christy faculty/staff relations committee is looking to have a follow-up program regarding staff roles in student retention that was initiated approximately two years ago. This is a wonderful way to highlight the importance of staff on campus. What the group would like to do is have a follow-up program with ERAC and have panel to analyze student data. How we do with student graduation rates – broken out into different categories – by ethnicity, and gender, etc. But then hear from the associate deans, the colleges and student affairs – what are some of the issues that cause students to leave? If would be helpful for staff to have that information when helping to retain students. The committee is looking to do something with ERAC in the spring. They would like to have Printing and Mailing Staff do a communication for staff participation in this program. Also possibly have a Brown Bag Lunch after dates are decided upon and the panel has been selected.

## **Committee Updates:**

Bylaws – proposed change to membership structure. The proposed change of 6 member rolling off and 6 new members coming on was voted on and approved.

Events – there are several events in the works. Glenn is waiting to hear back from several people. Stabler land Development Brown Bag lunch is on hold. Student Success/Student retention is being scheduled for early June. Christa Evans has been contacted regarding Admissions regarding attracting students. A possibility is having a Brown Bag Lunch regarding shredding, ewaste, single stream recycling, etc.

Awards - The Distinguished Service Award for ERAC nominations will be opening at the end of February.

On Thursday, April 4th, there will be an Academic Symposium in Zoellner Arts Center. There will be 4 external academic speakers coming in. This event will be to promote student research.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:25am. Glenn Strause made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Ainsley Lamberton seconded the motion.