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Senate Executive Committee Request for Information

Budget diversion and increased enrollment

Submitted by: Christopher Cartright
1/30/2019

Question(s):

How does the university plan to address the potential for increased enrollment in Fall 2019, particularly in light of the 10 percent budget diversion among university departments in AY 2018?

Given the importance of low class sizes to student success, how does the university plan to ensure that this potential confluence of factors (lower budgets plus higher enrollment) does not result in a faculty-student ratio that is detrimental to student success?

Rationale:

In Fall of 2018, the Provost's Office asked university departments to divert 10 percent of their budgets back to the university. In Spring of 2019, faculty were told by administrators that there could be an increase in university enrollment of up to 9 percent in Fall 2019. Currently, in at least one department, course caps already exceed disciplinary recommendations. For example, composition courses provided by the Department of Writing and Linguistics are currently set at 24, while the Association of Departments of English recommends courses be capped at 15. Some composition instructors teach 5 courses per semester, for a total of up to 120. The ADE recommends instructors teach no more than 60 students per term. Given the historical relationship, in educational contexts, between lower budgets and increased class sizes, it is incumbent on the Senate and the University to ensure that our budget decisions do not produce inappropriate class sizes within the departments.

Response:

2/22/2019: Approved to move to the floor. Forward to the VPAA, VPB&F, and VPEM for response and clarification.