UC Resolution for Consideration at the Committee of the Whole Discussion: Budget Strategies

Whereas the current economic crisis, the worst of our generation, forces the state, the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, and its administration and faculty to make serious decisions about the future of our institution.

Whereas many Department Chairs and Executive Committees have not been provided line item budgetary information for the current year from which to make cuts;

Whereas the deadline for the 2009-2010 UWM schedule has been imposed without adequate budget information and adequate knowledge of the actual size of the budget cuts needed to construct the schedule;

Whereas the budget exercise has been focused on reducing expenditures as opposed to increasing revenue;

Whereas potential size of the budget cuts puts faculty workloads high on the administrative budget reduction agenda, and at least one school has already implemented a workload increase without adequate consultation in the tradition of shared governance;

Be it resolved that:

Department Chairs and Executive Committees be provided with real line item budgets so that they can make reasonable decisions about budget reductions;

The 2009-2010 schedule of classes be constructed such that it meets departmental and service needs and is sufficiently flexible for workload and staffing requirements;

Equal attention be given to increasing revenue as well as decreasing expenditures in the budgeting exercises;

Faculty workloads be determined in line with the existing legal, UWM policy, and shared governance traditions of consultation between Deans and Executive Committees; and

Faculty workloads imposed that are contrary to these policies and traditions be rescinded.

1 According to UWM Faculty Document No. 2027, February 22, 1996: “Departments are responsible for implementing their particular workload policies within the context of the department mission and this campus policy. Department policies, and any subsequent revisions, are subject to review and approval by the Dean and will be reported to the University Committee.... As in other personnel matters, the department Executive Committee bears primary responsibility for compliance with the faculty workload policies.” [Emphasis added.]

The campus policy calls for four units of work—each unit the equivalent of a three credit group instruction course—all faculty teach two units, the remaining two may be divided between teaching, research, and service depending on the individual strengths of a faculty member.

Essentially, the department implements workload policies that are reviewed and approved by the Dean. If the department changes policies, the Dean reviews and approves them.

In the Spoto Decision of Circuit Court Branch 14, Dane County, Case No. 92 CV 5046, a case involving the distribution of faculty merit pay increases and where a Chancellor overruled the faculty recommendations, Judge George A. W. Northrup noted that under Chapter 36 since faculty have “primary responsibility for ... faculty personnel matters,” the administration did not have the power to “trump faculty authority” and “may not treat shared governance as a matter of administrative convenience.”