Joint Meeting: FPS/SPS
Minutes
February 7, 2012

Present: Jane Bowers, James Llana *(SPS Chair)* , Robert Pignatello *(FPS Chair),* Karen Kaplowitz, Staci Strobl, Thomas Kucharski, Ned Benton, Carina Quintian, Maki Haberfeld, Ricardo Anzaldua, Virginia Moreno, Ben Rohdin, Pat Ketterer, Richard Saulnier, Inez Brown *(Recorder)*
Absent: Harold Sullivan, Francis Sheehan, Anna Singh

1. <u>Approval of Minutes for December 6, 2011</u>. Minutes were approved without amendment.
2. <u>Discussion of New Budget/Planning Model</u>. Rob began by suggesting that there be more regularly scheduled meetings because there is a lot of information to share. He believes the fiscal environment of the college looks good; we are doing a better job aligning recurring expenses and revenues thus placing less of a strain on OTPS. The tuition increase supports this; looking forward, we may expect a "healthy" CUNY COMPACT next year.
Planning Development and Transparency: The joint SPS-FPS meeting seems to be helping with regard to the strategic planning and vision of the college. However, the group needs to continue to look at how we can involve stakeholders beyond this committee in the process (public forums and established groups) in order to further improve the financial planning of the College and make the process transparent.

   Gina Galligan will be the Budget and Planning point person who will create new and improved reports, and support the budget integration and transparency process. Rob believes the college will end the year with a $2 million surplus; given the new building, he would like to request additional funds for custodial services and Science labs.

   Stacy questioned the "transparency" and presented her concerns as a result of a recent experience when attempting to secure emergency funds for a student. Rob explained that transparency happens at different levels, and that many different individuals and areas are responsible for ensuring transparency. Jane stated that some of the frustration surrounding transparency may be related to the fact that depending on the source of funds, we don't always know what is available. For example, a large donation was recently made to the college (foundation) to specifically support student emergencies; this is managed by Berenecea, and the faculty does not know what is really available. Pat stated that although the Budget office is aware of the fund balances, they are not privy to the policies that govern the distribution of funds. <u>*FYI:*</u> There are more than 50 accounts in the foundation.

   The general consensus is that we need to report more of everything so that faculty are aware of what is available. The fact that many faculty at this meeting are not aware that a student emergency fund even exists, or that there are emergency metro cards for students, is indicative of the fact that more communication is needed.

Incorporating data and evidence in planning: Ned is currently working with external agencies and has four ideas about this topic.

1) Present personnel information at a level that can be broken down by position. This makes it easy to manage 70-80% of the budget.
2) Organize non-personnel funds around programs. We could then identify the programs that cost the most, need additional funding, etc…
3) Organize reporting around decision points. What are we changing? This would help with the analysis.
4) A *Cross-cutting Cost Center* would be useful. We could review revenues and expenditures together.

The information would be transparent to this committee and eventually to all.

Other ideas regarding how to go about setting priorities: develop a deeper perspective of the revenue side; first concentrate on having simpler reports that would be easier to share with department chairs, and then with other constituencies; generate granular budget report(s) because the current budgets reports do not tell where the funds are actually going. Rob noted the JJC spends the least amount of all CUNY colleges on administrative expenses, and agreed that there is not enough transparency regarding how the large chunks of funds assigned to VPs are allocated and assigned/utilized in each area. It was noted that chairs are more concerned about the decision-making process; it is transparency about the existence of the process and engaging faculty in that process. Faculty should be integrally involved in the development of the five-year faculty plan. Granted there are external entities that govern how some monies are spent, but the line allocation process should be more consultative.

Historically the college has not started the budget planning process early enough, thus has not allowed enough time for consultation and revision. Jane is currently working to improve this process in her area. There was concern expressed that the annual process often gets sidetracked by short-term issues that arise. The entire framework should be in place and the suggestion is that a calendar be established and that the college sticks to it. Rob hopes to develop a multi-year budget that involves the chairs. We should begin to have the discussion about how the money will be spent. It is important for this committee to understand the concerns of the chairs because some of the recent budget changes have affected them in catastrophic ways, i.e. loss of support staff. This has created anger, suspicion and resentment, something that will not be resolved easily. It will take some time and effort to rectify this. It was noted that the college will begin to build back the support staff in the departments.

Future Goals:

1) Develop a set of recommendations for fiscal year 2013.
2) The joint SPS-PFS committee would like to meet every 2 weeks; we will continue to meet until we get through this agenda. Tom asked that meetings not be held on Mondays.
3) Jim has provided an analysis of the Master Plan, in terms of data drawn from various sources; suggestions for additional data are welcome.

4) CUNY First has the programmatic structure that would be useful; it should be coming up this spring in anticipation of being used next year. Our current system has reporting limitations.

3. **The remaining agenda items will be covered at future meetings.**