

Budget Council Minutes

September 13, 2021

2:00 p.m.

239 Tigert (Provost's Conference Room)

If unable to attend in person, Zoom =

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/95055095373pwd=WDFnR2gvNmJHMTJ5bEw3cHZqZTdOdz09>

Present: Ashley Ghiaseddin, Lauren Solberg, Jorg Peters, George Kolb, Shawn Weatherford, and Laurie Bialosky.

1. Call to Order - Ashley Ghiaseddin, Budget Council Chair

- The meeting was called to order by Acting Chair Lauren Solberg at 2:11 p.m.

2. Introduction of Council Members and Liaisons

- Members and liaisons were introduced.

3. Approval of March 19, 2021 Minute

- The minutes were approved.

4. Overview of Budget Council Mission and Past Activities

Responsibilities: This council's area encompasses budget and fiscal matters as they involve the academic mission of the University, including the recommendation of budget priorities involving academics and research, the fiscal implications of the creation, modification or deletion of academic programs, the collection and dissemination of information about University budgeting and planning; and monitoring whether the allocation of resources is consistent with Faculty Senate actions and the University's long term and short term strategic plans.

5. 2021-22 Agenda Topic Suggestions

- Council reviewed information and discussion from the last meeting pertaining to university benefits plans and interest in increasing employer contributions. Council will continue to focus on this topic this academic year and will update the Compensation & Equity Committee that it has added this topic to this year's agenda.

- Council will communicate recommendations and agreed to invite a Human Resources representative to the next meeting to discuss options and brainstorm ideas to move forward on advocating the increase of employer contribution in the SUSORP.

- The current contribution is 5.14 percent but council will advocate for faculty to move this number closer to ten percent to more closely align with peer and aspirational institutions.
- DSO's were discussed. They help manage the investment of the university's money and report to the Board of Trustees (BOT). The UF Foundation is a DSO. UF's financial statement identifies the DSO's. UF is a component unit of the state of Florida.
- Council agreed that the ([UFICO ESG Policy Overview](#)) provided last year is a lower priority agenda item.
- Fossil fuel divestment by other institutions was discussed and two articles were shared:
 - <https://www.npr.org/2021/09/10/1035901596/harvard-university-end-investment-fossil-fuel-industry-climate-change-activism>
 - <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2021/04/28/divestment-gains-some-colleges-can-it-spread-where-oil-rules>
- Faculty Senate Chair David Bloom encouraged councils and committee chairs to ask for a Vice-chair to informally assist the chairs with tasks or facilitation, etc. in the chair's absence. If interested, please let Chair Ghiaseddin know.
- Council members are encouraged to provide any additional topics of interest for council to explore in upcoming meetings.

6. Administrative Liaison's Report/Updates – George Kolb

- \$ 20 million dollars has been received to assist with UF's AI initiative. This fund was slated for approximately 100 AI positions and is recurring.
- \$75 million has been received to assist with the UF Lastinger Center's New Worlds Reading Initiative. A majority of the funds, which is a one-time funding project, are dedicated to vendors to provide books to children state-wide. The project provides free monthly books to children throughout the school year and aims to strengthen reading and help address barriers for students lacking access to books.
- There was an inquiry regarding the recent three percent raise. It was funded without new state money and was funded internally by the Office of the Provost.
- This merit raise was primarily led by the BOT, which hopes to receive legislative appropriation. Placement in the Top 5 rankings would assist with continued efforts to retain and recruit top faculty. Several funding scenarios were discussed, including utilization of a statewide State University System (SUS) state model; a UF-specific model which could come from state funds; or a plan enacted independently from Human

Resources.

- Auxiliary positions and grant positions are not funded by state monies. The impact of a college's compensation plan and how this is related to raise funding was also discussed.
- Institutional CARES Act funding was discussed.
- A separate portion of CARES Act funding is earmarked for student funding.
- COVID prompted the refund of approximately \$8 million for housing, parking and other refunds.
- Approximately \$5 million in funding was used to increase IT capacity to strengthen Zoom capabilities, enhance classroom technological features, and another portion was set aside for net lost revenue.
- Other necessary COVID expenditures included wastewater testing and enhanced Facility Services cleaning.
- Approximately \$3 million in utility savings occurred during COVID campus closures/reduced services.

7. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 2:58 p.m.