

University Planning and Budget Committee  
Meeting of January 10, 2013, 1:00pm  
The 1849 Room, Student Center

In attendance: Yvonne Kirby, Charlene Casamento, Laura Tordenti, Rae Schipke, Thom Delventhal, Haoyu Wang, Kevin Oliva, Matthew Bielawa, Carl Lovitt, Kathy Martin-Troy, Guy Crundwell, Carlos Liard-Muriente, Lisa Bigelow, Chad Valk

Meeting called to order at 1:03

Chad: Thank you all for attending this extra session. Dr. Gray is going to speak and give us a chance to ask questions about *Excel CT*.

As you all know, the date is set for the annual University budget presentations, February 19th. I have asked each presenter if they can provide us with preliminary papers by February 12th so we can be best prepared.

All members briefly introduce themselves for Dr. Gray's Benefit.

Dr. Gray: Thank you for this opportunity.

I have found in the first few month of the job that I often say to the board of Regents and others at the system office, "At the end of the day we're all still in the same business: education. We're not dealing with manufactured parts. The numbers don't always come out the way we expect. We have to deal with the human element.

Let me say a few words about how *Excel CT* came about. Before I had even finished my previous post in CA, I received a call delivering the news about UConn's \$1.6 billion award from the state. Almost as soon as I arrived, Governor Malloy said to me, "You need a plan." And...given the rocky start of the BOR and my office, it's important that plan be developed independent of this recent history, UConn, etc. But a priority was given to quick access and development, and I immediately began to solicit comments, ideas and opinions from the presidents of the individual campuses and discussions have developed.

Some faculty have been critical of me, perhaps rightfully, for not seeking enough input. But we have not finished the groundwork, and until that's done there can't be an opportunity for input. The name *Excel CT* was chosen to give the project identity and momentum but we are still in the framework stages. you can't hang windows without building walls first.

We hope that the BOR will endorse our initial proposals on January 17, then the Governor on February 5. If both these approvals occur, there will be a dollar amount attached. Then we can really get to work. The amounts of our proposals and expectations of the Governor's response are being kept tightly under wraps, and will be until after February 5th. The Governor seems please with our exchanges and my information is that we have a good chance. But nothing more can be said until the 5th.

The plan is designed to make us a *system*.

The plan is to upgrade campuses.

The plan is to provide the best technology possible.

What we intend to emphasize on a daily basis, to reinforce over and over, is the message that we are *the* system of higher education in the state of CT.

I am concerned about the scope of the plan. It is huge. But if we receive approval on Feb 5, then the plan will be complete by the fall. To do this we need:  
a task force on expenses;  
a task force on a long-term approach to tuition;  
the best experts with which to consult;  
CCSU and all the other 16 institutions will need to define your identities and priorities.

It is a multi-tiered, 10-year program.

Our technology is in trouble. We are behind. We need substantial financial investments there.

We have over \$500 million in deferred maintenance. Wiping that out is part of the *Excel CT* plan.

There has never been a master Plan for the system. This has to happen. There is money in our current proposal to accomplish that.

“Enrollment management.” We hope to stem and even reverse the downward trend in enrollment.

We need to establish “Early College” at all 12 colleges. Data clearly indicates that there will be an immediate benefit from reducing the need for academic remediation.

The plan includes funding that will enable us to offer more scholarships to keep students in the system, and money for marketing Charter Oak.

Chad: Where are we hoping to be by the end of the legislative session this year?

Dr. Gray: If the Governor approves our proposal on February 5, there *will* be money made available. The legislature will have to approve and the Governor will have to be re-elected--so there are still lots of potential obstacles. But that money is to build the plan. We have worked hard to have a reasonable plan, which means aggressively moving to fruition. But there does need to be some time to develop the plan. That’s why I’ve said that we hope to “launch” by fall.

Chad: What relationship will it have to the 2020 plan.

Dr. Gray: Not much on the first phase, but hopefully there will be an opportunity for the presidents to edit their 2020 plan and find initiatives that will dovetail to the benefit of all.

Guy: I see some union concerns on the horizon when you speak of developing Charter Oak. Will that mean more teachers?

Dr. Gray: No. My idea--and I will share these ideas with the task force, they’re just my ideas--but it becomes a fulcrum to help all institutions organize their on-line offerings. Some of Central’s offerings are the same as Southern’s, et.

A question from Stephen Cohen, CCSU Faculty Senate President(emailled to Chad): If funds are awarded to encourage specialization, will that be to the detriment of the

rest of the University. For example, if extra funds are given to develop the engineering program, is it possible that a decrease would be seen in Math?

Dr. Gray: That would be up to the individual universities.

Guy: What else is involved in the frame-work, other than the consolodation of the units?

Dr. Gray: The first thing is to hire a consultant. There will be immediate savings from upgrading tech. Right now there's talk of centralizing IT, but I'm not going to say more. I'm not an expert. That's why you hire an expert.

Kathy: There's all this talk of efficiency. Some things look efficient but simply don't work. Students often defy the numbers.

Dr. Gray: I believe it's important to include students on the task forces. We're totally wrong if we go into this hoping to save \$60 million. We hope to improve the efficiency of what we do and serve students better. If we save a few million. Great.

Lisa: Is there any talk of closing some schools?

Dr. Gray: There was the moment I arrived. But the talk is alarmist. I don't believe any institutions are poorly run. We close any of them and 3-4,000 students don't go to college. That's important.

Chad: UConn has announced a goal of increasing enrollment by 6500. There is concern that that will happen at our expense.

Dr. Gray: We have to get over our image of being the ugly stepsister of UConn. My goal is to make them anxious about us. We have several compelling reasons that our own identity is strong and worthwhile. These simply need to be framed the right way at the right time.

Chad: There is concern about the growth of the system office.

Dr. Gray: I understand, that's why we'll bring in an efficiency expert. But I've worked in other systems and our costs are comparatively low. Our admistrative costs are 3.9% of the overall budget. In CA that figure is 18%.

My staff is set. We're in the process of making two hires, but I don't see the system office growing beyond that. We are in the midst of hiring 100 new faculty. That's a fact that is often overlooked in the shuffle of all this.

Adjourned at 2:20