Date: May 12, 2006

To: Richard Davenport, President

From: Mark Johnson and Jim Grabowska Chairs of Planning Sub Meet and Confer
       H. Dean Trauger and Jean Haar Chairs of Budget Sub Meet and Confer


Summary

Budget and Planning Sub Meet and Confer
Planning Sub Meet and Budget Sub Meet held six joint meetings during the 2005-2006 academic year. The stated purpose of the joint meetings was to improve the linkage between the planning process and the budgeting process. A goal for 2005-2006 was to develop a beginning framework of a more unified process that would strengthen the decision-making abilities in the two areas.

Background

Review of Planning Results from 2004-2005
Primary recommendations that surfaced from the three university-wide forums hosted by Planning last year helped set the course for this year’s efforts. In particular, efforts focused on (a) the recognition that funding of the strategic priorities and consideration for funding of key goals and initiatives must continue, (b) the implementation of a plan to move the current priorities to a sustainable funding model, and (c) a discussion of what practices and artifacts could be left behind as we move to fund new initiatives. These three recommendations, combined with the need to link planning, budget and assessment, drove the combined Planning/Budget agendas.

Summer 2005 Cabinet Retreats on Planning
The Cabinet Retreats were used to discuss and formulate an overview of a proposed vision for strengthening institutional planning through the alignment of planning, budget and assessment with the University’s mission and vision. Planning – Budget -Assessment Diagram

Summer 2005 Presidential Retreat on Planning
A consultant guided a broad cross section of campus representatives in attendance at the Presidential retreat through an overview on integrating planning, budget and assessment as well as best practices in Higher Education.

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President's Convocation Address that included a charge to Planning
In his convocation address, President Davenport presented the following challenge: "We need to invest in institutional planning and research if we hope to achieve and measure our goals and accomplishments. The Cabinet and I have had initial discussions about how best to organize the functions needed to support this initiative. Because of the importance in accountability, measurement and assessment as we move forward with our strategic priorities, it is important that these functions be consolidated and supported at an existing vice presidential level." He also gave this challenge "I challenge our campus community to seriously consider laying the groundwork for a Baldridge National Quality Award in education. Many of you are familiar with this program that strives to help organizations improve. Being recognized as a Baldridge award winner is one of the most prestigious honors attainable. It requires that we examine our strengths and opportunities for improvement in every facet of our institution. This will take more than a year to accomplish, but we must start now if we are to distinguish ourselves as an institution worthy of such recognition. Only a few colleges and universities have received this significant award but the outcome, should we be successful, would be to raise our institution to a level of national prominence. I believe that this is an achievable goal, but we will all need to pull together and strive for the highest standards in all that we do."

This Year
Focus of Planning and Budget during 2005-2006
In response to President Davenport’s charge and in preparation for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation visit, Planning and Budget collaboratively began to address the issue of how to best organize for optimal institutional planning and budgeting. Two key issues were introduced: (a) the concept of planning driving budgeting and (b) the concept of planning and budgeting moving from a divisional perspective to an institutional perspective.

Although there were differing views on the two concepts, there was clear agreement that assessment needed to become an integral component of the unified process. By the end of the initial meeting, two joint task forces were identified—one to define an improved process for the alignment of planning, budget, and assessment, and the other to establish a structure for a planning office to further develop, implement, and support the work.

By spring of 2005-2006, the two Sub Meet and Confers had developed preliminary frameworks around the objective of creating a process for aligning planning, budget and assessment (Improved process for alignment of Budget with the Planning) and developing an overview of the roles and responsibilities of a Planning office (Developing an outline for the Planning Office).

The intention of the work completed was to establish the groundwork for creating a process in which the following can be demonstrated: (a) planning drives the budget, (b) all plans submitted to budget for funding include an assessment plan, (c) all plans funded provide periodic updates of progress on the assessment plan, and (d) the assessment update is used for future planning.
A model for evaluation of RFPs that incorporates the process described above was implemented and applied to requests for $1.5 million in Strategic Priority funding during Spring '06. It is anticipated that this model will receive expanded use to include new budget requests as the university begins to move to the institutional planning and budgeting model.

The co-chairs of Planning met separately with the HLC accreditation team in order to provide the team with essential elements of (a) what had been accomplished during the previous years, (b) what was in practice now, and (c) a vision for what could be in the future. In light of that information, the accreditation team also met with the Planning committee as a whole to discuss particular issues that surfaced during the co-chairs' meeting.

The Planning Sub Meet also added both the administration and faculty representatives for assessment as ex-officio members. This will help improve the linkage to assessment as well.

**Recommendation**

**Next steps**
Based on the work completed by Planning and Budget, the following has been proposed:

1. Pilot the created, unified process for aligning planning, budget and assessment with the Strategic Priority Funding process,
2. Support the formation of a Planning office,
3. Complete an administrative structure to assist University planning efforts next year,
4. Continue to investigate budget models that support the alignment of planning, budget and assessment,
5. Address the Higher Learning Commission accreditation requirement for improving and implementing a more unified planning, budget and assessment process.
6. Continue to pursue the Baldrige award by implementing process improvement and quality efforts.

Planning and Budget Sub Meet and Confer members: