**Budget Advisory Council**

November 29, 2012 at 1:30 p.m.

Burke Library - Bedsole Conference Room (BL201)

Present: Fabian Balmori, Maureen Bergan, Sergio Castello, Joe Deighton, Mike Ferry, Stephanie Girard, Gentry Holbert, Jim Hall, Margaret Massey, Rhonda Shirazi (co-chair), Carolyn Simmons, George Sims (co-chair), Jon Spence.

Invited Guests: Fr. Salmi, Bob Stewart

* The meeting was called to order at 1:34 p.m.
* The minutes of November 6, 2012 were approved.
* The main business of the meeting was presentations by Father Salmi, Bob Stewart and Jim Hall. Details are shown below.
* Other Business
* Mike Ferry presented the Faculty Executive Committee’s recommendation that the Council reconsider the effective date of its by-laws. After discussion, George Sims said that he would report to the Committee the sense of the group that we are not ready to make a decision on the issue, but we believe that there should be coordination with the other Councils.
* Rhonda announced that the Council had received a request from the College Senate to review the budget implications of a proposal to transition our Public Safety Department to a sworn police force. She will email the full proposal to members of the Council. The Senate requested a response by Friday, January 25.

**Presentations**

Fr. Salmi identified 3 major challenges facing the College and outlined strategies for addressing each of them.

**Philanthropy:** Giving to the College has been down in recent years as a result of the recession. Jeff Hilperts, new VP for Advancement, is working with his staff to engage and re-engage alumni and friends of the College. So far this year, annual giving is up 8% over last year.

**Debt:** The cost of servicing the bonds used to rebuild the campus is very high: what cost us approximately $2,000,000 in 2007 now costs us $5,000,000. Father Salmi and Rhonda Shirazi are investigating the possibility of restructuring the debt.

**Enrollment:** The campus building campaign was based on a plan to increase enrollment to 1600 full-time students. This required both an improved retention rate and an increase in the size of the freshman class. To date, we have not been able to recruit a class of 400 students. A study of the College’s applicant pool revealed the need to market the College more extensively: a majority of parents and students in the pool reported that they would not attend Spring Hill at any price point. They had no ideas (positive or negative) about the College. Authors of the study recommended a re-tooled marketing campaign to raise the visibility of the College and reposition it relative to its competitors. A marketing firm has been engaged and is in the process of designing new materials. Bob Stewart began as VP of Admissions in November and is working to re-energize and redirect their efforts.

**Admissions**

Bob Stewart presented his philosophy of admissions and outlined a strategy for improving enrollment. Major points include

* Shifting focus from counseling to recruiting and from recruiting freshmen to recruiting students who will be able to succeed and graduate.
* Qualifying the applicant pool to allow recruiters to focus on the students most likely to enroll and segmenting the pool to allow for more targeted marketing.
* Beginning the recruiting process with high school sophomores and juniors. This will allow us to build awareness of SHC and its programs instead of relying on financial aid to attract high school seniors.
* Increase opportunities for students to visit campus and interact with faculty and students. This may include adding weekend visit days and starting a program of continuing communication between faculty and new admits.

Bob also reported that Scholarship Day will be the same as it was last year, but will likely change going forward. He is using admissions figures from two years ago as a baseline and reports that this year’s number of accepted students is reasonably close to the same number from this time two years ago.

**Athletics**

Jim Hall presented the plan for switching from NAIA to NCAA II and increasing the number of varsity and club sports on campus. He sees the Athletics program as a component of admissions, retention and Student Life initiatives. He provided Council members with the numbers of students and teams for each year from 2012-12 to 2017-18. Cost figures for the program were not presented, although Jim indicated those figures are available.

**Meetings:**

Rhonda requested that Council members send her their availability for the Spring semester. She would like to set the semester meeting dates before we leave in December.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Minutes compiled by Stephanie Girard