During the fall semester of 2011 the Business Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate initiated a conversation with senior management regarding the process used for the distribution of campus resources. We were working on our charge to examine the distribution of campus resources, communicate that information to the campus community, and to serve as a communication link between students, faculty, and staff to senior management regarding the distribution of resources.

Towards that end, members of the committee met with all three Academic Deans, our Provost, and our Vice President of Business Affairs and the President of the College.

The intent of the committee is to understand the rationale and criteria for the distribution of campus resources and communicate that information to the campus community.

I. Question of Academic Deans

A. Distribution of OTPS

*Question: What process is used to create a budget proposal for the School of Arts and Sciences, the Crane School of Music, and the School of Education and Professional Studies? What criteria (rationale) are employed in decisions for the allocation of resources among departments?*

All three deans shared that historical need has a strong influence on current distribution. Also in common is that fact that conversations with department chairs determine how resources are distributed. Each Dean meets with the Provost biweekly and resource needs are addressed.

Within the School of Arts and Sciences there is no formal process for resource allocation. The needs are determined by the requirements of student learning. The Natural Sciences and Art, due to laboratory, studio, and field study requirements, have the greatest need; followed by the Social Sciences and Humanities. Budget information is shared periodically with the Arts and Science Council, along with rationale for distribution. Resource allocation (for OTPS and faculty lines) is tied to the guidelines of the Bicentennial Plan and the Mission of the College.

There have been attempts to create a process. A subcommittee was formed during the past five years to examine zero-based budget planning. This attempt failed. There was also a proposal to change the bylaws of the School to create a budget committee. This proposal was rejected by faculty.

Within the Crane School of Music, OTPS and IFR budget summaries are presented to the Crane Faculty Association for review and comment. Much of the 2009/10 budget was inherited as Dr. Sitton is a new to our campus. Nonetheless, several changes were initiated over the past academic year. New discrete
Budgets were created for internally-managed areas; three academic departments, four professional staff areas, and five ensembles. Faculty travel has been severely limited, restricted for the most part to the state music education conference (NYSSMA). Professional development funding was restricted to cases tied to student participation and/or recruitment.

The School of Education and Professional Studies (SOE&PS) was created from a merger between the former School of Education and selected departments from the School of Arts and Sciences. There has never been enough money to support the departmental needs. In the past, when departments expended their OTPS budgets, the Dean would provide assistance from his budget. Over the past few years as funds to the Dean’s accounts were drastically reduced, there was an attempt to closely align departmental budgets with need. Department budgets were examined to ensure equity within the School and the College.

The (SOE&PS) Dean's office examined the OTPS budgets of departments within the School of Arts and Sciences and used those data, and historical spending, to align departmental budgets within the School of Education and Professional Studies. There was a desire to provide $500 annually to each faculty member for professional development.

**B. Temp Services and New Faculty Positions**

*Question: What process is used to determine instructional needs within the departments of the School of Arts and Sciences, the Crane School of Music, and the School of Education and Professional Studies? What criteria (rationale) are employed in decisions for the allocation of faculty lines among departments?*

All Schools have experienced a recent decline in personnel due to deep and continued budget cuts from declining state support. In preparation for the 2010/2011 Academic Year, all Deans were asked to rank their requests for teaching faculty by three levels of staffing for:

1. Courses needed to sustain an existing program,

2. General Education and courses supporting teacher education,

3. Courses that support existing programs but are not required.

Each Dean consulted with department chairs to determine need. There were insufficient resources to support all requests from each School, but the two higher priorities were funded.

In the School of Education and Professional Studies, 50% of the faculty members must be full time. It has been a goal to exceed this requirement. The requirement informs personnel decisions.
II. Questions of the Provost

A. Distribution of OTPS

*Question: What processes are used to determine how OTPS resources are distributed among the three Schools of the College? What criteria (rationale) are employed in decisions of the allocation of OTPS resources among the Schools?*

A rubric was developed a few years ago to guide the distribution of resources to the departments of the three Schools of the College. The rubric attempts to account for the factors that result in additional expenses to academic departments.

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Provost Madden shared that this model works well when there is an increase in resources but not as well when resources are declining. The model was developed to become more systematic in the distribution of resources. Fees (IFRs) in some areas add a level of complexity and have been taken into account when resources are distributed.

B. Faculty Positions

*Question: What process is used to determine instructional needs among the three Schools of the College? How is the balance of adjunct to full time established? What criteria (rationale) are employed in decisions for the allocation faculty lines among the three Schools of the College?*

The process works through the Deans as they present arguments to the President’s Council based upon programmatic needs. In the past two years, positions have been filled only if need cannot be met in any other way. In some cases it is not less expensive to hire adjuncts. If the needed skill is very specialized, the College has to pay mileage to attract faculty from distant cities. This is sometimes experienced in the Crane School with needs for specific instruments.
Academic program reviews have helped departments make the case for instructional needs. NCATE and other accrediting body requirements have also guided the allocation of resources. Decisions are based, in part, upon enrollment data, which includes things such as average class size in lower- and upper-level classes, number of majors, and student:faculty ratio. The ability of the department to cover major areas of a discipline with available expertise among full- and part-time faculty members is also important.

C. Faculty input to decisions on allocation of resources.

*Question: How may (has?) the Council of Chairs provided information that could assist in the judicious distribution of resources among the three Schools of the College?*

The Council of Chairs could be asked to establish criteria such as these, but they declined to do so when we discussed it last year. There has been no reason to approach them yet this year, since our budget is so uncertain, but I would welcome such input from them when we have sufficient budget clarity to warrant a discussion.

Priorities are given to meet the instructional needs of the majors, transfer students, and general education.

*Question: How may the Business Affairs Committee provide information that could assist in the judicious distribution of resources among the three Schools of the College?*

The Business Affairs Committee can assist in the communication of resource distribution to the campus community. The Business Affairs Committee could provide similar input as the Council of Chairs.

III. Questions of the President and Vice President of Business Affairs

*Question: What are the criteria and rationale for the distribution of resources to the various areas of the College?*

President Schwaller used an analogy to explain that the current distribution is largely based upon historical precedence. The pattern was established over 40 years ago. Whatever amounts are added or taken are done so from what already exists. There have been small areas of transfer, but relative allocation has been largely stable.

Distribution of resources is discussed at great length in President’s Council. Increases in resources are often earmarked for specific initiatives.

There is some hope for approval of a tuition increase. New resources (if they occur) will not be added proportionately. If and when new resources become available, they will go to the highest priority as outlined in the Bicentennial Plan and supporting documents.

Unrestricted funds from the Foundation are added to the financial plan and allocated to areas of greatest need.
The members of the President’s Council have wrestled with cuts. No member was willing to give up enough.

This has been handed down from previous administrations dating back more than 40 years. There was a study of our peer institutions but it is too difficult to make comparisons as peers are not truly similar. The same general patterns are found throughout higher education (ca. 86% to salary, 76% to Academics), but details differ greatly. There is no benefit to standard patterns of allocation.

The College has moved away from a centralized distribution of resources. Resources now “belong” to somebody.

There were no offers of reduction from groups that would have matched need.

Cuts have been made in vacant positions. There has been some savings due to reductions in energy needs and lack of inflation. Price of natural gas is at an all time low and we benefit from being part of buyer’s consortium for electricity.

Budgets have grown based upon programmatic need.

**General Discussion:**

We discussed the “Harvard Model” where all colleges of the university function as separate units. That would not work here as it assumes independence.

In some states tuition is the “coin of the realm” when the state follows tuition absolutely. That does not happen here and academic units feel put upon.

Members of the President’s Council attempt to put a value on every decision. For example, when will lack of upkeep affect student recruitment? It is difficult to weigh. We have hired outside consultants to help us make these decisions.

In the past, cuts were made to “low hanging fruit.” Physical Plant lost many positions. There is no low hanging fruit left.

We are trying to quantify the qualitative; our charm and the intimacy of our classroom. This risk of the loss of our distinctive nature is the President’s number one concern. Over 75% of the students who visit our campus apply and most come. We benefit from a relatively low student/faculty and adjunct/full time ratios.

We are struggling to maintain program integrity. Retrenchment and eliminating positions is not a tool we seek to have. At this time, we are not filling vacant positions and making judicious use of part time help.