University, College, and Departmental Budget Transparency

Submitted by: Heidi Altman (haltman@georgiasouthern.edu)

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Question(s):

1) Will there be money generated from summer teaching to help augment departmental operating budgets this year?
2) If not, how will departmental operating budgets make up for such monies which were disbursed in past years?
3) When will college budgets be released?
4) What measures do the Office of Business and Finance and the Office of Academic affairs currently take to make the financial state of the university transparent to important stakeholders such as Deans and Department Chairs?
5) Does the Office of Business and Finance and the Office of Academic Affairs follow a specific timeline in the transmission of this information? If so, what is it?

Rationale:

The financial operations of departments and colleges are critical to research, student success and effective teaching. Without a clear budget, department chairs and deans cannot plan for faculty travel to conferences, faculty research support, student research support, student travel to conferences, and operating expenses above the allotted departmental operating budget. Over the years, summer incentive money has come to replace any actual increases in departmental operating budgets. Some departments have not had an increase in operating budgets within memory. Over time and as departments grow, costs rise and higher scholarly expectations put more pressure on departmental operating budgets. In some cases, departments may not even be able to purchase paper for copying exams or other supplies. Without knowledge of their budgets department chairs and deans cannot adequately administer their academic units. Finally, there are rumors flying fast and furiously between departments, between colleges and across campuses about the budget situation. Transparency and clarity would improve the relations among departments and colleges and foster better relations.
between campuses. Rumors which blame one campus or the other for budget shortfalls threaten to disrupt the trust we have been striving for in the consolidation process.

Response: