

CREM Meeting Minutes of March 30, 2021

In attendance: Barb Cherry, Paul Coats, Beth Gazley, Jon Trinidad

Co-Chair Barb Cherry opened the meeting with an overview of the feedback received from the BFC, emails from concerned faculty, and the Executive Committee.

Questions brought up by the CREM committee members were:

- Were the difficulties faced by faculty during the financial troubles at the University of Evansville and IU-PU-FW due to the presence or the absence of a policy such as the one we are considering for IUB?
- What would we gain by looking into financial exigency at other institutions?
- What is the “blueprint” of a financial exigency? How is it declared and who are the responsible parties for its enactment?
- In what circumstances would faculty want representation?

In response to these questions, the following points were discussed:

- As there is no real “blueprint” or guidebook for a case of financial exigency, but rather just emergency mitigation, looking into cases of financial exigency in our immediate vicinity (e.g. University of Evansville and others) could possibly give us a window into some of the ways in which it comes about and is enacted, thereby giving us some clue as to where faculty involvement would be the most needed.
- Shared governance applies to cases of financial exigency, so any realignment plan designed to mitigate this should include the faculty.
- However, due to the nebulous nature of financial exigency (not to mention the external emergency that would prompt such a measure), perhaps any policy which attempts to promote faculty involvement and representation should be broadly stated, allowing for this to be nearly always an option for any kind of financial changes.
- It was added that it may be useful to also include persuasive language directed to administrators of the type: “Here are some pitfalls that can be avoided by involving faculty governance.”

The committee then turned from the general discussion of the nature of financial exigency and the role of shared governance to look at the first task before CREM: responding to the recently ratified UFC ACA-41 concerning the definition of a university-wide financial exigency and the role the campuses. Specifically, the need to choose a group who would in turn choose a list of potential faculty members to be submitted to the UFC executive committee to form an ad-hoc financial exigency committee for the university as a whole. In its discussion of this, along with the related feedback from the prior BFC meeting, it was mentioned that:

- Such a group should contain faculty who are competent to evaluate the units and employees affected.
- The BFC would need to select the list of potential members for this group.
- For the sake of transparency and involvement of all affected parties, in our policy to respond to UFC ACA-41, we could mention specific groups that should be conferred with (e.g. staff and students), but perhaps also be as general and open-ended as possible.

- Perhaps it would also be important to specifically state that the administration should apply the same values of transparency, equity, and inclusion.
- Perhaps also include whereas statements to give the WHY, before getting into the HOW and WHAT of the policy.

After the above discussion, the committee decided on the next concrete steps for CREM: to move ahead with gathering specific feedback from BFC members via email from interested parties and to follow the recommendations from Elizabeth Pear regarding the distribution of the request for direct comments/feedback. It was decided that in the communication to the BFC membership, we would relist the original questions from CREM along with a bullet-point type summary of the general feedback received in the last BFC meeting, as a means of sparking more specific feedback.

The co-chairs adjourned the meeting with the promise they would apply the methods decided upon to gather feedback, and to contact Elizabeth Pear for guidance on logistics and the specific means of gathering said feedback.

Respectfully submitted,
Barb Cherry and Paul Coats, CREM Committee Co-Chairs