January 13, 2009

University Planning Council

Minutes for January 13, 2009

Present: Melissa Acker, Gwen Ashburn, Buffy Bagwell, Becky Doyle, Jane Fernandes, Archer Gravely, Bill Haggard, Bill Haas, Jeff Konz, Jim Kuhlman, Nick Ladd, Amy Lanou, Keya Maitra, Linda Nelms, Adrienne Oliver, Dan Pierce, John Pierce, Anne Ponder, Christine Riley, Barbara Svenson, Betsy Wilson

Absent: Amanda Alvarez, Bill Massey

1. Chancellor Ponder convened the first UPC Spring 2009 meeting from 3:00 to 4:20 in Highsmith 224 on January 13. This was a special meeting to provide information and consultation on the emerging budget situation. She reported that Senior Staff have submitted the required documentation to the State by the January 5 deadline, outlining our plan for 3-5-7 percent budget cuts. Chancellor Ponder reported that we would know more about the likelihood of the cuts after April 15 when the tax receipts are due. She also indicated that the state’s unrealized revenue estimate is closer to $2B rather than the $1.2B reported last Fall. The $2B figure is 10 percent of the entire state budget, but NC does have an $.8B rainy day fund. Mr. Pierce stated that the cuts were likely to be at the higher end of the 3-5-7 percent range. Responding to a question about what are we going to do about the strategic plan – put on the shelf or on hold, Chancellor Ponder stated that we would not put the plan on hold, but that some things may need to move slower; UPC will be asked to help us make tough choices about what we do now and what we delay. For example, should we fill a position of strategic importance vs. eliminate a position with a person in it? Mr. Pierce suggested that if we do our jobs splendidly, students will see a minimal impact of our cuts. However, one exception would be that planned cuts in the library on-line databases would be noticed by students.

To illustrate the impact of a 5% cut, Mr. Pierce described multiple ways that we would forfeit the 20 permanent state funded positions that are included in that plan. They include, not filling current vacancies, not filling positions as people retire or leave, moving the position to non-state funding and the last option will be cutting positions with people in them.

Mr. Pierce also indicated that in the plans for permanent cuts, only 25% of the cuts could occur in non-recurring funds, such as equipment. Chancellor Ponder reminded UPC that Mr. Pierce is the repository of ideas for cost savings, and that any new ideas should be forwarded to him.

2. Chancellor Ponder reported to UPC that UNC Asheville has received very positive feedback on the acquisition of the Rhoades property announced in December. This property has a value of $6M and we were able to acquire it for $3M. Most of this was in the form of funding from the state for land acquisition, funds that could not be used for any other purpose.

3. Chancellor Ponder reported on her meeting with IDC to discuss the revision of the mission statement. For some individuals, the process of changing the mission statement during the strategic planning process was too subtle. We have submitted the new mission statement to UNC-GA as part of UNC-Tomorrow. Additionally she indicated that there has been no change or disagreement about the elements of public,
undergraduate liberal arts, and that the change was in the mission statement and not the mission of the University.