

Budget Committee of Academic Senate

Report for Academic Year 2002-2003

September 22, 2003

The Budget Committee of the Academic Senate met seven times over the past academic year to address various budget issues. Some of the issues were raised on the initiative of the Budget Committee, some were presented to it by the Policy Committee, and some were raised as the result of actions contemplated by the Board of Governors. Following past practice, meetings of the committee typically were scheduled just prior to the scheduled meetings of the Budget and Finance Committee of the BOG. In accordance with an informal request from the Academic Senate, the Budget Committee has been posting its minutes of its meetings regularly on its website. The website address is: <http://www.law.wayne.edu/mcintyre/budget>. As will be evident throughout this report, the Budget Committee experienced great difficulty in engaging in useful consultation with the Administration on budget matters, due to the disinclination of the Administration to consult on anything but the most mundane matters.

A major obligation of the Budget Committee is to consult with the Administration on budget proposals going to the Board of Governors' Budget and Finance Committee. The chair of the Budget Committee represents the faculty on that committee. The Budget Committee spends much of its time reviewing items going to the BOG, and it frequently schedules its meetings to conform with the meetings of the BOG.

In most respects, academic year 2002/03 was a frustrating year for the Budget Committee. At its first meeting, the committee discussed the need for early formation of the Budget Review Committee. The minutes of that meeting state:

The first topic of discussion was the desirability of getting the budget process started early this year so that there could be meaningful consultation with this committee and other relevant committees. The Chair had raised this issue at the Board of Governors (BOG) meeting on July 29, 2002, on behalf of the committee and both President Reid and Provost Bantz had given assurances that the process would be started in the early fall. Members of the committee who also serve on Policy reported that Policy has already begun the process of submitting names of candidates to serve on the Budget Review Committee (BRC), although that process is not yet complete. The Administration will pick one name from the list of five submitted to join Seymour Wolfson, President of the Senate, on the BRC.

Despite the efforts of the committee and Policy, the Administration failed to appoint the members of the Budget Review Committee in timely fashion. Indeed, the BRC was not appointed until late May of 2003, after most of the major budget decisions were set in concrete. As a result, the BRC simply received information reports on the budget and played no significant role in the formulation of budget priorities. The committee has received assurances from Provost Barrett that the BRC will be appointed early in the fall and that work will begin early on the implementation of the 1999 report of the Formula Funding working Group for the introduction of a dynamic component to the budget.

In addition, the Administration bypassed the normal consultative process by appointing two ad hoc committees to develop proposals for cutting the budget. The Budget Committee requested copies of those reports, but the requests were not granted. In fact, no response to those requests were received. The committee also requested information on other budget matters, and those requests were also ignored. At the request of the President of the Academic Senate, the Chair of the Budget Committee made a presentation to the Senate on the lack of consultation. As was made clear in that presentation, the lack of consultation on budget issues rivaled the worse years of the Adamany administration.

Despite the lack of consultation, the Budget Committee was active on several issues. It prepared detailed reports on the proposed recharting of several centers/institutes. It raised concerns about the proposed purchase and renovation of the Maccabees Building (estimated costs of over \$18 million). See the minutes of the meeting of April 28, 2003, for details on the rechartering of the centers/institutes and on the Maccabees Building. The committee noted rumors that the administration was planning changes in the way indirect cost recovery (IRC) funds are distributed and requested consultation on any proposed changes. See minutes of the meetings of Oct. 18, 2002, and July 28, 2003, for details. The administration did present a proposal to the BOG in July for cutting back sharply on the ICR funds going to principal investigators, albeit without any significant faculty consultation.