



3 May 2013

To: Senate

From: Council of Senates' Budget Committee Vancouver Sub-Committee

Re: Annual Report on the Activities of the Sub-Committee

Attached please find for your information the 2012-13 Annual Report of the activities of the Council of Senates' Budget Committee Vancouver Sub-Committee.

If you have any questions, please contact Stephanie Oldford at
Stephanie.Oldford@ubc.ca.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. William G. Dunford, Chair
Council of Senates' Budget Committee Vancouver Sub-Committee

Council of Senates Budget Committee Vancouver Subcommittee

Report to Senate – May 15, 2013

Terms of reference

The Budget Committee shall:

meet with the President and assist in the preparation of the University budget; and make recommendations to the President and to report to the Okanagan and Vancouver Senates at least annually concerning academic planning and priorities as they relate to the preparation of the University budget.

In advising the President on the University budget, the Budget Committee may request information on any of the University's fund accounts.

Background

This is the 2012/2013 annual report of the Vancouver Senate Budget sub-Committee (SBSC). The Budget Committee is a Council of Senates' committee, which has never met and is not scheduled to meet. The only mandate for the full committee would be to look at the distribution of funds between the campuses, but the allocations were largely agreed and ring fenced when UBCO was formed and there has not been further discussion.

At UBC's Okanagan Campus, our sub-committee's counterpart has coincidental membership with that Senate's Academic Building and Resources Committee. At the Vancouver campus, there has been discussion of combining various committees in similar manner, but at present the committees potentially involved have chosen to retain independent paths. However, there have been some successful joint meetings this year and more are planned, principally involving the Senate Academic Building Needs and the Library committees.

It should be noted that the SBSC has no oversight role and no power to insist on any involvement in the budgeting process. If topics of concern were identified it would bring these to the attention of Senate,

Activities

In addition to exploring common interest with other committees, the SBSC has also continued to move away from its previous, confidential way of operating with the aims of opening the budget policy of the University to discussion with the community. The SBSC website <http://senate.ubc.ca/council/committees/budget> is an open repository for public information

which has been presented to the Sub-committee and provides a mechanism for the community to provide confidential feedback to the Sub-committee from the community. This has been advertised via mass mailings to both faculty and students. In the approximately six months of operation so far the website has received five feedback messages. Essentially this level of response provides no evidence that the University community has any concerns about the present financial management of UBCV.

The SBSC has adopted a schedule of meeting just before every Senate meeting. The meeting is in two parts. It begins with a private meeting of the committee to discuss any items which should be raised with the administration. It then moves into a second phase where representatives of the administration attend as guests. This provides a forum for ideas to be exchanged and presentations by various campus units.

A summary of the meetings this year is below:

Meeting Date	Subject	Presenters and Guests
May 16, 2013	Campaign and Budget Update	TBD
April 17, 2013	Capital Plans and Priorities and Library (Joint with Senate Academic Building Needs and Library Committees)	Ian Burgess, David Farrar, John Metras, Peter Smailes, Jody Scott
March 20, 2013	Cancelled	
February 13, 2013	IMANT and Endowments Update	Ian Burgess, David Farrar, Jai Parhar, Pierre Ouillet
January 23, 2013	Faculty Budget Update	David Farrar, Pierre Ouillet, David Shorthouse
December 12, 2012	Campus as a Living Lab and UBC Properties Trust (Joint with SABNC)	Steve Cockcroft, David Farrar, John Metras, Pierre Ouillet Al Poettcker, John Robinson, Brent Sauder
November 14, 2012	Classrooms - Utilization and Upgrading and Capital Projects Update (Joint with Senate Academic Building Needs Committee)	Catherine Alkenbrack, David Farrar, Shaun Filwok John Metras, Pierre Ouillet, Jody Scott, Claudio Pini
October 17, 2012	Graduate Student Funding	David Farrar and Susan Porter
September 19, 2012	Budget Outlook and 12/13 Budget Process	David Farrar and Ian Burgess

In general the University is in a good financial situation compared to many peer institutions. There continue to be constraints on support from the Provincial Government and the fee income which can be raised from domestic students. Although the constraints on salaries have been lifted, there is no ready source of income to pay for increases and their ongoing effects. Two major possible sources are through expanded use of campus facilities, particularly through summer use of the campus and increasing the numbers of international students.

Topics which have been discussed at length include problems funding classroom maintenance. This has resulted from changes in the Provincial Funding structure, but some resources have been reallocated to compensate for this. There was also discussion on the desirability of providing a faculty meeting area to serve similar functions to the former Faculty Club. The committee was assured that there are definite plans to provide such a facility in the very near future.

The present budget model puts more emphasis on trying to close the loop between the source of income and the provision of service. This is simpler at the undergraduate level, where a percentage of fee income follows the student to the office of the relevant Dean, although not necessarily beyond that. There is however, still a block allocation dating from the previous budgeting model. For research students and research facilities in general the funding model is quite complicated. For example, although PhD students pay fees, more than the total amount of fee income is returned to students through scholarships.

It is also apparent that there are no direct incentives at the departmental level for the generation of new income, the control of costs or allocation of income. Attracting more students into a course results in funds going to the Dean's office, but not necessarily to the department. A claim that a new course does not require resources is not generally audited. A Library consultation for a new course does not imply any flow of resources to the Library.

Conclusions

In the absence of obvious problems or requests for advice the Sub-committee continues to operate in a largely reactive mode. Contacts with the administration are cordial and regular. The Sub-committee intends to continue with this approach but will try to anticipate potential problems and welcomes any input which may come from interested parties.