A&S&E Committee on Budget and University Priorities
Annual Report, 2003–2004

The Committee on Budget and University Priorities met twelve times during the 2003–2004 academic year.

The major item of business for the fall semester was preparation of a multipage report to the Arts, Sciences and Engineering administration, detailing recommendations for the university fiscal year 2005 budget. Meetings in the spring term were devoted to more long-term issues that will have budgetary implications in the future. The committee is grateful to Dean Bouchard for his guidance over the period of many years. We extend to him best wishes in his new role as Chief Financial Officer for the Boston Museum of Science. The committee wishes also to thank Catherine Doheney for providing venue and sustenance.

The committee met with the following administrative and faculty representatives:

- Senior staff of the Tisch Library
- The Provost
- The Vice President for Finance
- A faculty representative from the AAUP
- The Director of Undergraduate Admissions
- The Director of Financial Aid
- The EEOC representative for A,S&E
- The central administration director of information technology and associated staff
- The Deans of Arts and Sciences, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and Engineering, who also serve as ex-officio members of the committee.

Issues demanding attention by the committee, all of which have budgetary implications for the FY05 budget and beyond, include:

- Planned selective expansion of the faculty, particularly in Engineering.
- Evolution of library facilities to accommodate graduate student expectations and needs.
- Faculty retirement and benefits.
- Deferred maintenance of facilities ($50-$60M university-wide in the foreseeable future).
- Undergraduate financial aid; projected “need-blind” admissions policy.
- The impact of the new wireless technologies.
- Graduate student stipends.
- Goals for the new capital campaign.
- Impact of a projected increase in the administrative independence of the Engineering School from Arts and Sciences.
- Implementation of the goals generated by the undergraduate task force.

2003–2004
The effect of the low value of the dollar, which considerably increases electronic subscription prices and puts strain on book purchases. Foreign studies programs are also affected.

- Faculty startup costs, particularly in the laboratory sciences.
- The central administration institutional assessment costs to Arts, Sciences and Engineering.

The committee spent a considerable amount of time discussing the financial implications of the new senior administration’s expectations for faculty scholarship. Increased expectations demand increased infrastructure and support for faculty scholarship. Limited space on campus for faculty research places constraints on the productivity of existing faculty, not to mention the hiring of new faculty.

While the committee was pleased that most of its recommendations were implemented in the final budget submitted to the Trustees, there was disappointment that more attention was not paid to faculty merit raises and to graduate teaching assistant stipends.

For the committee,

Robert P. Guertin, cochair
Mark Richard, cochair