A&S&E Committee on Budget and University Priorities  

The Committee on Budget and University Priorities met seven times during the fall 2005 semester and once during the spring 2006 semester. The chairs held several additional meetings with the Executive Committee and members of the administration.

The major item of business for the committee was preparing a set of budgetary recommendations for the Arts and Sciences and Engineering administration. The eight-page document contained mostly qualitative recommendations for the fiscal year 2007 budget. There was considerable administrative change in the A&S&E administration during the budget preparation process during the fall term, so the budgetary priorities enumerated by the committee, while clear in their statement, were less quantitative than they had been in prior years.

The committee met with the following faculty, administrators, and students:

- The acting Executive Associate Dean for Arts and Sciences (two meetings)
- The senior staff of the Tisch Library
- The Director of Undergraduate Admissions
- The Director of Undergraduate Financial Aid
- The new Chief Information Officer for the university
- A representative of the Graduate Student Council
- Two representatives of the AAUP
- The Deans of Arts and Sciences, the Dean of Engineering, and the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and Engineering, who also serve as *ex-officio* members of the committee.

Some issues addressed with budgetary implications included:

- Undergraduate financial aid and the stated goal for “need-blind” admissions. Implementation of this policy will demand considerable support from outside the operating budget.
- Graduate tuition financial aid.
- Faculty compensation—competitive levels for new faculty.
- Overenrollment in the freshman class and implications for the outlying years.
- The continuing high price of the euro and its effect on subscription prices from European technical publishers.
- Graduate student issues: bringing teaching assistant stipends to a competitive level and health service fees for master’s degree candidates receiving full tuition scholarship.
- Maintenance support for new construction projects.
- A&S&E support for university-wide information technology and perceived services rendered thereby.
• New faculty startup costs, particularly in the laboratory sciences. The lack of a clear policy for faculty retirements.

The committee was well aware of the impending bifurcation of major parts of the A&S&E budget, separating Engineering from Arts and Sciences. However, it was generally agreed that because of the generality of committee issues, the faculty makeup of the committee should remain the same. However, bylaw changes voted by the A&S&E faculty in April reconstituted the student composition of the committee (two graduate and four undergraduate), and there were some administrative changes to the committee composition as well.

Though not directly discussed in meetings, the committee recognized high fuel costs markedly affected flexibility in the FY07 budget and on future budget cycles.

The committee wishes to thank Catherine Doheney for her continuing role of providing venue and sustenance.

For the committee,

Robert P. Guertin, cochair
Mark Richard, cochair