

Budget Information Committee Report

Fall 2018

The Budget Information Committee has been reviewing the tasks set before us and trying to frame a set of questions for Dr. Jerry Strawser. He has agreed to meet with us sometime early in the Spring semester to give us as much information as he can regarding these questions. The list of question we have forwarded to him are:

1. We would appreciate an update of the annual TAMU budget and expenditures, especially as these pertain to expectations for the 2019 Legislative season.
2. We would appreciate an overview of the budget for transportation services on campus, especially with respect to (a) faculty-generated revenues, and more generally, any other major revenue line items, and (b) annual expenditures on streets, sidewalks, football parking, garages, and other programs.
3. With respect to the collaborative partnerships for building new dorms and the new hotel, are those original financial projections for these projects on track? Are we achieving the revenue streams that were projected? Are we at risk of not hitting the capacity utilization agreement for the new hotel?
4. What is the present state of the financing for new building construction? How have increased costs in raw materials (steel/concrete/etc.) affected future building plans?
5. What is the budgetary situation for the maintenance of older buildings? Have any related bonuses/penalties been assessed based on the outsourcing contracts, as negotiated previously. When there were cost savings predicted, have they been actually achieved through the centralized outsourcing contracts?
6. We understand the University may be moving toward a Responsibility Center Management (RCM) budgeting model. How might this move to RCM affect College and Department funding and budgeting?
7. Given the “Flat Growth” philosophy of the Regents with regards to pricing of undergraduate education, and the capping of the present student population for the time being, how will these factors affect the budgets of Colleges and Departments?
8. With respect to TAMU expenses pertaining to administrative overhead, how does TAMU compare to peer and aspirant institutions? How have administrative expenses changed over the past decade? How will administrative expenses change going forward?
9. Given the presently dynamic macro-economic situation, what is the University’s contingency plan if the economy crashes? What variables are University financial managers considering and preparing for?
10. What is the TAMU plan (across a 5/10/20-year horizon) for student/institution growth and for sufficient revenue to cover those plans?

Once we meet with Dr. Strawser we should be able to respond to the charges set before us.

Legislative Affairs Committee Report
Fall 2018

The Legislative Affairs Committee met twice with Mr. Michael O'Quinn, Vice President for Government Relations and Strategic Initiatives. Mr. O'Quinn discussed the upcoming Texas legislative session and how the outcomes might affect the University. Now that the election is over, new chairs may be selected for relevant committees at the state level. He agreed with us that the Legislative Affairs Committee members should plan on going to Austin in January or February to meet members of these committees.

The Legislative Affairs Committee members discussed topics of concern to bring forth to the legislators. Adequate funding, dual credit and transfer credit, and the field of study issues headed up the list.

Faculty Senator and committee member Patrick Burkart gave a presentation on the TCFS, AAUP, and TACT joint meeting in Austin, and also mentioned the AAUP members meetings with legislative aides this summer. The topics discussed were similar to those identified by the Legislative Affairs Committee. One of the speakers at the joint meeting gave a presentation on campus involvement of Koch Industries.

The Legislative Affairs Committee will be organizing visits with Texas legislators this spring, and will create a discussion topic list for each member.

Prepared by Senator Price