

UAF Staff Council Planning & Budget Committee Update 3/21/14

The Planning and Budget Committee (PBC) serves in an advisory role to the Chancellor's Cabinet. The process for this committee is different this year than in past years, as UAF must consider both long-term budget reductions (FY15) as well as strategic areas to invest in for FY16.

The PBC has been meeting twice a week since late February. The committee is chaired by the Provost, and includes vice-chancellors, deans, and representatives from faculty senate, and staff council.

The PBC will recommend a prioritized list of quantifiable reduction options to the Chancellor's Cabinet. After considering all input, the Cabinet will then aim to finalize decisions by May to allow implementation lead time prior to the beginning of the fiscal year.

This year, the Planning and Budget Committee process is to:

- Identify any additional cost reductions or revenue enhancements, beyond those suggested by the Budget Options Group (BOG).
- Add to the assessment of each option provided by the BOG.
- Recommend to the Cabinet the options to be implemented, in priority order.

The goal is to identify \$15 million in reductions or revenue enhancements for FY15 and beyond, expecting that additional reductions may be necessary in FY16 and FY17.

The Chancellor's Budget Options Group (BOG) has compiled and analyzed several options to address the budget gap, and I shared their findings in an email earlier this month.

During the past two months, the PBC established a set of guiding principles that align with UAF's mission statement, and identify the strengths, and successful programs and services. The PBC is committed to address the budget reductions in a manner that is thoughtful and considerate even while realizing that its recommendations will undoubtedly have negative effects.

In addition to the BOG options report, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has collected ideas from other groups, including Staff Council. The PBC spend approx. a month gathering information and brainstorming ideas. All of the options are currently being considered, and nothing has been eliminated or decided at this point.

The next, and current part of the process, is the evaluation phase and initial rating of options. This is done in PBC subcommittees, each of which have an assigned group of reduction options, sorted according to the categories established by the BOG.

Each subcommittee has a staff member of OMB assigned to them, who can provide further information regarding the options/ideas it has been given. In addition, the subcommittee can ask to speak with key individuals responsible for the area that it is considering options/ideas for.

The Planning and Budget Committee's tasks are difficult, and will be ongoing until the end of April. It has been encouraging to see the careful and considerate manner with which the committee has handled each idea and option it has been given. While it may not appear so, the focus is on the University of Alaska as a whole, not on one or two particular areas, and not just on academic or non-academic issues.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the current budget process, please feel free to contact me.

Chris Beks
Staff Council Representative
Planning and Budget Committee