



Representing Wayne State Faculty and Academic Staff

# NEWSBRIEFS

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## Budget Debate Continues

### “Instruction” or “Buildings”?

#### Board of Governors Will Decide

By Steve Babson, Information Coordinator

The debate over Wayne State’s budget priorities continues with contrasting proposals from the Academic Senate and the Administration for allocating \$40 million in new funds and carryovers from last year.

There is much at stake for faculty and academic staff in this budget battle. The Administration’s first priority is to allocate the money to administrative costs and construction projects. The Academic Senate, in contrast, has proposed allocating a significant portion of the money to the Schools, Colleges, and Academic Support Services that took the brunt of the budget cuts last year.

The decision on which of the two proposals will go forward rests with the Board of Governors (BOG), which meets on January 30.

For WSU’s students, the BOG’s decision will be especially important. Students have been asked to pay substantially higher tuition at a time when the programs directly affecting them have been cut to the bone. The BOG’s endorsement of a renewed emphasis on Instruction would signal a welcome turnaround from recent policy.

#### Found Money

Last year’s cuts in academic programs at Wayne State were conducted in an atmosphere of

exaggerated crisis driven in part by the Administration’s questionable accounting methods. Professor Mike McIntyre, Chair of the Academic Senate Budget Committee (and a past Bargaining Chair for the AAUP-AFT), highlighted these dubious practices in the October *Newsbriefs*, focusing attention

on hidden reserves and the Administration’s gross underestimation of income from tuition, investments and state support.

The actual monies received by Wayne were, in fact, \$7-9 million higher than the Administration’s projections. For budget purposes, this money is considered “permanent” and carries over into future years because tuition and investment income is generated on a continuing basis. The

Administration acknowledges that there is at least \$7 million of this “permanent” money available for the 2008 budget, and the Academic Senate estimates that the amount is closer to \$8.9 million.

There is another \$30-33 million available in new money from various sources that will not be renewed in future years but is available for a “one-time” allocation in 2008. About \$4.5 million of this amount comes from the emergency tuition fee of last year, which will not be renewed. Another \$4 million represents “year-end balance money” that is available for allocation on a one-time basis in 2008.

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In addition, there is a \$22 million carryover from the 2007 budget that mostly represents Lansing's delayed payment of last year's state subsidy. This, too, is now available for a one-time allocation. (See the summary tables on page 4.)

### Contending Proposals

The Academic Senate voted unanimously on January 9 to recommend that the priority for allocating the new money be, as much as possible, the restoring of last year's budget cuts to "Instruction" and "Academic Support." (These two categories roughly correspond to "faculty" and "academic staff.")

For the "permanent" portion of the money, the Academic Senate proposes 40 new tenure-track faculty positions, 30 Graduate Assistant positions, and 15 new Academic Staff positions. This would represent about \$6 million in new spending and would go a long way towards restoring the \$7.7 million cut last year from Instruction and Academic Support. Another \$1.1 million in the Academic Senate proposal would go to Research and \$1.7 million would go to the "New President's Enhancement Fund."

For the more than \$30 million available in "one-time" money, the Academic Senate proposes that a little more than one-third of this would go to Instruction, Academic Support, and Research, and two-thirds would go to capital expenditures, building maintenance, administration, and contributions to the "Rainy Day" and "New President's" funds. The Academic Senate proposal specifically earmarks funds for the renovation of State Hall, one of the main classroom buildings for undergraduates.

Taken together, these proposals match the Board of Governor's "Priority Resolution" of last August, which provided that any additional funds that became available for the 2008 budget be allocated first to Instruction, then, respectively, to Academic Support, Research, and Administration. President Reid publicly endorsed these same

priorities on September 6 of last year during debate over the controversial termination of the Interdisciplinary Studies Department.

However, when it comes to actually allocating the new money that has now become available, the Administration has not taken very seriously the BOG's "Priority Resolution" and President Reid's pledge of last fall. Indeed, in its December proposal for allocating the "one-time" money, the Administration failed to allocate a single dollar to Instruction. It also ignored the BOG's definition of spending priorities by, among other things, treating proposed expenditures for renovating State Hall as an "instructional" expense.

In response to complaints from the Academic Senate and the AAUP-AFT, the Administration has since revised its proposed budget, but it still allocates only half as much to Instruction and Academic Support as the Senate proposal. The priorities of the Administration and Academic Senate budgets are, in effect, opposed: the Senate gives top priority to funding Schools, Colleges, and Academic Support, allocating what is left-over (primarily one-time money) to research, buildings, the Rainy Day Fund and the New President's Fund; the Administration, in contrast, gives top priority to building construction, maintenance, administrative budgets, and the New President's Fund, allocating what is left over to Instruction, Academic Support, and Research.

### Transparency

It should be noted that building construction and maintenance are items that the Administration has over-budgeted in past years. Whatever unspent surplus remains in these budgets at the end of the fiscal year can be moved to reserve accounts that are off-budget and often escape BOG scrutiny. This is apparently what happened last year when upwards of \$5 million in previously undisclosed reserve funds was discovered by the Academic Senate Budget Committee late in the budget process.

The Administration is engaged in continuing and constructive discussions with representatives of the

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## “We Are Stakeholders”

By Tom Anderson, Ph.D.

Bargaining Chair, Union of Part-time Faculty

The Union of Part-time Faculty (UPTF), certified as the bargaining agent for adjunct faculty by majority vote in the spring of 2007, is currently negotiating its first collective bargaining agreement with the university Administration. Our bargaining unit is quite large, with nearly 900 members in the winter of 2007, about 100 fewer than in the fall. This attrition was mostly due to the vagaries of part-time staffing, caused in part by the state budget crisis and by the termination of the Interdisciplinary Studies Program and the Humanities Department.

While it is true that a substantial minority of our members are professionals with non-academic jobs who teach part-time as a matter of choice, the majority of the bargaining unit is composed of individuals who teach part-time because full-time positions are not available. UPTF survey data indicates that more than 50 percent of our members teach at other colleges and that 60 percent of those teach two or more classes at other institutions.

Our data also indicates that 62 percent of UPTF members have taught at WSU for at least four years, half for at least six years, and 40 percent for at least eight years. Indeed, many have taught at WSU for decades. A compelling conclusion that emerged from our survey was that many WSU adjuncts have committed a large part of their lives to Wayne State. Many of us have been educated here. We are committed to the university and to the city. We are stakeholders by any reasonable definition of the word.

Yet our survey of UPTF members also shows that, although the university has at least 15 different salary levels for adjuncts, 60 percent are classified in the lowest four salary levels. Fifty-nine percent of our members have never received a raise and an additional 14 percent have not received one in five years. Virtually all UPTF members listed a salary increase as their top concern going into these negotiations.

With the exception of a few professionals who are qualified by their professional credentials, virtually all UPTF members hold at least an MA (96 percent), 17 percent have PhDs and 15 percent have advanced degrees in more than one discipline. But despite these qualifications, the treatment of adjuncts can vary widely. A few departments, for example, have policies in place that dock an adjunct who misses a class because of illness or the death of

a loved one. Some departments list adjuncts on their websites, others do not. Some ask adjuncts to attend department meetings, while others mandate such attendance, and still others make it clear that adjuncts are not really welcome at such meetings.

All too frequently adjuncts feel that they are not are treated by the administration, or by their own departments, with the professional respect they deserve. The UPTF is working to

change this reality.

High on our list of priorities is some sort of job security and seniority system. Yes, we understand that an adjunct has no guarantee of long-term employment, and that classes can sometimes be cancelled on short notice. But the contract negotiated between the administration of the University of Michigan and the AFT's union of adjuncts and lecturers demonstrates that annual contracts, rather than semester contracts, are indeed workable for the university. The UPTF bargaining team has therefore proposed an interlocking system of job security, seniority and promotion within the constraints of part-time employment.

Finally, there is the question of benefits. Our survey data listed health and dental insurance (although the majority of our respondents had such insurance coverage), participation in the retirement program, and tuition reimbursement as the highest priorities.

***"Fifty-nine percent of our members have never received a raise and an additional 14 percent have not received one in five years."***

Academic Senate, so the direction it will take is not yet clear. The hope is that it will change course and embrace the priorities President Reed and the BOG endorsed last fall.

The need for focusing on Instruction and Academic Support is well documented: these were the areas that took most of the cuts last year, and they should take priority now for allocating new resources.

## Proposed Allocation of Additional Funds

### Permanent Funds (\$ / percent)

Category	Administration Proposal	Academic Senate Proposal
Instruction	\$2,975,000 / 41.9%	\$5,050,000 / 56.7%
Academic Support	455,000 / 6.4	1,050,000 / 11.8
Research	420,000 / 5.9	1,100,000 / 12.4
Administration	450,000 / 6.3	0 / 0.0
Other	2,800,000 / 39.4	1,700,000 / 19.1
Total	\$7,100,000 / 100.0	\$8,900,000 / 100.0

### One-Time Funds (\$ / percent)

Instruction	\$2,350,000 / 7.1%	\$7,300,000 / 24.1%
Academic Support	1,250,000 / 3.8	2,090,000 / 6.9
Research	2,250,000 / 6.8	2,200,000 / 7.3
Administration	19,265,000 / 58.4	10,700,000 / 35.3
Other	7,900,000 / 23.9	8,000,000 / 26.4

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