

The BAC and Its Role

There is a long history of the Budgetary Affairs Committee (BAC), and its role and place in faculty governance. The Bloomington Faculty Council created the committee on February 6, 1973, at the recommendation of the Faculty Affairs Committee, chaired by Joseph Rezits. Ken Gros-Louis, our former campus chancellor (before we had a provost, the post was known by this title), was one of the committee's first members. The idea was to make the committee relatively (but not completely) independent, so as to be sufficiently nimble to react quickly to administratively-driven matters, while at the same time accountable to the BFC. The BAC also is to be broadly representative of the campus as a whole, and includes many members who are not elected members of the BFC. The "ethic" of the committee is to take an overall "campus good" view of finances, and not to advocate for any particular unit's welfare. Faculty on the BAC, for instance, do not attend the budget conferences of their units, with some exception made for the co-chairs in some years.

The provost has traditionally engaged the BAC in making Provost Fund allocations, but it must be kept in mind that the BAC's recommendations are advisory only. The allocation of funds is the provost's prerogative in her role as the chief academic and administrative officer of the IUB campus. The BAC is most effective when it receives concrete guidance from the Provost about her priorities and makes recommendations to the Provost based on that guidance. Thus, as you will see, the committee and the Provost concurred on their recommendations about the individual requests from the Provost's fund last year.

The BAC also plays a role in other budgetary issues. In the past, the BAC set minimum salary recommendations for the faculty. In 2013, Provost Robel asked former co-chairs Don Gjerdingen and Bob Kravchuk about their thoughts regarding her planned changes to the RCM system respecting calculation of UG enrollment market shares. The charge to the Budgetary Affairs Committee given in the bylaws for the Bloomington Faculty Council is as follows:

The Budgetary Affairs Committee shall act as a representative of the Council in offering to the Provost and to the Vice President and CFO its continuing advice and criticism on all aspect of the Bloomington Campus budgetary policy and the allocation of the Bloomington Campus financial resources, especially those proposed allocations and re-allocations of financial resources that have bearing on the economic well-being of the faculty and academic staff. Among others, the committee's responsibilities shall include:

- i. Considering the relative allocations of the University's resources with respect to new programs and significant changes in existing programs.
- ii. Considering the setting of priorities with regard to capital outlays.
- iii. Considering the setting of general faculty salary policies.

The Budget Hearings Process

Since the implementation of RCM, the main role of the Budgetary Affairs Committee is to advise the Provost on the use of the Provost's fund. Units and Schools make budget presentations and requests for funds from the Provost's Fund during the Spring semester. Every budget presentation is attended by at least one co-chair and another faculty member from the BAC. The BAC representative writes a summary for the BAC to consider. After the conferences have ended, the BAC meets to prioritize the requests, taking into consideration the Provost's priorities. The committee submits its recommendations to the Provost. In the Fall, the committee meets with the Provost to learn the outcome of the previous year's process and to discuss priorities for the coming year.