



# Southeastern Oklahoma State University

## *Office of Vice President for Business Affairs*

**TO:** Dr. Randy Clark, PhD.  
Chair, Faculty Senate

**FROM:** Dennis L. Westman, MBA  
Vice President for Business Affairs & CFO

**DATE:** November 10, 2020

**SUBJ:** Response to Faculty Senate Budget Process Questions

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide additional information about the current budgeting process at Southeastern. Below are my responses to the questions. I would be more than happy to answer any questions or discuss further. Please feel free to contact me!

Thank you.

***Question 1: What is the current formal budget process, where is it written or available and what is the functional timeline for budget decision-making?***

While there is no formal, documented process, there are some common University practices and principles that assist with budget preparation and decision-making.

Faculty input is solicited through the VPAA and respective department chairs via a series of budget request data sheets. Those sheets are then gathered by the VPAA for discussion and prioritization as a division. Each executive team member would then meet with VPBA, Comptroller and others to talk through their division requests, etc. Then, all of the Executive Team members' budget request data sheets were combined into a University-wide document. From there, the President and VPs would work through the priorities and available funding to decide what could be funded first and when (start of fiscal year, later in the fall, January 1, etc.)

With little to no new State money and uncertainty with enrollment numbers so early in the budget cycle (April of the year for fall numbers), Academic Affairs requests are usually funded first depending on the confidence level with the data. Other requests are held for additional review later in the year.

Generally speaking, the functional timeline for the budgeting process is as follows...



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- December & January, academic services fees reviewed and adjusted if necessary
- February, academic services fees presented to RUSO Board and State Regents
- March & April, internal budget process, feedback solicited
- May, state tuition and fee hearings (if requested or applicable)
- May (last Friday of month), state appropriations announced
- June 10 or so, budget due to State Regents
- June 10 or so, tuition and mandatory fee changes due to State Regents
- Mid-June, budget presented to RUSO
- Mid-June, budget presented to State Regents
- Late-June, budget considered by State Regents
- July 1, new budget year begins

***Question 2: In what ways, if any, does current practice vary from documented budget process?***

As there is no “formal” documented process, variances are not noted.

***Question 3: What is the current mechanism for faculty participation in budget decisions?***

Over the past several years, faculty participation has been solicited through the Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. I believe that VPAA would solicit input from department chairs and others for academic and instructional initiatives, new FTE, programmatic funding, etc. Once gathered at the VPAA level, the budget requests would be entered into the budget requests worksheets provided. Those sheets would then be accumulated and added to the requests from the other divisions across the university and presented to the president and executive team

***Additional Comments.***

Please note that the above process is under review and will be the topic of ongoing discussions prior to starting the FY2022 process. This review is intended to ensure that Southeastern maintains and improves the process such that input is received from appropriate persons at the institution prior to submission and approval in order to better inform the annual budget. The first discussion will take place on November 17, as part of the Administrative Council meeting. It is the desire that the University will eventually develop a formal, documented process for budget development.