

A Sense-of-the-Senate Resolution on Planning Unit Reduction Targets and
Budget Priorities
Finance & Facilities Committee
Faculty Senate
April 25, 2011
First Reading

I. University budgeting should implement a core commitment to protecting and advancing the academic quality of the university by promoting outstanding teaching and research. However, the currently proposed reduction targets undermine this goal by demanding considerably higher reductions from academic units (4.47%) than from academic support units (3.12%) and general fee support units (3.03%).

Therefore, the Ohio University Faculty Senate resolves that budget planners reevaluate the proposed targets to achieve a distribution that protects and advances the academic quality of the university.

II. It is further resolved that the budget planners fully implement practices of transparency and evidence-based decision making. As more detailed reduction scenarios are developed, Budget Planners should address two key areas of concern:

- A. At this point in time, the proposed strategy of “increased instructional efficiency” (changes in workload, section sizes, numbers of electives available, and composition of faculty) fails to address or even explore the inevitable degradation of the quality of learning, student experience, student and faculty research, and the overall academic mission. It also fails to acknowledge the cumulative deleterious effects and “efficiencies” created by nearly a decade of budget reductions.
- B. Furthermore, the uneven distribution of cuts is justified with the claim that academic support units cannot absorb larger reductions, yet the current proposals fail to provide any evidence to support this claim. Instead, certain areas within the support units, such as exploding IT expenses, costs for advancement and enrollment management, executive staffing and salaries, or the OU airplane, appear to be systematically excluded from reductions.

As the process stands now, it fails to identify how academic quality can be maintained while further increasing “instructional efficiencies” and fails to demonstrate the alleged inability of academic support units to absorb proportional cuts. As scenarios are released in the coming weeks, we look forward to a full public discussion of these concerns.