The 2017-18 Faculty Senate Budget Committee spent much of its time researching and analyzing the conditions influencing the 17-18 budget. While there was not much of a change in admission numbers of students and unfunded mandates from the state legislature, the committee still kept current with the budget process and overall budget numbers. The Committee did review several proposals directed by the individual departments and programs through Curriculog. The Budget Committee approved the Real Estate major, Bachelor in Professional Studies program, and the English concentration.

As a result of approving these programs, there was much discussion about the dollar amounts needed from these programs to make them viable. The Budget Committee did make a recommendation to the Senate: The Departments of origin and the Curriculum Committee need to articulate more clearly and honestly how the addition of a program or courses will impact student enrollment in other courses or units. For example, if English establishes a new program or minor, several courses are added. If professors are taken away from existing courses to cover new courses, who teaches the old courses? What happens to the enrollment of the old courses if students now take the new courses? We take the word of the Provost and Department Chairs, but we really have no way to determine the economical and budgetary impacts of all these new additions.

Another recommendation is for the Budget Committee to request and get reports on the 3-5 year progression and financial health of previously passed new programs. The next committee will be charged with researching the 3-5 year window of previously approved programs to determine overall budget concerns and to validate the procedures for budget submission of proposals.

The committee continued its work with the Deans of the academic units by inviting them to present the “status of their schools”. Two meetings were used to discuss what should be presented, and afterwards, what was presented that might help the committee inform the faculty and its constituents. Not all academic units presented information to the Committee. Some issues did arise from our discussions with the deans:

1. Office of Academic Experience exists with no certificates, majors, or degrees and has no faculty input. This entity receives unfunded mandates from the President, Board of Trustees, and various Vice Presidents. This unit was cut $51,000 in 2015-16 and has not gotten any back.
2. Various Schools have money for lines but cannot get them approved through the Business Affairs office.
3. Study Abroad using affiliated programs is “leaving money on the table” and must be collected. CofC cannot give transfer credit to any program outside of CofC without issuing some type of fee.
4. Why do we use Bottom Line Budgeting?
5. Faculty/Staff turnover is in need of a resupply. Brian’s discretionary fund ran out two years ago.
6. Can we establish a method for carrying over money not spent each year, or at least a percentage? Why not? Schools cannot set up “rainy day funds.”
In May and June, the Chair of the committee observed the Board of Trustee’s Budget and Finance committee meetings. Similar to last year, the committee was given a seat at the table for the discussions, but was inactive during the discussions. The committee’s recommendations and concerns were relayed to Provost McGee. Paul Patrick, Executive Vice President for Business Affairs, was asked to attend one of our meetings. He was able to explain his vision for the budget process and the College. He explained the budget process for the committee and how he might change it starting with the May BOT workshop.

At the BOT Budget Workshop on May 15, 2018, Paul Patrick presented individual budgets from different programs so that everyone, including BOT members, could see what each budget was and how they differed. The financial health of the institution is better than it has been the past 3 years. He also shared his vision of developing more programs (i.e., study abroad) and stated that these new programs would and could be paid for. Additional questions from the meeting will be asked in a separate meeting of the new committee members in September.

The budget process developed for the Budget Committee was as follows:

- Executive Summary
  - Sources
    - Enrollment decrease for current year and projected for next year. (Ex. 2015-16)
    - Revenue from Fee increases (Ex. Graduate Fee Differential, Fees for OOS, Summer School)
    - Any State Appropriations?
  - Uses
    - Mandated New Spending (3.25% salary increase, and Health, Dental, & Retirement)
    - Un-Funded!
    - Inflationary Required Spending (Ex. Financial Aid, security, staff replacements, P&T, Leases, Insurance, IT contracts and services)
    - Programmatic Items (Schools, IT, Maintenance, Student Affairs) 3.4 mil cut to offset the mandated new spending.

The goals for the Budget Committee for 2018-19 will be to continue to review new program proposals with a sterner look towards appropriate and accurate numbers of student enrollments. A suggestion was given to the Senate to have other committees look more closely at the shifting of faculty to teach in new courses and programs, which may have a negative impact on teaching assignments in their departments.