

Budget Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 12, 2023

- I. Introduction (Ms. Laury Fiorello)
Ms. Fiorello welcomed the members of the Budget Advisory Committee to fiscal year 2025 preparations and the members of the committee introduced themselves.
- II. Welcome from the Office of the President (Dr. Russell Jones)
Dr. Jones expressed the importance of the committee and the need to have input from it. He explained the committee will meet three times during the 2023-24 fiscal year with specific inputs and outputs at each meeting. He stressed the importance of attendance and representation of the various aspects of the university at each of the three meetings. He expressed his appreciation to the members of the committee for their time and service.
- III. General Information (Ms. Laury Fiorello)
Ms. Fiorello explained that overarching goals and priorities for the committee and the fiscal year 2025 budget will be discussed during the January meeting. She told the committee that the university is considering a differential tuition model moving forward. The fee sub-committee will begin its preparations later this month in advance of a fees discussion at the January meeting. The March meeting will focus on budget entering and any last-minute adjustments that are necessary at that time.
- IV. Budget Development Training and Process (Mr. Matt Fraser)
There will be feedback sessions regarding the fiscal year 2024 budget experience on Tuesday, Oct. 17, and Thursday, Oct. 19, on Webex. New user setup for fiscal year 2025 will begin in November, followed by budget development training in November and/or December. Year-to-date department changes and department/index review will be considered in each vice president area in January. The budget development portal will be open for fiscal year 2025 changes in the February/March timeframe.
- V. Enrollment Trends (Ms. Laury Fiorello and Mr. Wyatt Watson)
The decrease in billable hours for fall 2023 was less than projected (5.1 percent decrease projected; 4.1 percent decrease actual on Russellville campus). It is projected that billable undergraduate hours will decrease by approximately 3 percent for fiscal year 2025, followed by a leveling in the three years after that.
- VI. Non-Revenue Generating Students (Ms. Laury Fiorello)
Ms. Fiorello reported that the ATU Division of Student Affairs has a concurrent committee that is assessing the future of that program. She stated that group is early in its work and no recommendations have come forth at this time.

Budget Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 25, 2024

- I. Introduction (Dr. Russell Jones)

Dr. Jones reported that student semester credit hours were better than forecast for fall 2023 and are on track to be above forecast again in spring 2024. He also reminded the committee that even though the numbers are better than forecast, they still represent a decrease as compared to one year ago. He indicated that while an overall budget reduction for fiscal year 2025 will be necessary, the reduction will be less than in recent years and the long-term trend is favorable to begin turning the corner away from budget cuts in future years.
- II. General Information (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

Ms. Fiorello said a 5.51 percent decrease in student semester credit hours from fiscal year 2023 to fiscal year 2024 was forecast. The actual decrease was approximately 3.5 percent. A 3 percent decline in SSCH for fiscal year 2025 is forecast. Dr. Keegan Nichols reported that it is important for the university community to help spread the word about events such as Time Out for Tech to help drive incoming freshman recruitment for fall 2024.
- III. Fees (Dr. Jeanine Myers)

Dr. Myers reported that a reduction in nursing student fees has been proposed by the nursing faculty on the Russellville campus.
- IV. Universal Undergraduate Rate-In State vs. Out of State (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

Ms. Fiorello reported she intends to propose a universal undergraduate tuition rate that would make the rate consistent regardless of the student's residency inside or outside Arkansas. The committee discussed the relative merits of the proposal.
- V. Differential Programmatic Fee (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

Ms. Fiorello stated any changes to fees would not increase fees for general education courses. Plans for this possibility will continue to be developed during the spring 2024 semester.
- VI. Budget Needs (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

Ms. Fiorello reported that the anticipated budget need for fiscal year 2025 is \$3 million for Russellville campus educational and general funds. She asked those in the room to analyze their budgets for any decreases that could be implemented in order to make up the deficit without negatively affecting services to students. Dr. John Jackson noted that external factors beyond the university's control, including inflation and increased energy costs, are pressures on the university's budget.
- VII. Arkansas Tech Institute Non-Formula Entity Funding (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

Ms. Fiorello reported that Arkansas Tech Institute will focus on career coaching and workforce education (non-credit). A state appropriation in the amount of \$2 million is anticipated to be approved later this spring to support the operations of Arkansas Tech Institute.

VIII. Data Entry Update (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

Informational sessions on budget data entry are ongoing through the ATU Office of Budget. Recorded sessions are available through the ATU Office of Budget for personnel who are unable to attend live.

IX. Capital Improvement Plan Requests (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

Mr. Drew Dickey reported on the timeline that was established for addressing deferred maintenance at Arkansas Tech. The committee received a report that includes the current list of capital improvement plan projects and parameters for submitting additions to that list moving forward. Additions to the list are due to the Office of Facilities Management by March 8 so they can be processed for the June meeting of the ATU Board of Trustees.

X. Special Called BAC Meeting (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

It will take place in February. Exact date and time to be determined. The topic will be differential tuition.

Budget Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2024

I. Introduction (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

Ms. Fiorello shared a graphic reflecting Arkansas Tech University's emphasis on students and academics. Additional priorities that support those areas of emphasis include college support, student support and administrative support.

II. Differential Fee Analysis (Ms. Laury Fiorello)

Ms. Fiorello provided the committee with a college-by-college differential fee analysis for consideration and review as part of ATU's budget development for fiscal year 2025. The analysis provided revenue and expenses for each academic department on the ATU campus in Russellville. Ms. Fiorello explained the methodology behind accounting for expenses related to the departments themselves, scholarships, academic support, student support and administrative support. Dr. Jones clarified that this analysis is not a tool for determining budgets. He said the goal of the analysis is to pursue equitable student costs per program. The group engaged in a conversation about how general education courses should be allocated in the analysis.