Because the operating budget is a document that reflects the University's planning, Puget Sound has relied for many years on an unusually comprehensive process in developing that budget. An advisory committee to the President, the Budget Task Force, reviews proposals from across the institution and recommends a budget to the President, who, after his review and action, makes a recommendation on the budget to the Board of Trustees. The Budget Task Force consists of two faculty members, two students, two staff members, the Vice President for Finance and Administration, and the Academic Vice President, who serves as the Budget Task Force chair. The Associate Vice President for Accounting and Budget Services provides information support.

The Budget Task Force is charged with weighing competing requests and recommending to the President those ongoing additions to the base budget which most forward Puget Sound's mission. The proposed operating budget recommends such key variables as tuition, student fees, increases in the faculty and staff compensation pool, and student financial aid. The budget also reflects other revenues and expenses.

Members of the Budget Task Force are charged with representing the best interests of the University as a whole rather than the interests of any constituent group. All their discussions are to be confidential.

**Budget Task Force Membership**

**Academic Vice President, Chair**

**Vice President for Finance and Administration**

**Associate Vice President for Accounting and Budget Services** – Information support

**Two Students.** Each student normally serves a two-year term, one student being new each year. Students apply for membership on the task force by interviewing for the position with the ASUPS President. The ASUPS President then submits two or three recommendations to the University President who selects the new member.

**Two Faculty.** The faculty member of the Board of Trustees Finance & Facilities Committee (appointed by the Board Chair on recommendation of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee in consultation with the Academic Vice President and the President) serves a simultaneous three-year appointment to the Budget Task Force. The second faculty member normally is the past chair of the Faculty Senate, who serves a two-year term.

**Two Staff.** Each staff member serves a two-year term with one staff member being new each year. The Staff Senate Chair submits two or three recommendations to the President, who selects each new member.
Budget Task Force Process and Timetable

The Budget Task Force begins meeting in September or October to review the current year budget and long-range financial planning goals of the University. These long-range goals for enrollment, student financial aid, faculty and staff compensation, and tuition are the key element in the budget process and were developed in 1986 by an ad-hoc trustee committee composed of trustees, faculty, students, and staff.

As the fall term proceeds, any and all members or committees of the campus community are invited to submit requests or opinions to the Budget Task Force. This generally takes the form of written communication, but could be a presentation to the Budget Task Force at one of its meetings. The campus community is informed of these deliberations through the ASUPS "Tattler," the "Open Line" for faculty and staff, an occasional article in the "Trail" (student newspaper), and special invitations to ASUPS executives and University Vice Presidents.

Groups or committees that regularly or occasionally make requests or recommendations to the Budget Task Force would include: ASUPS Executives, Academic Vice President, Business Services, Facilities Services, Faculty Salary Committee, Human Resources, Information Technology, Office of Finance, Staff Salary Committee, Student Financial Services, University Relations, Vice President for Enrollment, and Vice President for Student Affairs.

Once all have had an opportunity to meet with the Budget Task Force or have their material received by the committee, the information is assembled into budget alternatives. The Budget Task Force generally requires the balance of the fall term to come to a recommendation, which it then presents to the President. Formal votes rarely occur. Minority opinions seldom arise. Generally, a broad consensus is developed and agreed to by all members of the Budget Task Force before a recommendation is made to the President.

The President has the opportunity to review all material submitted to the Budget Task Force and can, of course, change any recommendation made by the committee. The Budget Task Force reviews its recommendations with the ASUPS Senate, the Faculty Senate, and the Staff Senate at the beginning of the spring semester. All students, faculty, and staff are welcome at these presentations. A two-week comment period occurs prior to the February Board of Trustees meeting where final action must take place. During this two-week period, any group, committee, or individual of the campus community may write to the President expressing their opinion on any element of the proposed budget.

The President reviews the recommended budget with the Finance & Facilities Committee of the Board of Trustees. Final action is made by the Board of Trustees.