



VIUFA 2021 AGM Report
Budgetary Analysis Chair
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The Budgetary Analysis position on the VIUFA Executive has, in this Covid-19 year, featured a learning curve...despite the fact that I initially felt well-prepared after recent service on VIU's Board of Governors, there were many dynamics at play so it was challenging to 'get in the zone' of this portfolio. I appreciate the opportunity to learn more about VIU's budgetary planning, amidst a new budgeting process, modified priorities, administrative staffing changes and methods of communication pivoting this year during the ongoing repercussions of the pandemic.

VIU's budgeting process was altered, not just in response to decreased base funding from the provincial government (calculated per FTE), tuition, and ancillary services which necessitated an altering of spending strategies designed to cope with the impact of Covid, but also because a new CFO and Vice-President Administration (Marlene Kowalski), was hired to work alongside new President Deb Saucier on a budget model that would see each academic area aligned more directly with its own tuition revenue. This re-structuring of the budget (Consolidated Resource Plan) is meant to calculate more directly expenditures in each area, to provide for more regular forecasting and to allow for a more consistent financial picture to be communicated. All year, CFO Kowalski was forthcoming with information about how the University was being affected by Covid and about how the budget was being adapted, presenting multiple times to faculties, VIUFA exec, and Senate on the budget modifications.

Ultimately, the University saw huge loss in revenue due to Covid, resulting in a budget deficit of \$12,332,684. Like other universities across the province, the financial impacts of the pandemic have resulted in a restricting or reducing of expenditures, and we can see that on campus with examples such as the shuttering of buildings, which decreases utilities and janitorial costs. Though the Ministry of AEST has permitted post-secondary institutions to run a deficit for two years, VIU is using investments and cost-cutting measures to balance expenses. Direct impacts on VIUFA members includes non-regular faculty contracts not being renewed per the pattern of past years, and early retirement incentives potentially causing bumping rights. These aspects need to be tracked closely in the coming year. Although layoffs were not listed in the Preliminary Budget Assumptions for 2021-22 letter, wording about how the impacts of Covid will persist is cause for concern. It is predicted that more adjustments will be required, all contingent on domestic enrolment maintaining an upward curve (forecasted as of April 1 to be only a 4% increase of combined undergrad/graduate registration) and on international enrolment increasing once global travel is resumed (projected as of April 1 to be -34%). The CRP is projecting an overall combined headcount decrease by -37% in 2021/22, and predicts a four-year cycle of recovery.

I read data from past BA Chairs, reports and news from other universities, and FPSE and CAUT papers/criticism on budgeting, and am grateful to have received some training from CAUT on transcribing University data into a new analysis template. I looked at the trends in the growth of administrative positions and compensation at VIU, and a large portion of my time was spent conducting the FPSE review, a report on VIUFA's relationship with the Federation.

It was a pleasure to sit on the VIUFA Exec again this year, and to serve on the Human Rights and International Solidarity committee as well.