

Investigative Budget Committee Report for the MSCA Delegate Assembly – Rala Diakite

The investigative Budget Committee was established on August 27, 2022 and had its first meeting in February of 2022. The committee has 14 members representing the various State Universities. The committee's charge is to "collect and analyze relevant financial information about the nine state universities, including making information requests when needed, and to work with chapter presidents to inform and educate members of the universities' financial information." - It is essential that we develop a strong knowledge base regarding the finances and financial practices of our institutions, in order to effectively oppose the state underfunding and austerity budgets which present grave threats to our academic mission, and to student access to higher education.

Our state universities, financially weakened by the impact of covid and decreasing enrollments have already begun cost-containment measures such as cuts to programs, reduced hiring of PT faculty, planned attrition of full-time faculty, and furloughs. In the last round of both Day and DGCE bargaining we saw drastic proposals aimed at making retrenchment easier, creating a new non-tenure track category of faculty, and increasing the percentage of sections taught by part-time faculty. Management put up huge resistance to even meager salary increases for our members; indeed for the DGCE they made an offer of 0% raises for a three-year contract.

Management always justifies these actions and proposals on the basis of financial exigency.

Our analysis of financial information will help us to discover any mismanagement of resources, or misrepresentation of financial circumstances. The sharing of information across institutions will also reveal best (and worst) practices among our institutions. What we learn about HOW to understand budgets and financials can be shared with chapters so that members have more power and agency in this domain.

Thus far, the committee has had two meetings.

- 1) We have already gathered quite an extensive digital archive of materials from our institutions, along with links to useful databases and articles.
- 2) We are working on developing methods to analyze the financial data which is reported quite differently at each institution, and to make comparisons.
- 3) With the assistance of our MTA rep Catherine Santiago, we have organized two training sessions, to be provided by a financial expert from the NEA, the first to be held in May, the second in late September 2022.
- 4) The proposed MSCA budget includes support for the work of this committee, funding an intern, and a financial consultant.

We are off to a great start, and we hope that the products of our labor will be useful and impactful in the upcoming year. Thank you.