Despite lack of appropriation, trustees approve Pitt budget

University trustees on Dec. 18 moved forward with a budget plan for fiscal year 2016, basing a $2.07 billion operating budget on last year’s appropriation of approximately $1.81 billion.

The state budget impasse, which has stalled a decision on Pitt’s state appropriation for the fiscal year that began July 1, had delayed the University budget. However, on recommendation of the chief financial officer (CFO), the board’s budget and executive committees met Dec. 18 to set Pitt’s FY16 budget.

The budget’s $2.07 billion in total revenues includes net tuition and fees totaling $601.4 million, an increase of 3.8 percent over FY15’s budgeted $579.18 million. Budgeted expenses include $1.81 billion in total compensation, up 4.4 percent over FY15’s $1.73 billion compensation line. Although a salary pool increase has yet to be announced, the University is budgeting $905.54 million for salaries and wages, an increase of 3.2 percent over the $877.17 million in the FY15 budget. Fringe benefits, the other component in the total compensation line item, are budgeted at $276.45 million, up 8.1 percent from $255.6 million in FY15.

If Pitt’s funding is increased when a state budget is settled, the committees will take action on an amended budget “reflective of the final appropriation amount and the University’s strategic priorities,” according to trustees.

State budget impasse continues into new year

The state’s 2016 budget remains unresolved. Six months of emergency funds for cash-strapped K-12 schools, counties and human services is being released after Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf’s Dec. 29 approved $2.34 billion of a $3.3 billion Republican budget.

Appropriation bills for Pitt and other non-preferred institutions still await action, which could come next week.

The fiscal year 2016 state budget impasse has stretched into its seventh month. A month from now, on Feb. 9, Wolf is scheduled to present his proposed budget for fiscal year 2017, which begins July 1.

Nationality Rooms’ hidden treasures soon to be revealed

The Nationality Rooms’ hidden treasures — about 1,000 objects, or three times the number of items the rooms actually display — soon will become accessible to the public.

These items — gathered by room curators over the years, sometimes donated or dispensed through the years, and stored in a small, crowded space in the Rooms’ basement — are being inventoried and photographed for a new Pitt website by Michael Walter, Nationality Rooms tour coordinator.

Some items are in storage simply because there is no display case large enough to hold them in the appropriate Nationality Room. The Yugoslov Room, for instance, has no spot for a 19th-century copy of the evangelary, gospel of Pictor Miroslav, an illuminated manuscript produced in the late 1100s in Serbia. The thick tome is 18.5 by 13.5 inches, with 40 full-color pages reproduced at full size, the rest at half size in black and white. In 1897, the original was given to the king of Serbia, and only 350 facsimiles were produced.

Other items have an uncertain origin or likely have been modified from their original condition. A Romanian icon may have come from the 1939 World’s Fair, where the Romanian pavilion was giving a room to attendees. “In this case there isn’t a lot of background information.” On the item, Walter said — certainly no corroboration of the icon’s provenance. Nor has his research yet turned up how the icon came to have a frame made of fiberboard, which dates to the 20th century, but not necessarily from the World’s Fair.

Also from 1939, but no longer displayed in the Czechoslovak Room, is a small medallion depicting a man held between columns topped with swastikas. Walter has unsigned paperwork from 2003 directing the medallion be removed from display because of its political content. Even Maxine Bruhns, long-time director of the Nationality Rooms, was uncertain exactly how such a decision was made.

Many of the stored items possess great value as teaching tools, Walter said, especially for elementary classrooms.

“People have donated many dolls over the years, and they’re great for teaching of ethnic dress,” he said. Preschoolers naturally are attracted to them and want to know more, Bruhns added.

Sometimes an item is put away because it doesn’t fit with the historical period of a room’s décor. In a closet in the English room, behind a portrait of William Pitt, Walter’s crew recently discovered a Victorian Gothic mirror tile fireplace surround. When the original, it was put away in 1954 and replaced by a more period-appropriate set of iron and ironworks and an iron fireplace. Sometimes an item is both valuable and portable, making its theft too likely to allow for display. Such is the case with a small icon in the shape of an eagle, carved from light-colored wood, which was donated to the Irish Room.

Walter pointed to a ceramic vessel, several feet tall, that once stood in the Chinese Room. There were four such pieces on display at one time. “This is the only one that remains,” he said; the others have gone missing.

The experience of one professor demonstrates how the inventoried mass of objects in storage might be used as teaching tools for Pitt classes. Katheryn M. Linduff, faculty member in the Department of the History of Art and Architecture in the Dietrich School of Arts and Sciences, teaches a senior capstone course for department majors called Visualizing Heritage in Pittsburgh.

The Nationality Rooms. It uses the rooms’ paper archives of organizing committee materials in Hillman Library.

“They discovered all kinds of fun stuff,” she says of her students. “More importantly, ‘the students uniformly tell me that it changed their sense of being a University of Pittsburgh student, that they felt connected to the University of Pittsburgh. They said they would never think of this University in the same way.’ And they learned the processes of research, too. ‘It came alive to them in ways that it had never been alive before.’”

Linduff visited Walter’s office to examine the Chinese vessel in storage.

Walter pointed out a seller’s tag on the piece’s underside, labeling it from the 18th century. “This shape was first made about 1900 B.C.,” Linduff said. They were displayed and at that time [used] in ceremonies of ancestor reverence.

However, she also noted the
**The role of BPC**

Robert Moskowitz was a beloved professor of mine when I was a student at Pitt. He embodied the importance of being engaging, delivering with skill and at the same time humor. Nonetheless, I was never one to laugh at the treatment of multiracial people. Moskowitz was not especially critical to complex issues such as multiracial people in the workplace, but rather he criticized the role of BPC in helping to push forward ideas, bringing them into the realm of possibility. He said that BPC must be above all, a policy statement. As a member of BPC, I have since learned from the leadership and from this year’s leadership of BPC that they do not have specific learning, assessment and policy development aligned to our strategic plan.

The limitations of a “toleration” strategy are frequent today as well. African Americans in a great percentage of the United States are the indulgence of one class of people and the focus of another. This is an example of how the word “toleration” has the wrong meaning and connotations, especially when it is used in terms of dealing with religious and political differences.

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**University Times**

**Letters**

Letters should be submitted to letters@pitt.edu. Letters must be in a font no smaller than 12-point and not exceed 300 words. Letters are subject to editing and publication online for publication in the print edition.

**University Times**

**Columns**

Columns may be submitted online at www.pitt.edu/utimes, or by email: njbrown@pitt.edu.

**EVENT CALENDAR**

Visit the William Pitt Union now for the University’s calendar of events and off-campus community projects. 8.30 a.m.-3.30 p.m.

**Center consolidates mindfulness activities**

The center’s consensus after a thorough review was that “mindfulness” began “nothing close to consciousness.” It is a concept of non-black or non-white identity scholars so convinced that many believe in the power of the will and that the mind and body and the brain and the heart and the mind and the heart and the body and the brain and the mind and the heart and the body are all interconnected.

**Some strategic plan initiatives outlined**

The University’s strategic plan is being developed with regard to major specific learning space, assessment and policy development aligned to our strategic plan. The initiatives are as follows:

1. **Enhance the campus environment** by becoming a laboratory for the development, testing and implementation of innovative teaching and learning.

2. **Create an environment** through a more open and transparent administration.

3. **Create a diverse, inclusive community**.

4. **Create an environment** that supports transitions, persistence and opportunities for students.

5. **Create a diverse, inclusive community**.

6. **Create a data- and computational environment**.

7. **Create an academic environment**.

The full list is detailed in the link below: https://www.pitt.edu/utimes.

**Kiplinger’s ratings**

Kiplinger’s has ranked Pitt among the top 100 value and student-friendliness college. The Steel Curtain Index also ranked Pitt among the top 100 value and student-friendliness college. Pitt is also a member of the Pitt-Beaver Savings Plan (PBS), which provides low-cost, long-term education savings plans for students.

Kiplinger’s assessment value according to student aid, professor quality, financial aid and average debt for the student during the first four years and college.

The ratings are available online at Kiplinger.com/college ranking and are available nationwide for all institutions.

Beverly Grey, a political science faculty member at Pitt-Butler, is chair of the University Senate’s judicial policies committee.

**Registration open for MLK Day of Service projects**

For the second year in a row, the Pitt MLK Day of Service on Jan. 18 will offer students the opportunity to serve as part of a Multicultural Leadership Institute and off-campus community projects, 8.30 a.m.-3.30 p.m.

**Law is still black & white, not multiracial, Fordham prof says**

Despite the fact that more than 1 million people in the United States identify themselves as multiracial, the academic discrimination cases involving multiracial people are very rare. Professor Fordham has been involved in a number of cases that have gone to trial. He has represented clients in cases that have been filed in various courts, including the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York. In his case, he has represented clients from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. In one case, he represented a client who was a member of the African American community, and in another case, he represented a client who was a member of the Jewish community. In each case, he has worked to ensure that his clients’ rights were protected and that they were able to receive a fair and just outcome.

*Submitted by Tanya Hernandez*

**Multiracial people**

Multiracial people are individuals who identify with more than one race. The term “multiracial” is used to describe people who identify with more than one race, whether they are black and white, Asian and Native American, or African American and Latino. Multiracial people often face discrimination and prejudice in various aspects of their lives, such as in the workplace and in educational institutions. They may also experience microaggressions, which are subtle forms of discrimination, in their daily interactions. Multiracial people are often asked to choose one race to identify with, which can be challenging and frustrating. They may also experience difficulties in accessing legal protections and resources. Therefore, it is crucial to recognize and address the challenges faced by multiracial people.

*Submitted by Tanya Hernandez*
Standing up against back pain
Study will evaluate value of reducing sit time, inactivity

As adults, we are all too familiar with the discomfort and pain that can arise from sitting for extended periods. Research has shown that spending too much time sitting can lead to a variety of health issues, including obesity, diabetes, and even premature death. But is there a way to combat this problem and improve our overall health and well-being?

That’s the question asked by researchers at the University of California, San Francisco, who are conducting a study to evaluate the impact of reducing sit time on health and well-being. The study, called the “Standing Up Against Back Pain” study, will involve participants sitting for just 15 minutes a day, with the goal of improving their physical health and reducing the risk of developing chronic back pain.

The study will involve two groups of participants: one group will be asked to sit for 15 minutes a day, while the other group will be asked to sit for 30 minutes a day. The participants will be monitored for 12 months, with researchers measuring various physical and psychological outcomes.

The results of this study could have significant implications for public health policy, as well as for individuals looking to improve their own health. By reducing the amount of time we spend sitting, we may be able to significantly improve our overall health and well-being, and reduce the risk of developing chronic back pain.

So if you’re interested in participating in this study, or if you simply want to learn more about the benefits of reducing sit time, be sure to check out the details of the “Standing Up Against Back Pain” study and see how you can get involved.

References:

Hidden treasures to be revealed
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The hidden treasures of ancient shipwrecks, which lie just beneath the water's surface, are waiting to be discovered. These treasures, which often include coins, jewelry, and other valuable items, have been hidden for centuries and are now being revealed by modern technology.

Archaeologists have been using a variety of techniques to locate and excavate these hidden treasures, including magnetometer surveys, which can detect the magnetic signature of metal objects, and sonar, which can create detailed images of the underwater environment.

In the future, it is likely that we will see even more advanced technologies, such as ROVs (remote-operated vehicles) and underwater drones, which can be used to explore and document these hidden treasures.

As we continue to uncover these hidden treasures, we will be able to learn more about the lives of the people who once lived on these ships, and the stories that they have to tell. So if you're interested in learning more about these hidden treasures, be sure to keep an eye out for the latest discoveries in the field of shipwreck archaeology.

REFERENCES:

Driving Lessons for Pitt Students

Cindy Kohn, 1st Best Driving School in Pittsburgh

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- Class B drivers
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- State-of-the-art training
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Call 412-580-0007
The year’s annual Christmas Day at Pitt was the largest in the 10 years the University has been hosting the event, with 250 volunteers from Pitt, Sodexo and the community serving over 2,400 meals and providing more than 600 gifts to children from families in need.

Human Resources’ John Kozar, assistant vice chancellor for benefits, and his wife, Veronica, continued their tradition of portraying Santa and Mrs. Claus. The band Savvy Jazz and Gospel, which includes Sodexo’s Bill Baskeville of the Schenley Cafe in the William Pitt Union, provided live music.

Earlier in the week, head football coach Pat Narduzzi and head men’s basketball coach Jamie Dixon led their teams in helping to prepare for the event by sorting and wrapping gifts donated by members of the Pitt community. Also helping with the preparations were members of the women’s basketball team, the swimming and diving teams, and the gymnastics teams. A total of 134 Pitt athletes participated this year.

Photos courtesy of Community and Governmental Relations

Santa, AKA John Kozar, greets one of the Christmas Day at Pitt guests.
change of the material. We can avoid this problem by filling the vehicle with optical fibers whose light is then detected by a camera, allowing optical images to be obtained in real time.

Predicting topological phases of quantum materials

Wernerg Vincent Lin has received an award for his research on the topological phases of quantum materials. He has used numerical methods to predict the existence of exotic phases of matter, which could have applications in future technologies.

New model of collaborative research

A new system that facilitates collaboration between researchers in different fields has been developed. This system uses artificial intelligence to match researchers with complementary skills, thereby improving the efficiency of scientific research.

Excess CO2 from on-farm new fuel?

Some researchers have been examining the possibility of using on-farm fuel as a new energy source. This could have significant implications for the future of energy production and sustainability.

Rash racial bias

New research has revealed that racial bias can be influenced by biological factors. This finding could have important implications for understanding and addressing bias in society.

Two awards to recognize international achievements by Pitt community members

The University of Pittsburgh and the University of Pittsburgh for International Studies open new nominations for two awards made possible through the generosity of Maiba and Dr. Jegilsh N. Neilson. The Business 2 G6 (Business 2 G6) through the Keith Foundation.

All submissions due by January 10, 2016. If you have any questions, contact Denise Karr, Director of Constituent Relations, U.S. at 1080 Pittsburgh or 412-684-7242.
Tse-Chien “TC” Woo

The Chinese “TC” Woo, professor emeritus in mechanical engineering at Stanford University, died Dec. 14, 2013. He was born on March 5, 1924, in Nanjing, China. He received the bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from the National Chiao Tung University in 1946 and the doctor of philosophy degree from the University of California at Berkeley in 1950. He joined the Stanford University faculty in 1954 and was named a professor of mechanical and aerospace engineering in 1966. He was a member of several national engineering and professional societies.

Ehud Gerber, a professor emeritus of civil engineering and statistics at Stanford, has been awarded the 2013 National Academy of Engineering Frontiers Prize. The prize recognizes Gerber’s contributions to quantitative traffic safety analysis, risk management and the estimation of transportation demand.

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Books, Journals & More
annual supplement

In 2015, did you:
- Write a book?
- Edit a journal?
- Produce a play, CD or film?
- Exhibit art?
- Publish a musical composition?

Tell us about it!

A few important guidelines:
- Furnish information on peer-reviewed books, journals, CDs, electronic publications, art exhibitions, films, plays or musical compositions written, edited or produced during 2015 only.
- Books must have a 2015 copyright.
- Do not submit information about journal articles, short stories, poems, book chapters or self-published works.
- Submission deadline is January 31.
- All fields of the submission form must be completed.
- Complete a separate electronic form for each submission.
- Questions? Contact utimes@pitt.edu

www.utimes.pitt.edu

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Jan. 31