

The concept of the “Decision Package” started two years ago upon my arrival to the AS/VU. Prior to that, the AS did not have an annual system for office’s to request possible changes/increases to the budgets unless they were going through the Structure and Programs Advisory Committee (SPAC) process (which only occurred every 4 years). As such, Eric Alexander worked with Chelsea Ghant (AS VP for Business and Operations 2014-2015) to develop the idea of decision packages, a concept similar to the State of Washington process, where agencies can apply for small, medium, or large decision packages (not grants that are time limited) in order to increase the annual operational budget of an agency. This was such a new process for the AS that it was hard to know how to manage the decision package process. For us, questions arose like:

- 1) How big of request warrants a decision package (if someone wants to increase by \$100 or \$1000 or \$10,000) – what makes sense.
- 2) How do you define “decision packages.” In other words, do decision packages have to only be about money – what if an organization (outside of the SPAC process) wanted to change all or part of its program – how would that be accomplished?
- 3) What role does the business and budget committee play vs. the AS BOD.
  - a. To this point, the original thought was the Business Committee helped to put together the form for the decision packages and support the AS Business Director in receiving requests to analyze them for completeness.
  - b. The Budget Committee could look at the economic feasibility of a request and deliberate over a recommendation to fund a new request or not from an economic perspective (for instance, maybe a certain office historically underspent a different part of their budget so rather than asking for new money the Budget Committee could recommend that the money from that office be reallocated to this request).
  - c. The Board would make the final decision based on the values of the AS BOD and the students who voted you into office (maybe you would think increased funding was needed and in fact would seek additional funding to what was requested rather than finding money within a current operating budget – for the example listed in b.).
- 4) What information would all groups need in order to make a decision?
- 5) How did the decision package request align with the standard budget requests? Should they happen simultaneously, in succession, or maybe only in certain years?
- 6) How do we help train and support student budget coordinators and budget authorities in this process AND what to expect (for instance, decision packages should not be expected to pass)
- 7) How often or how many decision packages can any one area bring forward (should there be a limit)? Annually? Over time?
- 8) Finally, the question of “Should we even do/have the opportunity for decision packages?”