

Q: Is an operating budget different than the more familiar term of “Current Expense” budget?

A: “Current Expense” is a term used currently that can encompass many different types of budget categories for a budget holder’s entire budget. As part of the budget framework project, these categories are being separated out into a few distinct budget categories in an effort to have all budgets using the same language, and to have a better understanding of the total campus expenses in each category. One of the new categories is being called an “Operating Budget”. This budget is intended to be the amount of money that a budget holder uses each year for expenses that recur on an annual basis. A typical operating budget is expected to be entirely spent by the end of the year. Operating Budget expenses would not fall into any of the other new categories listed such as Software, Contracts, Equipment, Furniture, etc.

Q: Does an adjunct faculty count as a part-time employee?

A: The questions on the first section ask for the number of full-time and part-time employees to determine how much money you need as a budget holder to support their employment needs, but not their “salary and benefits”. If they need your budget to pay for office supplies, materials, books, etc, then yes, you should include adjunct faculty as a part-time employees.

Q: What if I have a grant, but there is no Grant Account Index? How should I list it?

A: Enter a question mark (?)

Q: If a budget receives “Work to Learn” money from Lisa, do we include that in the Operating Budget?

A: No

Q: Should the cost of textbooks for faculty in a department be included in the category called “Academic Publications”?

A: Textbooks can be listed under either “Academic Publications” or “Teaching Supplies”

Q: Are computer monitors included in computer equipment?

A: Yes

Q: How do I make a request for an increase to my annual budget?

A: At the end of the form you will find a link where you can enter your request

Q: By completing this survey, do I automatically get my budget increased to the amount that I listed as the desired amount?

A: No, after completing the survey, and you have a better understanding of your budget needs in the future, you can fill out a budget increase request using the link at the end of the survey.

Q: My budget is in the negative every year, and I don't know how to fix the situation. What can I do?

A: For budgets that are stuck in the negative, please reach out to Sherri Hansen to arrange a time to look at your budget together and see what can be changed and what options are available.

Q: This survey seems very long, and I can't imagine tracking down all the equipment that is under my budget index. Do I really need to do this?

A: Different budgets have different amounts of equipment that are paid for or replaced by that budget, and it is important as a campus to understand how we plan for equipment costs, and how to save for future replacement. This is an opportunity to plan better, and to avoid emergencies when equipment fails and there are no available funds for their replacement. Please do your best to determine what equipment, computers, contracts, etc., are covered by your budget so we can have good data to improve our planning for these expenses. If you need assistance to develop your list of equipment, please reach out to your liaison. Your liaison can be found at <https://www.snow.edu/offices/financial-services/liaisons.html>

Q: Will I have a rollover next year?

A: With a shift to an operating budget, the historic “rollover”, meaning unspent funds from a current expense budget, that budget holders have had access to in the past will no longer be part of the budgeting process. The operating budget is intended to cover annual expenses anticipated to be spent each year. Any unspent funds in an operating budget account at the end of the year will be pulled back to the college and used for new one-time funding requests and new ongoing funding requests.

Q: Can I still get access to my unspent funds from my current expense budget from FY 2024 if they are rolled back to the College in the next fiscal year?

A: If a budget holder is saving money to replace existing items or renew existing contracts that fall within the 5 consolidated budget categories, then that item should have been reported in the budget survey conducted in January 2024, and that item will be saved for and replaced with the funds that are pulled back using the centralized budget system.

If a budget holder is saving money to purchase a new item or new contract that is part of the 5 centralized budget categories, then they will make a request to that centralized budget committee for that item or service to be approved and funded, as the funds would have been transferred to those category accounts and would be available. The online form and schedule for making one-time requests can be found here:

<https://www.snow.edu/offices/budget/index.html>

If a budget holder is saving money to purchase a new item or new contract that is not part of the 5 centralized budget categories, then they will make a request to that centralized budget committee for that item or service to be approved and funded. The online form and schedule for making one-time requests can be found here:

<https://www.snow.edu/offices/budget/index.html>

This may not cover every possible circumstance, so we encourage budget holders to contact their budget liaison for additional help.

Q: I am a new budget holder, and I need help understanding my budget, how much money I will have, and what is for hourly wages vs. material expenses. Where can I go for help?

A: The best place to go is to contact your budget office liaison to get help. You can find your budget office liaison here: <https://www.snow.edu/offices/financial-services/liaisons.html>

Q: There seems to be a \$5,000 limit for items that departments pay for vs the college paying for them. What if I need 20 office chairs that are \$400 each? They are each less than \$5,000, but all of them would be \$8,000. Who pays for those?

A: If you are purchasing multiple items in the same order, and it goes over \$5,000, then first and foremost, this purchase needs to follow procurement laws that are already in place which required going out for RFP for purchases over \$5,000. Splitting that purchase into smaller amounts to avoid the RFP process is illegal. Secondly, if the total purchase goes over \$5,000, then it should go through the new centralized budget committee so that the College can use economies of scale for the purchase, and track the assets as needed. If the total purchase goes over \$5,000, then it would be paid for by the college if approved.

Q. Is it ok to buy software or enter into a contract with department funds if it is under \$5,000?

A. Yes; however, software, contracts, and IT items must follow an approval process and be inventoried and/or tracked. These items must first be approved by the corresponding centralized budget committee.