Portland State University

PDXScholar

Office of the President Publications and Presentation

Office of the President

4-27-2023

Portland State University Spring Symposium Report

Stephen Percy
Portland State University, spercy@pdx.edu

Amy Mulkerin
Portland State University

Anna Ruby
Portland State University

Andria Johnson
Portland State University

Rowanna L. Carpenter
Portland State University, carpenterr@pdx.edu

See next page for additional authors

Follow this and additional works at: https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/president_pubs

Part of the Higher Education Commons, and the Leadership Commons

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Citation Details

Percy, Stephen; Mulkerin, Amy; Ruby, Anna; Johnson, Andria; Carpenter, Rowanna L.; Emery, Jill; Allen, Jennifer H.; Neely, Kevin; Wilkinson, Lindsey; Meyer, Cara; Janke, Michelle; Gray-O'Connor, Jen; Simmons, Brad; and Fry, Kelly, "Portland State University Spring Symposium Report" (2023). *Office of the President Publications and Presentation*. 7.
https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/president_pubs/7

This Report is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Office of the President Publications and Presentation by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.

Authors

Stephen Percy, Amy Mulkerin, Anna Ruby, Andria Johnson, Rowanna L. Carpenter, Jill Emery, Jennifer H. Allen, Kevin Neely, Lindsey Wilkinson, Cara Meyer, Michelle Janke, Jen Gray-O'Connor, Brad Simmons, and Kelly Fry

This report is available at PDXScholar: https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/president_pubs/7

Portland State UNIVERSITY

2023 SPRING SYMPOSIUM REPORT

Table of Contents

04 Statement from President and Faculty Senate

05 2023 Faculty & Staff Spring Symposium Event Overview

08 Collaborative Governance Overview

10 Report Purpose & Intention

11 Process Recommendations

13 Next Steps

15 Acknowledgements

16 Appendix: Process Recommendation Tool

Statement from President and Faculty Senate

The 2023 Spring Symposium arose in response to a request to PSU administrators in a Faculty Senate Resolution. That resolution noted the high level of interest by the Faculty Senate in both understanding and engaging in the university's budgeting processes.

The Symposium offered an opportunity for all PSU employees to come together to identify priorities and shared purpose regarding the university's approach to long term financial planning. The recommendations created during the symposium are being shared with incoming president Ann Cudd to inform her thinking as PSU pursues a path toward financial sustainability.

2023 Faculty & Staff Spring Symposium Core Event Overview

PSU's Spring Symposium was held on April 27th, 2023. The focus of the event was to engage in dialogue for the purpose of gathering input from Faculty and Staff regarding the process and outcomes of decision-making at the university, particularly related to budget planning processes.

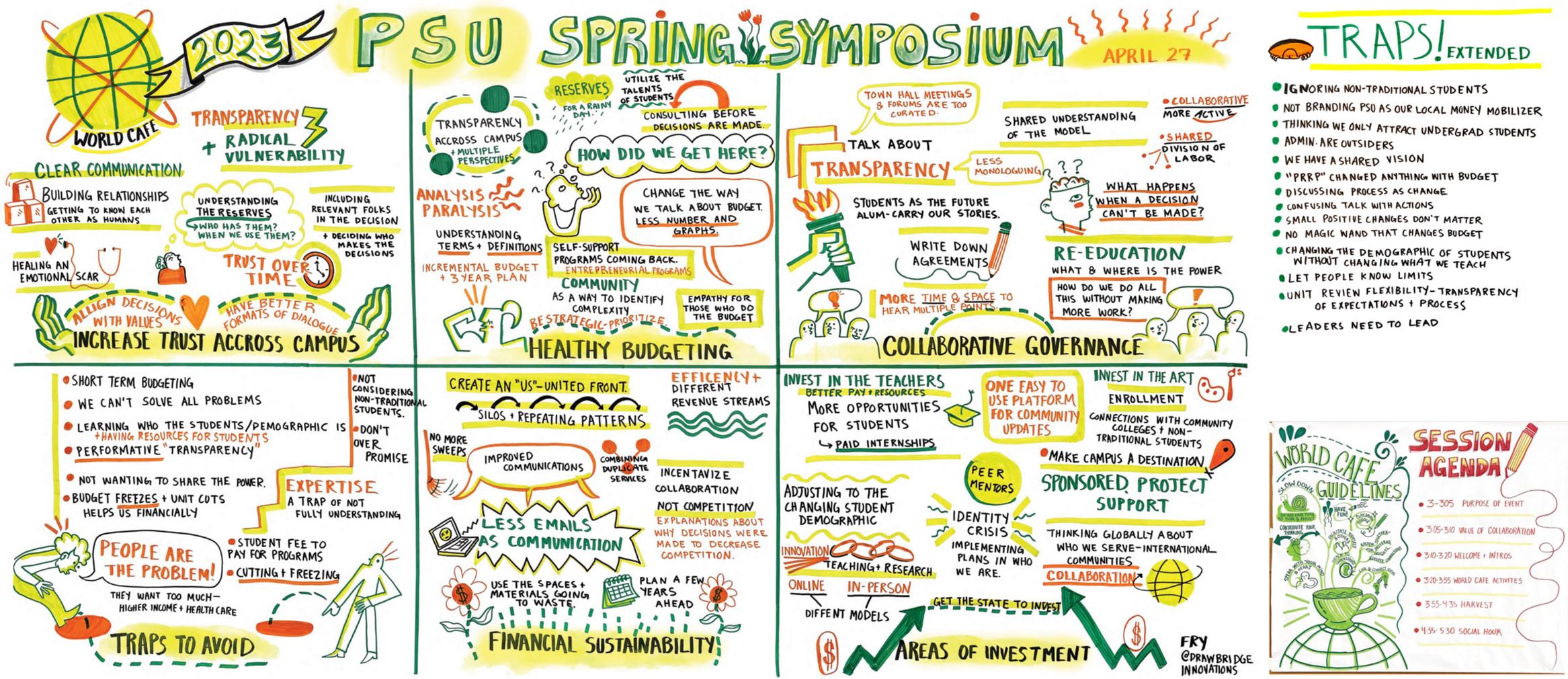
The event was organized for the participants to engage in a World Café Activity, gathering in groups to discuss pertinent questions and unearth possible solutions. Participants were able to participate either in-person at the Smith Memorial Student Union Ballroom or online via Zoom; both formats offered two sessions of 15 minutes of discussion with one question per table or breakout room. The in-person event had approximately 150 participants and the online event had approximately 70 participants.

Questions Discussed:

a. How might we design processes in a way that increases trust across campus?
b. What are the characteristics of a healthy budgeting process?
c. How might we utilize collaborative governance principles while making decisions and developing processes?
d. What are traps we want to avoid while making decisions and developing processes?
e. Given the financial challenges we face and the sense of fragmentation across campus, how can PSU build more collaboration and engagement principles to achieve financial sustainability?
f. What areas of investment (new or continued) are most important to us?

After the groups met to discuss, Table Hosts from each table or breakout group shared the main themes from their discussions with the full group. These themes were captured by the graphic facilitator, Kelly Fry of Drawbridge Innovations, and can be found in the Process Recommendations section of this report.

The facilitated portion of the in-person event was then followed by a social hour in which participants got a chance to mingle, enjoy refreshments, and contribute additional ideas or themes to the graphic notes.



Collaborative Governance Overview

To introduce the event and ground the group in some common language, Wendy Willis, Director of Civic Engagement for the National Policy Consensus Center, presented some of the basic principles of Collaborative Governance:

Basic Characteristics of Collaborative Governance

- It involves an issue or a cluster of issues that no one body or decision maker can address alone
- The parties involved are interdependent
- It's an intentional, designed process
- It includes those who can support or thwart the outcome, as well as those who are most affected

Principles of Collaborative Governance

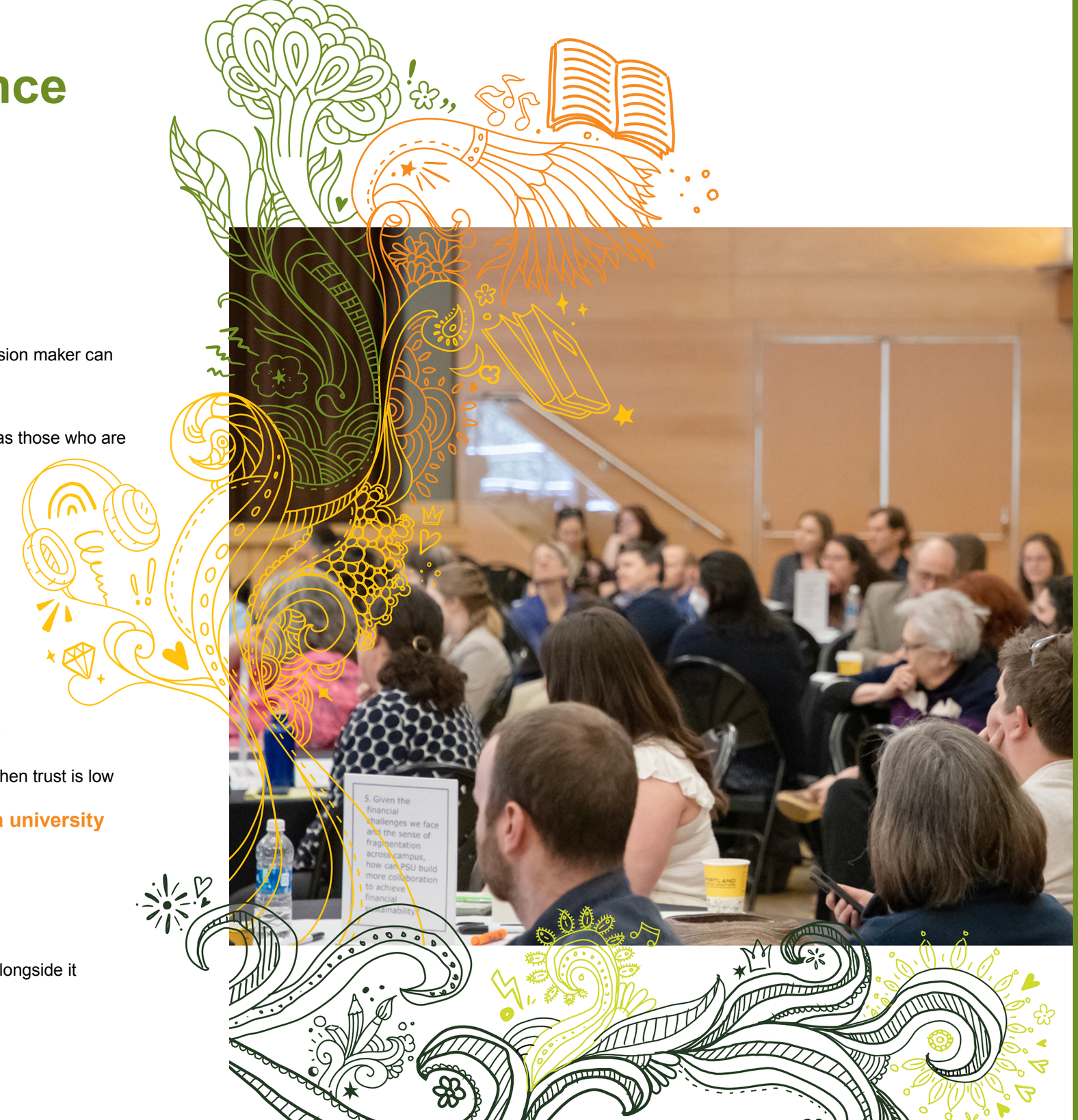
- Shared authority; shared responsibility
- Inclusive
- Representative
- Cross-cutting
- Deliberative
- Attentive to power dynamics

Where to start?

1. **Create a shared framing** of the question or problem to be solved
2. **Build collective knowledge**, understanding needs and interest
3. **With something small** that the group can accomplish together when trust is low

A few words about community engagement and input in a university context:

- Representativeness is contested here and everywhere
- Authority is broad instead of deep
- There are diffuse stakeholders and a short time horizon
- It's a process-savvy community
- Engagement may be separate from collaborative governance or alongside it



Report Purpose & Intention

Using this Report to Support Decision-making

To fully benefit from the feedback and suggestions developed at the 2023 Spring Symposium, it is advised that the Process Recommendations listed in the next section be reviewed by those leading budgeting decision-making to consider how they might be incorporated both into budget planning and process evaluation. Specifically, it will be helpful to consider how to involve various parties communicate progress and updates, and to evaluate how well the process and outcomes reflect the input, perspectives, and needs of the Faculty and Staff. While no process is done perfectly, for the sake of continuous improvement, the reflection stage is imperative.

Process Recommendations

Specific recommendations that emerged from the symposium include the following:

1. **Clarify the parameters of budget reserves, including when and how they can be used.**

   Participants seek a better understanding of the decision-making process for using budget reserves as part of the overall budgeting at the campus and divisional levels. Participants also desire greater communication and clarity around the budget process, explaining the role of the budget reserves can help illustrate the decisions and decision-making parameters.

2. **Increase transparent communication of the planning process and key decision-making milestones.**

   Campus participants would like clear communication throughout the budget process, particularly around when key decisions are made. Providing a timeline and clearly communicated milestones for the process will help the campus community better understand when and how to provide feedback.

3. **Reflect feedback and perspectives that have not been considered in previous budget cycles.**

   Participants see the budget process as an opportunity to enrich the University's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion through demonstrating the thoughtful consideration of perspectives from across the campus. Purposeful outreach to voices, faculty and staff alike, who are underrepresented in campus decision-making must also be accompanied by clear evidence that those perspectives were heard and considered in the budget process.

4. **Create spaces for meaningful engagement and dialogue throughout the process.**

   Creating opportunities for feedback throughout the budget process will help the committee to accomplish the goal of increasing opportunities to create an inclusive process. In addition to receiving feedback, a meaningful process should include opportunities for an exchange of ideas.

5. **Communicate the data and information that informs the budget process.**

   Participants would like to better understand the information that decision makers will use in making their decisions. Creating greater transparency with regards to data and information will help the University further educate campus members about financial processes and data analysis.

6. **Align decisions to a shared mission and vision for the University.**

   Aligning the budget decisions with the priorities that the President has articulated, as well as the shared mission and vision of the university, will further align the budget process to the shared community values and purpose of the University.

7. **Recognize and appreciate collaborative processes and interdisciplinary work on campus.**

   The budgetary process is one of many collaborative opportunities and examples of collaborative governance. By recognizing the successes of collaborative processes and creating greater recognition of collaborative possibilities, the budget process can amplify the impact these efforts have in strengthening the sense of community on campus.

8. **Invest in communication channels and platforms to keep consistent and timely information that is accessible to the whole campus community.**

   To improve clarity around the budget process, the University should create opportunities and pathways for frequent and clear updates regarding the budget process.

   In collaboration with the Faculty Senate Budget Committee, explore the development of a budget dashboard which can clearly and concisely provide the campus community with key budget data elements.

9. **Leverage the considerable power of PSU's research and teaching excellence to implement best practices in collective governance.**

   To accomplish a feedback-rich process, the University should implement best practices from collective governance case studies to leverage and contribute to PSU's thought leadership in collaborative processes.

10. **Commit to continuous improvement and dialogue to create a budget process that incorporates lessons learned from the year and innovative solutions for the future.**

    To further PSU's thought leadership in collective processes, the budget process should document the lessons learned and accomplishments of its own collaborations. Adopting a continuous improvement process will allow the University to further knowledge and build a better process for the future.

Next Steps

The information in the Report is being provided to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee as well as the incoming president. The information herein is intended to inform future budgeting processes and provides recommendations for undertaking the work. A process recommendation tool is included with the report to facilitate implementation. The tool can be used to identify individuals responsible for the work, as well as how the recommendations are being adapted and adopted.

Acknowledgements

Portland State University would like to thank our planning and event team partners for their strategic guidance and leadership through the process of developing this opportunity to share ideas and create a framework for our work ahead.

Planning Team

- **Amy Mulkerin**, Vice Provost for Academic Budget and Planning
- **Anna Ruby**, Sr. Internal Communications Manager
- **Andria Johnson**, Vice President for University Budget & Financial Planning
- **Rowanna Carpenter**, Director of Assessment and Research, Adjunct Assistant Professor
- **Jill Emery**, Collection Development & Management Librarian, Professor
- **Jennifer Allen**, Associate Professor in Public Administration
- **Kevin Neely**, Vice President for University Relations
- **Lindsey Wilkinson**, Associate Professor

Event Staff

- **Matt Berger**
- **Kendra Lynn & David Burrow**
- **PSU Eats Catering**

President's Office

- **President Stephen Percy**

Facilitators

- **Cara Meyer**, Associate Principal, Coraggio Group
- **Michelle Janke**, Managing Partner, Coraggio Group
- **Jen Gray-O'Connor**, Associate Principal, Coraggio Group
- **Brad Simmons,** Art Director, Coraggio Group

Visual Notetaker

- **Kelly Fry**,
  Drawbridge Innovations

Appendix: Process Recommendations Tool

Action	Who	Adjustments Made
Clarify the parameters of budget reserves, including when and how they can be used.		
Increase transparent communication of the budget process and key decision-making milestones.		
Reflect feedback and perspectives that have not been considered in previous budget cycles.		
Create spaces for meaningful engagement and dialogue throughout the process.		
Communicate the data and information that informs the budget process.		
Align decisions to a shared mission and vision for the University.		
Recognize and reward collaborative processes and interdisciplinary work on campus.		
Invest in communication channels and platforms to keep consistent and timely information that is accessible to the whole campus community.		
Leverage the considerable power of PSU's research and teaching excellence to implement best practices in collective governance.		
Commit to continuous improvement and dialogue to create a budget process that incorporates lessons learned from the year and innovative solutions for the future.		

Portland State
UNIVERSITY