DFA 1978 2018
Dalhousie Faculty Association

Dalhousie Faculty Association Calls for Better Budget Choices at Dalhousie

For Immediate Release

Halifax, NS (March 12, 2018) – Dalhousie University is once again cutting money from teaching and research in an attempt to balance the budget, as outlined in its recently released draft operating budget plan for 2018-2019.

“Year after year, the administration projects a budget shortfall and uses that to justify an increase in tuition fees and squeeze money out of academic programs. Yet, year after year, the University realizes a healthy surplus,” says Darren Abramson, President of the Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA). “Where is the money going?"

According to some, budget pressures are "driven primarily" by increased compensation for "faculty and staff" (Allnovascotia.com, Tues. March 6, "Wadih Fares Opposes Dal's Tuition Hikes").

The DFA believes that the data proves otherwise. Data provided to the DFA by the Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers (ANSUT) and by the Cape Breton University Faculty Association (CBUFA) shows that compensation to our membership (academic staff at Dalhousie University) has been declining as a percentage of revenues for the past 6 years (see chart below). Dalhousie currently ranks at the bottom of large Nova Scotian universities for compensation to academic staff as a percentage of revenues. When compared nationally, Dalhousie spends more on non-academic staff, relative to what it spends on academic staff, than almost any of the 15 largest universities in Canada.

“If Dalhousie wants to restore its reputation as a world-renowned educational institution, it needs to increase – not reduce – its investment in teaching and research,” says Abramson. “Attracting top students and scholars to our university will require an increasing, not declining, investment in the academic mission. Dalhousie's economic value to Nova Scotia will *also* increase if students from all socioeconomic backgrounds can achieve post-secondary excellence with low debt levels and fewer hours working while in school.”

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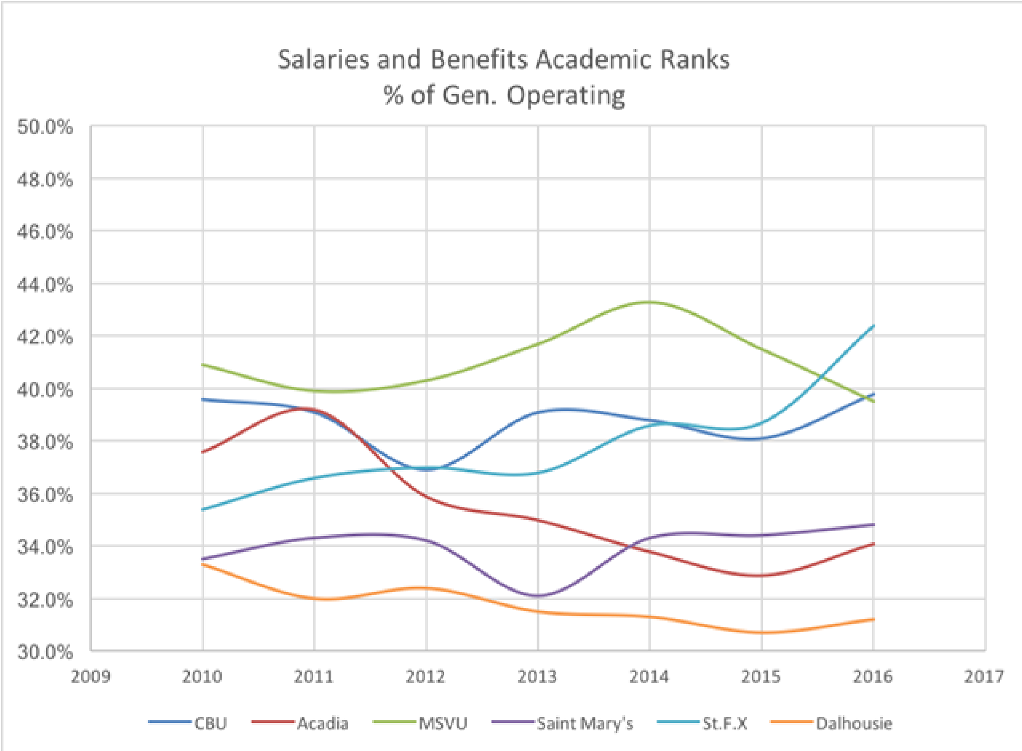
The Dalhousie Faculty Association (DFA) represents more than 950 teaching, research, librarian and counselling staff at Dalhousie University. Under the leadership of a volunteer Executive Committee, the DFA deals with items and issues of common interest to our members and addresses broader interests of the academic community.



Data provided by Association of Nova Scotia University Teachers

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

In reviewing Dalhousie University's Budget Advisory Committee reports, the DFA has identified a continued unreliability of budget forecasting. Here's an overview of the past four fiscal years for which audited statements are available:

- **2013-14**: estimated a shortfall of $17.6 million and recommended a 3% tuition increase and a 3.5% cut to Faculties and service units in order to balance the budget. The plan based its estimates in part on an expected 3% reduction in the provincial operating grant and stall in enrolment growth. Instead, the provincial grant actually increased and enrolment went up by 135 students. At the end of the year, there was an operating surplus of $23.8 million.

- **2014-15**: predicted a $10.1 million operating shortfall, and recommended a 3% tuition increase, a 3% increase in fees for facilities rental, a 2.5% cut to all Faculties and a 1.5% cut to all service units in order to balance the budget. That fiscal year, there was a $24.7 million operating surplus.

- **2015-16**: recommended a 2.5% budget cut for Faculties, 2.0% cut for service units, a 3% tuition increase and the use of $1.8 million from reserves to balance the budget. Yet, Dalhousie ended the year with a $13.8 million operating surplus

- **2016-17**: recommended a tuition increase of 3%, a 2.5% budget cut for all Faculties and service units, and the use of $1.5 million of reserve funds to balance the budget. The audited financial statements for 2016-17 showed an operating surplus of $20.5 million – a much stronger financial picture than predicted.