Matthew gave an overview of the 2014-15 financial projections based on Fall 2014 enrollment levels and current expense trajectories and the financial total for 2015-16 proposals (assuming no fee increase and assuming flat enrollment). A 5% fee increase, based on existing enrollment, would generate ~$80,000 in additional revenue. Expense side: Table shows amounts projected and proposed in the proposals themselves. 2014-15 expense projections are in line with last year’s approved plans, except for Student Life where there is a small savings due to timing related to Synapse ($16,000). Proposals for 2015-16 include total expense of $3.3m, leaving the fund with an ending balance of $282,000, equal to 8.5% of expenses. This also means that total expenses would be higher than total revenues, yielding an operating loss of about $80,000 for the year.

Nima asked about the $172k transfer in 2011-12. Matthew explained this was a catchup related to prior year benefit costs that were being funded by the chancellor and that the committee explicitly decided to spend down reserves during 2012-13.

Jennifer explained that all units would be invited to present their proposals and that it would be helpful if the committee had comments and questions that could be passed along to department representatives.

Cameron began asking for comments about the proposals

Arts and Events is proposing a $2,000 increase. No specific comments.

Nima asked about the sources of “Other Revenue.” Lisa explained that each unit has different sources, some from endowments, some from Campus Core funds, summer session revenue, self-supporting degree program tuition revenue, rate additive revenue (which is a tax on employee payroll). Cameron asked about the stability of these other sources, and Lisa indicated they are generally stable.

Family Services – Ashley asked who is eligible for the services (Sitter City for babysitting, elder care, or even pet care) and scholarships. Gary explained that Susie will explain how the $7,500 is used to
provide free services for students. Students can also earn money by working for Sitter City. Pete asked if there is more demand, can services be scaled up with more funding? Is there a large unmet need? Flora asked if the funded services covered postdocs. Gary indicated that it does. Students have access to the list of providers. Christina asked how much it would cost to access the list independently. Gary indicated that is not possible, access is by institutional affiliation. Flora asked how well the service is publicized. Gary indicated Susie could be asked about this. Polina asked about options for providing additional funding. Jennifer indicated they would need to develop a plan for spending the funds. Christina asked about the geographic scope of the program. Gary indicated that Sitter City extends to the East Bay.

FITREC -- Lisa indicated that this increase is occurring due to the normalization of benefits costs. $80,000 was a fixed amount to provide access to the Bakar Center; Current proposal is consistent with the increase in membership fees.

GP Student Association – Pete asked about the events listed in the proposal. Cameron explained that the two organizations merged, and the number of events declined. Jennifer indicated that the funding request has nothing to do with the events listed. Part is to pay for system-wide UCSA fees and ??? Nima asked about the officer travel expenses. Jennifer explained these expenses are not paid from SSF. Student government also pays for student travel to conferences. Costs paid out of student government fees, not the SSF.

Office of Career and Professional Development -- $50,000 proposed increase in budget. Kevin asked if the request was due to discontinuation of vendor fairs and repurposing staff to focus on other aspects of their mission. Vendor fairs have generated about $30-35,000 annually, but staff time required means revenue doesn’t translate into better services for students. Lisa explained that the additional staff time would be used to help facilitate appointments and programming for students.

Student Health and Counseling Services – Polina pointed out they hired another mental health provider. Lisa indicated the unit makes mental health a priority. Kevin asked about the reduction in support during 2013-14. Lisa indicated that there was concern about the fund being overdrawn, so they reduced their support from SSF and increased another fee to help make up a difference. This was supported by the students at the time.

Student Life – reduction of $20k. Greg asked about the feasibility of making Synapse online only to reduce the time to get a story out. What would the transition cost, impact on advertising revenue, what tech support is required, do they have a plan. Two weeks between cycles is a long time. Michael responded that they are moving more on-line, personnel costs have been cut. Greg: Can we use funds to improve the website, to make the publication better for students? Jennifer indicated they have made significant efforts to improve their web presence. Synapse is conducting a survey, expectation is to show the results to the committee. Cameron indicated they are working well to improve interprofessional communications among the schools. Henock stated that the committee has asked a lot change from Synapse in a short period of time. Each school and department already has an online presence; people actually pick up and read the print version. Supports the idea that students involved in various activities should be encouraged to write material for the paper. Stated that he felt they are doing a good job with the changes requested. Some changes requested are too fast. Niki indicated that the survey includes a question about preferences for paper versus online versions. RCOs???
Jennifer asked if there were questions the committee wanted to ask of all groups. Ashley suggested “what would it look like if you didn’t get an increase?” Christina expounded that how would it affect services. Greg asked what some other identified weaknesses are, what needs exist for which no funding request was submitted, what if a larger increase were approved, as there might be something students want that they didn’t ask for.

Michael asked if there is more GPSA can do to support students and more programming at Mission Bay. Question could be asked for more groups based on the increasing presence of professional students at Mission Bay. Jennifer indicated that there is interest in collecting information about usage of service at Mission Bay. Arts and Events is looking to add an employee to support activity at Mission Bay.

Nima pointed out the proposals seem to be funding events retroactively. Jennifer pointed that units were asked what they did the prior year. Cameron pointed out that most of the money approved by the SSFAC went to RCOs.

Christina asked if the committee was allowed to ask follow up questions during the proposal presentations. Lisa indicated they will either respond or submit a response later.

Jennifer brought up the question of how much of a reserve should be held and suggested that the committee start to talk about that. Nima pointed out that actual results can vary greatly from projections. Michael pointed out that drastic increases in benefits will subside. Also, because enrollment is flat, restoring a lost reserve will be difficult. Lisa suggested that 5% could be considered; 8.5% might be too high. Lisa also pointed out that the proposal uses up $80,000 of the reserves. Kevin pointed out that going over $80,000 next year probably means it is a continuing problem. Lisa pointed out that if revenue stays flat, the committee might need to consider not covering salary increase costs in future years, requiring units to identify another source. (Each proposal includes an assumption of a 3% salary increase for staff employees effective July 1.) Christina pointed out the committee could do that now as a means of protecting the reserve.

Jennifer also pointed out a consideration that failing to support a budget request might mean students pay for a service or activity in another way, via other fees. This is what Student Health and Counseling did in 2013-14. Another example would be the cost of the Rec Pass increasing.

Michael asked for information about trends in the proportion of students waiving out of GSHIP, which could increase costs for the GSHIP program. SHC bills full cost to the alternate insurance provider.

Jennifer indicated that she would accept and forward any other questions via email. SAA units will present on February 10 and CLS units on February 24.

Dan asked about how information about budget assumptions are communicated to units. Lisa indicated that units are informed about assumptions; budget preparers know their programs and that the SSF funds are generally flat. Complete budgets are still being developed for other sources of funds. Jennifer indicated that communication is very open and units are able to ask questions during budget development.

Nima recalled a group being told not to ask for funds from the committee. What determines who asks for funds? Those who were denied funding in the past have considered it a final no and don’t realize
they could come back to ask for funds again. They also haven’t been invited back. Jennifer indicated that UC policy limits who and what can be funded. The recent history of tighter budgets also led to some units being told to find other sources. In the future, the committee could issue a broader request for proposals. Jennifer is reviewing bylaws from other campuses. They have different committee structures, students who are paid to investigate the services provided, some have an open call. The campuses have much more revenue due to large undergraduate populations.

Lisa pointed out that in the past the committee has wanted to protect the existing services and suggested that other programs request funding from the Chancellor. Henock indicated he would be happy to entertain proposals from other units that could provide services that students benefit from.

Jennifer asked if a broader call should be issued this year or a note put in for next year. Nima pointed out that it’s probably too late given the amount of work required to complete a proposal.

Flora asked for information about what is eligible for funding from SSF. Jennifer indicated that anything academic in nature was not eligible. She will go back and look at the policy.

Henock suggested that some of the units currently being funded may be partnering with other service units that benefit students. Additional funding could be provided to increase those partnerships.

The meeting was ended at 7.04 pm.