This is in response to your request that RPIA review the information needs for budget restructuring in conjunction with the ARMS General Ledger to make certain the General Ledger appropriately addresses those needs. In completing this review, we looked at three specific questions:

1. How will ARMS address PBA or its equivalent?

2. How will needed expenditure data be tracked centrally in a consistent manner?

3. How will the reporting needs of the colleges and departments be met?

**PBA**

You currently have our review of the budget system in ARMS. The budgeting functions will work for the implementation of BRVIII. We are recommending that the screens and reports that refer to “permanent budget allocation” be changed to refer to “present budget allocation” to be more consistent with the principles of BRVIII.

**Expenditure Information**

Over the Summer, RPIA convened three workgroups. Marie Mead convened two of BRVIII workgroups. The Interdisciplinary Workgroup will have final recommendations to you shortly regarding a recommended protocol for tracking interdisciplinary expenditures in the ARMS General Ledger for purposes of BRVIII. The Physical Plant Assessment Workgroup will make recommendations on how plant, operations and maintenance expenditures will be allocated in BRVIII and the impact, if any, of that recommendation on the ARMS General Ledger. Donna Hobart has convened a group to recommend changes in the ARMS General Ledger to reflect the way fee authorizations will be handled in BRVIII. Those recommendations have been developed with ARMS staff input and are being finalized and will be sent to you for your approval next week.
Reporting Needs

ARMS General Ledger is a central accounting system. It is not appropriate nor desirable for such a system to address all the unique reporting needs of every college and department under either the current budgeting model or under the principles of BRVIII. The ARMS team is responsible for delivering an ARMS General Ledger capable of recording, tracking and reporting budget and expenditure information that is easily accessible and manipulated by the individual units.

For decision making in the context of BRVIII, the ARMS General Ledger data need to be complimented with data from other systems. For example, the credit hour information in the Student Information System will be a very important piece of data needed by the Colleges to forecast the revenue BRVIII is attributing to the Colleges. To address the need for data outside of the central accounting system, RPIA is developing databases and enhancing its web reporting server to provide coordinated data to support BRVIII. It is our recommendation that an advisory group be established with representation from the College Deans and Fiscal Officers to advise RPIA on the types of data required, the priority of each data source, and the format that would be most useful for the delivery of that data. RPIA is currently working on developing the base data required to support the central data needs for BRVIII as identified in the attached list. While development of data resources to support BRVIII is a continuing project, RPIA plans to have major components of this database and the web reporting server available to the Colleges by Spring 2000.

I hope this is responsive to your request. Please let me know if I can provide any additional information.

c: Ed Ray
   Brad Englert
   Don Seidelman

g: fin/files/walkerbrviii