

CAMPUS FEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

Date: 1/22/2026

Time: 1:00 PM

<https://csusb.zoom.us/j/83406630574>

Committee Members

1. Faculty Senate Chair or designee: Beth Steffel, *Co-Chair Designee*
2. Faculty Senate EPRC Rep: John Reitzel
3. University Advancement: Ginny Hattar
4. Student Affairs Rep: Mike Rister
5. Finance, Technology & Operations Rep: Maria Badulis
6. Finance, Technology & Operations, ITS Rep: Monica Villarruel
7. Academic Affairs Rep: Patrick Bungard
8. PDC Rep: Avi Rodriguez
9. ASI President or Designee: Diego Rendon, *Co-Chair*
10. ASI Undergrad: Ayanna McAlister
11. ASI Undergrad: Ashley Smith
12. ASI Undergrad: Melissa Saldana - Absent
13. ASI Undergrad: Kimberly Rosas
14. ASI Undergrad: Jiselle Villegas- Absent
15. ASI Undergrad (PDC): Alondra Lopez
16. ASI Graduate: Joseph Morales
17. ASI Graduate: Jay Carillo

Guests

1. Andreina Dominguez, Assistant to Associate Vice President – Finance, Technology & Operations (zoom support/ minute taker)
2. Sesar Morfin – Associate Vice President, Finance & Administrative Services
3. Lua Lopez-Perez – Assistant Professor, Biology
4. Dr. Paz Oliverrez – Vice President for Student Affairs
5. Mary Christien Ulatan Robles – Chief of Staff & Director of Operations & Fiscal Management for Student Affairs
6. Matthew Smith – Associated Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students
7. David Carlson – Professor, English

ASI President, Diego Rendon, called the meeting to order at 1:01pm.

1) Welcome

ASI President, Diego Rendon welcomed everyone.

2) Approval of November 12, 2025 Minutes

Motion to approve the November 12, 2025 minutes by Alondra Lopez and Ashley Smith.

The November 12, 2025 minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

3) M/S Bungard/McAlister: CAL 2970 – Liberal Studies Foundation Seminar & Assessment Preparation – David Carlson

David Carlson presented the course fee of \$30 per student.

Informed that the Liberal Studies program is requesting a \$30 per student course fee for CAL 2970 to help fund the PALS Ambassador Program, which employs student peer advisors to support instruction and student success. PALS provides one-on-one advising for class assignments and ongoing assistance with scholarships, field observations, course registration, and credential applications. Currently, the program relies on unpredictable ASI grant funding, supplemented by the CAL Dean's Office, but the recent denial of the AY 2025-2026 funding has significantly limited PALS support, risking negative impacts on student outcomes. The program has no alternative revenue streams and is considering recruiting work-study students to serve as PALS, typically 4-5 per semester.

Mr. Bungard clarified that the new course fee will only apply to students enrolled in this specific course and not to all students; he also asked whether students who repeat the course would be required to pay the fee again.

Mr. Carlson stated that he assumed that students who repeat the course would need to pay the fee again, as they would require the same mandatory meetings with PALS. However, Dr. Carlson mentioned that if there is a way to allow students who have already participated to opt out of paying the fee on repeat, they are open to exploring that option and could set up the system accordingly.

Mr. Bungard noted that there may be a way for students to opt out of paying the fee if they have already participated, but since it's not his area of expertise, he suggested that Student Financials would be the appropriate department to confirm this.

Passed (13/1/2).

4) M/S Rosas/Rister: IRA Fee – Dr. Paz Olivérez

Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Paz Oliverez presented on the Instructionally Related Activities (IRA).

Dr. Olivérez explained that the campus mandatory fee for Spring is currently \$199.52, split across two semesters, with 17% allocated to academic programs via the IRA, and the rest supporting athletics, special events, and wellness. This fee, established in 1994 and only increased in 2011, has remained relatively unchanged despite rising costs, and varies significantly compared to other campuses, like Sacramento with over \$1,000.

Clarified that the proposal is to increase the fee by \$300 starting in 2026-27, but that this step is only to seek approval to go to students for support, not to approve the increase. The process involves further review and approval by the committee and the president. The funding from the IRA supports various student programs, and comparison show fees are below the CSU system average, which is about \$2,000, reflecting different funding structures across campuses.

Explained that the proposed fee increase of \$300, would be implemented over the course of the school year, with options to phase it over multiple semesters or years to minimize short-term impact on students. Emphasized that the fee has not been raised in 15 years, despite rising costs and increasing demands on funding, which are often only partially met due to limited resources allocated by the IRA Board. The planning group, including staff and faculty, is preparing an educational campaign and consultation process to seek student support for the increase, and further steps will involve committee and presidential approval.

Informed that there are two main processes for implementing a fee increase: the alternative consultation process and the referendum process. The alternative consultation process has been used in recent years, such as for the Student Health Center fee in 2023-2024, engaging nearly 4,000 students to gather their input and ensure broad student participation. The referendum process, aligned with the ASI Spring election, involved over 2,000 students and saw high engagement levels, representing strong student interest in the decision-making. Both methods aim to give students opportunities to weigh in, with the consultation process providing more comprehensive information and feedback, while the referendum offers a direct vote on fee changes.

The alternative consultation process involves students receiving a presentation—similar to classroom sessions—where they learn about the fee increase, followed by a survey or QR code for feedback, aiming to engage at least 3,000 students this Spring through broad outreach and classroom access. The goal is to educate students about the IRA fees, their benefits, and gather their perspectives, while also raising awareness among faculty and departments, many of whom are unaware of the full scope of IRA resources. This process not only seeks approval for the fee increase but also aims to improve campus understanding and accessibility of IRA funds, ensuring they support student success more effectively.

Mr. Bungard wanted clarification about the charge frequency of the fee for students, whether it is an annual or semester-based fee.

Dr. Olivérez clarified that the fee is by semester, similar to current fees. She explained that if the proposed \$300 increase is implemented in one year, students would pay approximately \$250 per semester, totaling around \$500 annually.

Ms. Lopez inquired about the distribution of the IRA fee, noting that it is divided into 17% for academic programs, 68% for athletics, 4% for special events, and 10% for recreation and wellness, totaling 99%. She pointed out that there is a missing 1%, approximately \$35,000, and asked where this remaining amount is allocated.

Ms. Ulatan Robles explained that the missing 1% is likely due to rounding and offered to do a detailed review and present the precise breakdown. She clarified that the current percentages are based on the original fee schedule with the breakdown originating from the 1994 fee referendum.

Ms. Lopez asked if there is flexibility in the allocation percentages for each department, expressing concern about the high percentage allocated to athletics at 68%. She highlighted the need to potentially reallocate funds to support academic programs better, considering the financial struggles and the previous fee referendum that also benefited athletics. She inquired whether it is possible to decrease the percentage for athletics and increase the share for academic purposes.

Dr. Olivérez explained that the current allocation breakdown, including the 68% for athletics, reflects the original student proposal and ongoing needs, supporting athletics' operations. She noted that reducing this percentage would likely require downsizing the athletics program. Additionally, she pointed out that part of the ASI fee also funds athletic scholarships directly benefiting students. She emphasized that the 68% pertains to the operations budget of athletics.

Ms. Ulatan Robles clarified that the 68% of the IRA allocated to athletics covers travel, student employment, and daily operations, while the ASI fee specifically supports student-athletes through grants and aid, especially since many student-athletes are Pell eligible and face significant financial needs.

Ms. Rosas expressed concern that nearly 70% of the existing fee is allocated to athletics and emphasized the need for a broader discussion on how the fee could be redistributed to address other priorities. She highlighted the financial hardships faced by many students and suggested that the fee should be re-evaluated, especially if an increase is considered.

Mr. Morales asked for clarification regarding the 10% allocated to PDC students, inquiring whether this percentage is being taken from the current distribution or if it is a new allocation coming from a different source.

Dr. Olivérez clarified that the 10% allocation for PDC students specifically pertains to the academic programs area, which currently only allocates about 2% of its funding to Palm Desert programs. This 10% would come from the existing 17% fee, aiming to ensure that students from Palm Desert receive a proportionate share of funding, promoting equity based on student enrollment.

Mr. Morales asked for clarification if the 10% allocation for PDC students refers to 10% of the total fee revenue rather than 10% of the 17% portion.

Dr. Olivérez explained that if the fee were increased, the dollar amount associated with this allocation would also rise, and she emphasized that this was based on the current breakdown.

Ms. Steffel inquired about how student responses are recorded during alternative consultations compared to a traditional referendum; specifically asking how the student sentiment is captured in the alternative process, since referendums typically involve clear yes/no votes.

Dr. Olivérez confirmed that in alternative consultations, students respond to survey questions that allow them to express support or opposition, similar to a yes/no format.

Ms. Steffel then asked whether Category II fees are covered by financial aid, inquiring if students would need to pay out of pocket or if these fees are included in their financial aid package.

Dr. Olivérez confirmed that Category II fees are generally covered by financial aid, especially for students receiving Pell grants; where most of their tuition is covered. She clarified that this means many students would not have to pay out of pocket, though she acknowledged that individual circumstances, such as student income levels, could vary.

Ms. Steffel expressed concern about the proposed 250% fee increase and questioned how many students would be financially impacted versus those for whom the increase would be covered by financial aid. She also asked about the timeline for the decision, noting that it is likely to occur this Spring and could be approved by a departing President for the next academic year.

Dr. Olivérez confirmed that the decision process typically takes place in Spring, with implementation possibly occurring the following school year, meaning a departing President could approve the increase before leaving office.

Mr. Rister added that the current percentage breakdown was established through a student referendum several years ago, and any changes to that breakdown would require going back to the students for a new vote, as it is a referendum-based decision. He noted that there is a cutoff point defined by CSU policy for when past referendums can be amended, but he was uncertain about the specific timeline, emphasizing that the administration or committee cannot change the referendum percentages.

Ms. Lopez asked whether students at the Palm Desert campus will still be required to pay the athletics fee, given that the campus does not necessarily have athletics programs.

Dr. Olivérez explained that the athletics fee is a total amount paid by all students, not broken down by specific programs, and currently both San Bernardino and Palm Desert students pay the same fee. She clarifies that the 10% mentioned pertains to a portion of the fee related to the 17% and notes that faculty at Palm Desert may not be fully aware of the funds available for applying to, highlighting a need for more equitable distribution and awareness.

Ms. Ulatan Robles clarified that there is a focused effort to invest more in the Palm Desert campus to ensure that students see a return on their fees, including increased programming and athletic presence. She mentions that about 10% of the investment return from the IRA fee is expected to go back to the Palm Desert campus.

Mr. Morales asked for clarification about the possibility of implementing a phased approach to a certain plan or change, to avoid overwhelming students all at once. He inquires if there are any specific details or a proposed layout for how this gradual implementation might be structured.

Dr. Olivérez explained that a phased rollout over three years is being considered, where students would pay an additional \$100 annually, spread as a \$50 increase per semester, instead of a lump sum of \$300 all at once. This approach aims to minimize immediate impact on current students, especially those graduating soon, while future students would experience the full amount.

Mr. Rendon emphasized the importance of ASI representatives being well-informed about the specific allocation and vision behind each percentage of the fee increase, including how funds are designated for athletics, recreation, and sports, so they can effectively communicate this to students and address their questions confidently, serving as accurate advocates and representatives of student interests.

Dr. Olivérez confirmed that detailed presentations will be shared with ASI and Faculty Senate to ensure they are well-informed about the fee breakdown, allocation, and its direct impact on students, enabling them to confidently address student questions and concerns with comprehensive and transparent information.

Ms. Smith raises concerns that alternative consultation methods may not provide students with a truly direct influence on decisions like fee increases, emphasizing that while students can voice their opinions, they might still lack sufficient information to make fully informed choices, and she advocates for increased transparency and student participation without relying solely on referendums.

Dr. Olivérez explained that the alternative consultation process involves providing students with comprehensive information and opportunities to ask questions, which helps ensure they are better informed than they might be through a simple referendum, citing the Student Health Center fee campaign as an example where extensive outreach and education reached over 200 classrooms to facilitate informed student opinions.

Ms. Smith added that traditional outreach methods like presentations and campaigns can still be effective in a referendum process, but she raises concerns that without a guaranteed impact on student wishes, the feedback might not truly influence decision-making, especially if the majority opposes the proposal.

Dr. Olivérez shared that in a previous alternative consultation, over 80% of the roughly 4,000 participating students expressed support through survey responses, demonstrating that students still have meaningful opportunities to weigh in, and she emphasizes that this method has successfully engaged a large number of students, making it a rationale for pursuing this approach to ensure broad participation.

Ms. Lopez suggests establishing a fixed, concrete percentage of the fee dedicated annually to PDC, emphasizing the importance of having a reliable and measurable allocation that does not fluctuate yearly, ensuring consistent support for programming and operations at PDC.

Dr. Olivérez explained that the 10% allocation is designed to be proportional to enrollment, ensuring a consistent and fair distribution of resources to the campus each year based on the number of students contributing to the fee.

Ms. Rosas reflected on the recent student referendum, noting that despite efforts and face-to-face outreach, the vote was highly split, with students expressing concerns about fee increases and a desire for more transparency about where their money goes. She emphasized that increased engagement was achieved and suggests that exploring different outreach strategies could further improve future involvement, proposing to continue the discussion at a later time to strategize on how to enhance student engagement effectively.

Dr. Olivérez emphasized that a key component of the outreach strategy involves trained student teams engaging directly with peers through face-to-face conversations, which has proven effective in past campaigns like the Student Health Center, ensuring students' perspectives are heard and questions are addressed in a personal and impactful way.

Mr. Rendon suggested that allocating a small percentage, around 3%, of the fee increase from the governed IRA fee to the financial aid or basic needs office could significantly support students struggling to afford the fee increase, citing SDSU's successful example of a referendum that included a similar aid component.

Ms. Ulatan Robles explained that since the fee was established under California Ed Code to benefit specific activities, any allocation to support students' financial needs would need to adhere to those regulations, though exploring ways to incorporate such support remains a possibility for future consideration.

Mr. Rendon clarified that the vote was on authorizing the campus to pursue an alternative consultation.

Failed (5/5/2).

8. Adjournment

ASI President, Diego Rendon, adjourned the meeting at 2:07pm.