CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN BERNARDINO
5500 University Parkway, San Bernardino, CA 92407
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CAMPUS FEE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

Date: 5/14/2026

Time: 1:00 PM
https://csusb.zoom.us/j/84877333531

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: Sonia Miranda - Absent
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: Alberto Fernandez
13. ASI Undergrad: Kimberly Rosas- Absent
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. Dr. Paz Oliverez – Vice President for Student Affairs
4. Mary Christien Ulatan Robles – Chief of Staff & Director of Operations & Fiscal Management for Student Affairs
5. Matthew Smith – Associated Vice President for Student Affairs & Dean of Students
6. Jordan Fullam -Faculty Senate Chair – Ex-Officio

ASI President, Diego Rendon, called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.

1) Welcome

ASI President, Diego Rendon welcomed everyone.

2) Approval of February 26, 2026 Minutes

Motion to approve the February 26, 2026, minutes by Alondra Lopez and Mike Rister.

The February 26, 2026, minutes were unanimously approved as presented.

3) M/S Lopez/McAlister: IRA Alternative Consultation– Dr. Paz Olivérez

Dr. Olivérez provided an overview of the proposed fee increase, highlighting that the current fee has not changed since 2015, with the proposed increase adding $301 to reach a total of $500 annually, split between fall and spring. Provided a breakdown of how the funds support student learning, engagement, and success, emphasizing skills like critical thinking and collaboration, which are valuable to employers. Discussed the recent survey where 2,099 students responded, representing a diverse cross-section of undergraduates at different levels and graduate students, with key findings showing participation in programs like commencement, athletics, and the speaking center. The survey also revealed student priorities such as well-being, internships, and employment, and indicated that a majority felt fees were utilized fairly, though some disagreed. Emphasized the importance of IRA-supported programs in enhancing the student experience.

Ms. Smith emphasized concerns about the integrity of the fee increase process, noting the use of an alternative consultation that bypassed the formal student referendum mandated by CSU Executive Order 1102. She highlighted that the process failed to provide genuine democratic input, especially since the designated oversight body rejected this alternative multiple times. Pointed out that the survey's framing biased students by implying the fee increase was already beneficial and noted that about 600 students signed a petition opposing the increase, representing active opposition. She challenged the justification that most students could cover the cost through financial aid, arguing that this overlooks increased debt and disproportionately impacts vulnerable students, especially those who are first-generation or do not receive aid. Concluded by stating her opposition to the fee hike, advocating for a transparent referendum, and reaffirming her support for student democracy and shared governance.

Mr. Bungard questioned why the $301 increase was not addressed or mentioned in the survey, noting that the survey only referenced a dollar figure and included incentives like a $10 burger for completing it. He expressed confusion over why the specific amount of $301, which is part of the proposed fee increase, was not explicitly communicated to students during the survey process.

Dr. Olivérez explained that the detailed information about the $301 fee increase was intentionally provided through comprehensive communication channels such as the website, email, Canvas, videos, presentations, and FAQs, rather than being included directly in the survey. This approach was meant to ensure students had access to all relevant details beforehand, allowing them to form informed opinions.

She noted that many students did review this information and commented on aspects of the fee, indicating that the communication strategy was effective in providing a full understanding of what the fee covered.

Ms. Lopez expressed concerns about the survey questions, feeling that some were "trick questions" that could confuse students without the right information, particularly regarding perceptions of fee fairness compared to other CSUs. She noted that her own response of "no" to the fairness question could be interpreted as support for increasing the fee to improve services, which she found problematic. Stated that she is worried about how this information will be used to justify the fee increase, emphasizing the importance of clear and fair framing of survey questions to accurately reflect student opinions and prevent misinterpretation.

Dr. Olivérez explained that her interpretation of the survey question was different, believing it was meant to determine how students felt about how their fees are being used, not necessarily to justify increasing the fee based on disagreement. She highlighted that the survey provided students with information about the range of fees across the CSU system, which helps them understand how their campus compares. Emphasized that the responses showing both agreement and disagreement about fee use do not directly translate to support for a fee increase, and she does not interpret student disagreement as an automatic call for raising fees.

Dr. Reitzel asked for clarification on where the athletic funding is going, implying concern that it may not be allocated efficiently or appropriately and on whether the funds cover the entire athletics department.

Dr. Olivérez clarified that the funding discussed previously covers only about a third of the athletics budget, specifically 68% of the IRA fee goes to athletics, indicating that additional resources are allocated elsewhere. She emphasized that athletics are not fully supported by the IRA.

Dr. Reitzel also questioned why student fees are being used to support the athletics budget when there is already an existing budget for athletics, indicating that this practice seems problematic, especially given the disproportionate funding athletics receives compared to other areas funded by student fees.

Dr. Olivérez explained that the current allocation breakdown of student fees has remained unchanged since 1994-95, as any modifications require a student referendum. She highlighted that student fees support various campus areas, such as ASI, Rec. Center, Student Health Center, and others, with participation varying among students. She emphasized that these fees were initially established to address specific resource gaps and have since remained the same, with allocations adjusted annually based on proposals. She noted that the diversity and purpose of student fees reflect broader resource challenges within the CSU system.

Dr. Reitzel suggested that students should consider holding another referendum to reevaluate how fees are allocated, noting that 31-32 years is a long time for such a system to remain unchanged. He emphasized that whether or not students decide to increase fees in the future, reexamining the allocation process is an important issue for consideration by the committee.
Mr. Fernandez inquired whether there has been a comprehensive breakdown, within audited fiscal years, of how the IRA fee has been allocated to each department, including organizations like ASI and SMSU, and whether detailed tracking and auditing have been conducted to account for the funds' usage

across these departments.

Dr. Olivérez stated that, during her tenure, there hasn't been a full audit of how the IRA funds are allocated to each department, though there has been some scrutiny and review of the usage and allocation processes. She agreed that conducting a comprehensive audit would be a valuable step to better understand and improve the management of IRA funds.

Dr. Smith explained that efforts are underway to establish clear guidelines and policies regarding allowable IRA fund costs, ensuring they support enriching students' academic experiences and align with academic departments. He emphasized improving the transparency and efficiency of the application process, so faculty and departments know if they are funded earlier to plan accordingly. He also discussed challenges related to consistent funding whether programs should be funded based on application quality or other criteria and the importance of having equitable conversations about how IRA funds are allocated and awarded through the IRA committee.

Dr. Olivérez added that the IRA Board's review process provides an opportunity to reevaluate funding methods and allocation structures. She expressed strong support for working with students to consider a future referendum to potentially modify how funds are allocated, aligning with Dr. Reitzel's earlier suggestion and emphasizing the importance of student input in shaping future funding decisions.

Ms. Lopez raised concerns about the survey results, noting that some data points are not statistically significant, which could impact how the results are presented in support of increasing IRA funding. She questioned how the findings, with limited statistically significant differences, will be conveyed, emphasizing that the slight variations in student responses do not clearly indicate a majority in favor of increasing the fee.

Dr. Olivérez acknowledged Ms. Lopez's point, agreeing that the survey results represent a diverse range of opinions rather than a clear majority favoring or opposing the IRA fee increase. She emphasized that the data reflects a cross-section of student perspectives, and she agreed with the concern that the results should be communicated carefully to accurately represent that diversity.

M/S Lopez/Morales: To conduct the vote by ballot. Passed unanimously.

Dr. Fullam expressed appreciation for the student leaders' emphasis on transparency, social mobility, and affordability, affirming the importance of these values. He also highlighted that the Faculty Senate adopted a resolution opposing the fee hike, citing concerns similar to those raised by students, including the perception that students are being asked to cover a significant debt carried by Athletics, which has increased dramatically in recent years.

Dr. Olivérez acknowledged that all areas funded by IRA, including athletics, Student Health Center, and others, have been underfunded for years, with no significant increases, which has limited their ability to provide adequate resources and support for students. She explained that the process of allocating available funds is challenging, with no proposals receiving full funding and many receiving partial or no support, emphasizing the need for increased and sustainable funding. She also highlighted the broader systemic issue that ideally, no student fees would be necessary if the university and system had sufficient resources, but given current constraints, these fees are essential for maintaining services and support that contribute to student success.

Ms. Steffel inquired about the student fee policy, noting that she could not find any requirement in the system policy that allocations must be approved through a student fee referendum. She asked whether she might have missed this detail or if it is outlined elsewhere, seeking clarification on where the rules or procedures governing fee allocation approvals are officially set.

Dr. Olivérez confirmed that the requirement for allocations to be approved through a student fee referendum is indeed outlined in the policy, specifically related to state tuition and fees. She mentioned that this was the basis for initial discussions and that the current fee structure was originally established via a referendum process, as mandated by the policy.

Ms. Steffel clarified that the policy indicates that fee increases are generally supposed to be approved through a student fee referendum, but alternative consultation can be used if deemed appropriate by the president, which she believes is the process currently underway. She expressed concern that the majority of the IRA fee increase appears to benefit athletics, which has faced significant financial losses recently, and questioned the transparency of how funds are allocated and disclosed. Emphasized the importance of honest, transparent communication about the financial realities, including systemic issues like the lack of appropriate controls in athletics identified in a recent CSU audit; suggested that the current decision-making process may not be fully addressing the core issues.

Mr. Rendon acknowledged Ms. Steffel request for the specific policy citation and asked Dr. Olivérez to send the citation directly to Ms. Steffel via email.

Mr. Fernandez highlighted concerns about the lack of transparency regarding athletics' financial audits, questioning why their financial disclosures have been undisclosed in recent years. He emphasized that if fee increases are being considered, there should be clear acknowledgment and understanding of where funds, particularly those allocated to athletics, have been directed, raising valid concerns about accountability and transparency.

Dr. Olivérez emphasized that the information about athletics' financials is available but not widely known, and that increasing awareness and education are key goals. She acknowledged that many students, staff, and faculty are unaware of where the funds are going, and she highlighted efforts to improve transparency through presentations, videos, and the website. She stressed that ongoing education is essential to help the campus community make informed decisions about fee allocations, and pointed out that this process has revealed many people's limited prior knowledge on the topic.

Ms. Lopez addressed concerns about the allocation of IRA funding, clarifying that some programs have been fully funded or received significant support, while others were only partially funded based on alignment with the IRA committee’s priorities. She emphasized the need for transparency and suggested that if additional funding is necessary for educational programs, a referendum should be considered to reallocate funds, especially noting that athletics heavily relies on student fees without actively seeking alternative revenue sources like philanthropy or community funding and urged that this point be clearly stated in the meeting minutes to ensure transparency and informed decision-making regarding funding priorities and limits.

Dr. Olivérez clarified that athletics actively engages in fundraising efforts, generating revenue through sponsorships, competitions, and philanthropic donations, and that they are not solely reliant on student fees. Emphasized that while some funding comes from sources like the IRA fee and ASI, athletics continuously works to supplement their budget through various fundraising activities, and it's important to recognize these efforts to provide a more accurate picture of their financial situation.

Ms. Smith highlighted that most students are unaware of the details surrounding IRA and fee processes, raising concerns that survey responses may not accurately reflect informed opinions, especially given the possibility that students participated for incentives or without full understanding. She emphasized that the lack of education and awareness among students underscores the need for better communication and transparency, suggesting that many students haven't even been exposed to IRA information in their classes, which contributes to the overall gap in understanding and informed decision-making.

Dr. Reitzel emphasized the importance of establishing a student fee referendum, arguing that the current system has remained unchanged for 30 years and is outdated. He urged the committee to prioritize advocating for a referendum within the next year to ensure transparent, informed decision-making about fee allocation, especially given the lack of awareness among students and the potential financial burden on them. Reitzel highlighted that addressing this issue proactively can help prevent future financial misunderstandings and ensure that student interests are protected in the university's budgeting process.

Mr. Bungard proposed to quickly move to a vote on whether to send the committee's decision to the President, either approving or rejecting the matter at hand due to the group's limited time.

M/S Bungard/Lopez: To submit for a vote to the President with the committee's recommendation for approval or rejection. Passed unanimously.

M/S Bungard/Lopez: To recommend to approve the IRA fee increase.

Mr. Rendon clarified to the committee that the motion is to approve the fee increase of $301; members should vote "Yes" if they agree with the increase, or "No" if they do not.

Failed (3/10/2).

4) Discussion - (All)

Mr. Rendon observed that many concerns were raised during the meeting, including issues with policies, survey clarity, data presentation, and financial transparency, centering around a broader theme of transparency and clarity in communication and decision-making processes, indicating a need for improved openness and understanding among members.

Ms. McAlister clarified that her concerns are not against athletics itself but stem from the disproportionate and unfair burden on students to cover athletic debts through IRA funds, especially given the minimal presence and involvement of students in athletics on campus. She emphasized the need for greater transparency and accountability, advocating for a detailed audit of how IRA funds are allocated, where athletic income originates, and ensuring that student fees are not unjustly supporting

athletic expenses, highlighting the financial strain on students.

Ms. Smith expressed her appreciation for the committee and emphasized her support for athletes, but also her concern for the broader student body, fearing that the proposed fee might be passed despite opposition. She stressed the importance of shared governance and urged that the committee's decision be given strong consideration by the President, promising to continue advocating on this issue regardless of the outcome.

Ms. Lopez highlighted the significant gap between athletics and the student body at PDC, especially noting that many students are first-generation, commuting, and unfamiliar with navigating complex processes like this. She pointed out that previous negotiations with athletics have not been honored, which deepens her concern for students who face additional challenges in understanding and engaging with these decisions, emphasizing the importance of considering their unique circumstances in the voting and decision-making process.

5) Closing Remarks

Mr. Rendon thanked everyone for attending the meeting.

6) Adjournment

ASI President, Diego Rendon, adjourned the meeting at 2:00pm.