



Student Fee Advisory Committee Minutes

November 21, 2024

Attendees: Rosalinda Garcia, Fred Juarez, Dr. Hazelton, Ana Vargas, Jesus Galaviz, Mario Lopez, Mark Chapa, and Natileigh Aviles

Other attendees: Alana Benavides, Denisse Botello, and Karla Leal

I. Welcome

Ms. Garcia thanked everyone for coming.

II. Approval of October 10, 2024, Minutes

Motion to approve minutes made by Conrad. Second by Ana. Minutes were approved.

III. 2025-2026 Budget Review by Mr. Fred Juarez

Fees Overview: The three fees under review are Rec Sports, Health Fee, and Student Center Fee.

Budget Comparison: A comparison between the current and next year's budget is not possible at the moment as the budget for next year is not yet available. The state allocates funding every two years, and the university's budget is primarily state-funded (34%) and tuition/fees (41%).

State Budget Process: The state legislature determines the university's funding every two years. The next state budget decision will be made in 2025, making projections for 2026 challenging.

Enrollment Impact: Enrollment numbers for Fall and Spring are strong, but any drop in enrollment during Spring and Summer would lead to decreased revenue.

Funding Sources: The university's budget is supported by five key sources, including state funding, tuition, grants, fundraising. Fewer students enrolled equates to less funding.

Budget for Key Areas for 2024-2025:

- Rec Sports: \$1.1 million (including debt service for the Rec Center loan)
- Health Services (including disability services and partial student counseling): \$1 million
- Student Center: Budget covers community relations, special events, debt service, etc.

Legislative Advocacy: TAMIU leadership will present the university's needs to the legislature to request more funding. SGA President, Conrad will also participate.

Next Steps: Fred will provide budget numbers for the next semester, which will help in planning for the following year.

IV. Discussion on Funds Currently Available in SFAC Account

Last year, the decision was made to gather input from students regarding the 12K that are currently available in the SFAC Account. The plan included two surveys: the first survey aimed to collect student feedback on broad categories for fund allocation (i.e., parenting, furniture, grants and transportation), while the second survey would focus on specific allocations once the categories were determined. However, neither of these surveys was conducted.

Ms. Garcia gave a summary of items the previous SFAC members considered allocating the 12K to. These included:

- Funding a grant for parenting students: number of students who have children, many need to miss class because they have no money for childcare.
- Outdoor seating. Students felt that there weren't enough seating/lounging areas outside.
- Transportation. Many students ride the bus to TAMIU. The commute can be 1-2 hours long one-way. Bus passes can be costly. Therefore, SFAC was considering providing funding to buy bus passes for these students.
- The professor suggested contacting the colleges to see what needs there are.

Ms. Garcia reminded the Committee that the 12K doesn't all have to be used on one item.

Conrad's Proposal: Conrad suggested using funds to support the *Make a Difference Day (MADD)* and *BIG Event*. The LOVE committee, a part of SGA, faced unexpected expenses this year, and if additional funding is not found, their operations will be limited next semester. LOVE has received \$6K, but Conrad proposed creating a separate account outside of SGA for better management. Historically, SGA has contributed between \$3K and \$5K to these events. The goal is to prevent the events from being canceled due to funding fluctuations.

Funding Priorities: Ms. Garcia mentioned that this proposal echoed last year's SFAC committee's feeling that SOLE (Student Organization for Leadership and Engagement) and SCCE (Student Center for Community Engagement) might need more funding.

Fred's Input: Fred noted that the \$12K surplus started in 2024, and it was agreed that any leftover funds would carry over to the following year. If funds are entirely spent, the starting amount for the next year would be \$12K. This amount has been consistent for several years.

Discussion on Student Needs: A committee member expressed concern that while *MADD* and *BIG Event* are valuable, there might be more pressing issues such as transportation difficulties preventing students from attending classes.

Fred's Recommendation: Fred suggested a meeting to discuss how to allocate the \$12K, determining which priorities will be funded.

Conrad's Follow-up: Conrad proposed using part of the funds for an emergency grant under SCCE, which could help address transportation issues. He also noted that funding for *MADD* and *BIG Event* is a one-time award, subject to change each year based on the committee's decisions.

Vote on Allocation: Ms. Garcia asked for a specific amount for *BIG Event*, and Conrad indicated he would need to consult with the committee and SCCE before providing a final number. He suggested \$4K could be allocated. He proposed splitting the \$12K, with half going to the *BIG Event* and the other half to the emergency grant.

Agreement: The group agreed in principle to allocate part of the \$12K to *BIG Event* and the other portion to emergency funding, but the exact amounts would be determined later.

The following meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday, December 11th at 2:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.