



## Student Fee Advisory Committee

March 26, 2024

### I. Welcome

Attendees: Rosalinda Garcia, Fred Juarez, Mayra Hernandez, Carolina Ramirez, Rodolfo Rendon, Preston Salazar and Jesus Soto.

Administration: Juan Garcia, Scheiby Gonzalez - Fischer, Denise Botello, Laura Elizondo, and Arianna Perez.

### II. Review and Approval of Feb. 20, 2024 Minutes

Motion to approve minutes by Ms. Hernandez. Seconded by Preston.  
Motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Garcia requested that Lupita upload the minutes to the SFAC website that is now up and running.

### III. Presentation on Accounts Covered by Student Fees

Ms. Garcia begins by sharing a summary of information.

1. University gets funding to cover expenses from different sources such as tuition, fees, grants, government funds, and donations. There are some departments that may be funded by all one, two, or several pots of funds.
2. The four basic fees being discussed are Student Services Fee, Student Center, Student Health, and Rec Sports.
3. Institution expenses are listed and matched to a budget.
4. Ms. Garcia asked to confirm that these presentations were requested because there's an interest from students in seeing if there are savings that can be identified so that they can fund new items. Students confirmed and added that they're interested in identifying any expenses covered by Student Services Fees that are not covering student services. If there are, they'd like to see if those expenses be covered by other fees.

Presentations:

Student Life Account – Rosalinda Garcia

Ms. Garcia advised that the presentation will be done at a later time.

Student Travel Account – Rosalinda Garcia

Ms. Garcia presented the Student Travel account which shows \$20,000 for operational expenses. She explained that 100% of the funding is for student travel and as of now has assisted about 140 students.

SFAC Account – Rosalinda Garcia

Ms. Garcia advised that she would not be presenting on this account given that the SFAC committee hasn't yet decided how to use these funds.

VPSE Account – Rosalinda Garcia

Ms. Garcia presented the VPSE account which shows \$19,138 for operational expenses. Mr. Juarez added that Ms. Garcia's miscellaneous account also includes any copier rental fees, phone line charges and fees.

Ms. Hernandez inquired about the benefits of the HACU institutional membership and questioned if the benefits for students were equivalent to or more than the membership fee. Caro asked for data to be gathered so the committee could have better information on the expense.

Enrollment Management – Juan “Chelelo” Garcia

Mr. Garcia presented the Enrollment Management account which shows \$37,700 for operational expenses.

Caro expressed concern about funding the CourseLeaf software from the student service fee. Rodolfo asked what the difference is between the CAT and CLSS software. Mr. Garcia provided a visual demonstration using the projector. Carolina clarified that her general concern is for Student Service Fees to cover expenses that are directly student services. Jesse asked if the price on the systems were operating cost or subscription. Mr. Garcia responded it is a yearly fee that usually increases.

Registrar – Juan “Chelelo” Garcia/Triana Gonzalez

Mr. Garcia presented the Registrar's account which shows \$45,349 for operational expenses. He advised that the Registrar's office is funded by several funding sources.

Ms. Hernandez asked if all staff had access to professional memberships. Mr. Garcia mentioned that the supervisors get to decide who from their teams go. Staff and administrators attend. Carolina asked about the difference in professional memberships and travel. Ms. Elizondo responded by saying that “professional memberships” are affiliations and “travel” is the account used to fund the conferences and trainings.

Financial Aid – Laura Elizondo

Ms. Elizondo presented the Financial Aid account which shows \$136,127 for operational expenses. Rodolfo wanted to ask if the software budget is high because it is an accumulation of several different software systems. Ms. Elizondo confirmed and added that it is not the total cost, she supplements the full expense with other funding sources.

Carolina asked if Financial Aid is solely funded through the Student Services Fee and if has been funded from other fees in the past. Ms. Botello responded by saying she believes it was previously funded by tuition but was moved under the Student Service Fee on recommendation of a past SFAC. Carolina asked if anyone knew when that happened and why the recommendation was made. A few attendees discussed a possible timeline but were unable to answer the question.

#### Admissions – Ariana Perez

Ms. Ariana Perez, Associate Director of Admissions presented their account which shows \$30,485 for operational expenses.

Ms. Hernandez asked if Registrars and Admissions shared the cost of the College Source platform and how many staff members received professional development. Ms. Perez responded by saying that yes it was a shared cost and that there are 6 admissions professionals that rotate for professional development opportunities.

Ms. Garcia advised the committee that there may need to be an additional meeting after presentations are over to discuss recommendations. If the committee wanted to make a recommendation to the President, it would need to be presented following a specific timeline. Ms. Garcia will inform the committee on the timeline so everyone is aware of how quick and prepared they would have to be. Carolina asked if the committee could get the breakdown of how funds would be used by each department with more advance notice.

Preston mentioned that he thinks a lot of these expenses shouldn't come from student fees. They should come from tuition. He can't find the connection between "student services" and office supplies, for example. He asked how this (office supplies, copiers) benefits students. He mentioned that after reading the Education Code, there are some expenses that he believes don't fall under any of the categories provided. Preston also made the point that it's unstable to depend on enrollment to cover expenses. He thinks the President would not agree to a request to move some of these expenses from the fees. Ms. Garcia mentioned that if we have a recommendation, then we make them. The president then has a responsibility to do what's in the best interest of the whole university. Preston's concerned that we'll commit a lot of time to recommendations only to have them rejected. Ms. Gonzalez-Fischer asked what he considers "service." There was a conversation on that which included a reading of the Education Code. Ms. Elizondo mentioned that the paper is used to provide the service. It's not there for the personal benefit of the employees.

#### IV. Update on SFAC Website

Ms. Garcia shared with the committee that the website is up and running. The website can be found on [www.tamtu.edu/vpse/sfac](http://www.tamtu.edu/vpse/sfac).

#### V. Update on SGA "Student Fee Advisory Committee Standard Operating Procedures" Proposed October 2022

This document was brought up last meeting. It was put together by some members of the SFAC last year. Preston remembers discussing it with Dr. Arenaz who had suggested edits. There were differing recollections on the fate of the document. Ms. Garcia consulted

with Dr. Arenaz and Mr. Chelelo Garcia on this. They don't remember it being finalized and no one has a final version. Preston mentioned that he has one of the final drafts but does not have notes of the edits. Ms. Garcia believes that it is a good starting point.

Ms. Garcia and the Committee agree that there needs to be Standard Operating Procedures. She suggests the project be tabled until the summer or fall since the SFAC is working on this presentation project and we if we have recommendations for the President on the budget, we need to focus on that. We are also working on the 12K SFAC funding project. The committee agrees to hold off the project until the recommendation for the surplus funds is resolved.

VI. Update on Plans for Funds Currently Available in SFAC Account

Ms. Garcia reminds the committee there is no hurry in deciding what to do with the 12K. Ms. Garcia will meet with the student members to discuss details of the current project to survey students for recommendations on the surplus funds. She will wait for them to let her know when they are meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:27pm.