

Student Fee Advisory Committee (SFAC) Meeting Minutes

Date: April 11, 2025

Location: USU-205

Attendees

- Beth Lesen, Chair
- Milton Ordonez
- Marianne Hata
- Praveen Soni
- Ryan Fischer
- Nathan Troung
- Andre Achacon
- Matt Melendrez
- Alexis Suttle Chermock
- Crystal Abrica
- Saniya Bose
- Anthony Saucedo

1. Welcome

Beth Lesen, Chair

2. Fee Requests:

- a. Student Health Services CPI – informational

Presenter: Damian Zavala

Damian Zavala provided an informational update regarding the Student Health Services Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase. The last fee increase occurred in 2017, with the fee changing from \$75 to \$88 per semester. Despite this adjustment, the Student Health Services fee remains the second lowest in the CSU system.

Damian noted that expanding on-campus services is particularly beneficial for students who may not have the time or resources to seek care off campus. These services improve access and reduce barriers to care.

Andre Achacon asked which specific services were most anticipated. Damian highlighted dental, dermatology, chiropractic, and acupuncture services, noting that these services would be available to students free of charge.

b. CLA, Anthropology

The committee reviewed a request related to a CLA Anthropology course that is transitioning from CPaCE to the College of Liberal Arts summer session. It was clarified that:

- This request does not represent a fee increase.
- The course is shifting administratively from CPaCE to CLA as part of summer school programming.
- The fee amount remains the same.

The course provides real-world experience and can lead to licensure. Enrollment typically includes primarily seniors, some juniors, and occasionally graduate students. At the time of review, there were nine applicants, all of whom were aware of the fee.

The motivation for the transition was discussed. While the course had been considered a “unicorn” within study abroad offerings, it is not a study abroad program. The College of Liberal Arts made the decision to move the course back into summer school. Summer school is no longer administered through CPaCE, and enrollment will now count toward FTS. Because summer has moved stateside, the fee must now be structured as a CLA fee rather than a CPaCE fee.

Beth Lesen asked whether any scholarships had been developed for the course. It was noted that while no specific scholarships exist, IRA fee support helps keep costs lower; without this support, the course would be significantly more expensive. The transition to a stateside course also allows the fee to be covered by financial aid. Milton Ordonez requested that similar items be submitted with more advance notice in the future. It was acknowledged that this request reflects a transitional change rather than a new fee proposal.

Decision: Unanimous approval

c. CPaCE

Programs Reviewed:

- CED – Reading Authorization Program
- CHHS – MS Criminal Justice
- CHHS – MS Social Work (Distance Learning)
- CHHS – MS Sports Management
- CLA – BA in Psychology
- CLA – MS Geographic Information Systems
- COTA – MA in Dance

Tom Owen explained that all programs under review are self-supporting, with funding generated entirely from tuition revenue. A review was conducted to determine when fees were last increased, and a competitor analysis across peer institutions was completed. The proposed fees fall within the mid-range compared to similar programs. Any approved increases would apply only to new students entering new cohorts.

Alysa Turkowitz stated that multiple programs are being reviewed at once because many have not been evaluated in several years, and in some cases, fees have never been increased. While there has been a longstanding effort to avoid raising fees, analyses indicate that adjustments are necessary to ensure long-term sustainability. Alysa emphasized the importance of consistent and transparent communication with prospective students regarding fee changes.

Andre Achacon noted that it was impressive how well fees have been minimized over time and asked how the increases would impact program resources. Program representatives indicated that they do not anticipate generating large surpluses.

Program-specific comments included:

- CHHS: Fee increases are needed to address rising operational costs.
- MA Dance: The program has operated close to a deficit due to faculty salaries and administrative expenses.
- Dance and CED: Alysa confirmed that some programs have experienced deficits, reinforcing the need for fee adjustments.

Milton Ordonez noted that increased enrollment results in increased instructional and administrative costs.

Ryan Fischer asked whether students have been informed of the actual dollar amounts associated with the proposed increases, citing an approximate \$100 increase in the MS Criminal Justice program. He suggested that smaller, more frequent increases may be preferable.

Tom Owen reiterated that the increases apply only to new students and align with fees at comparable institutions. Alysa assured the committee that the competitor analysis exceeded standard expectations.

Matt Melendrez asked whether the intent was to close existing deficits or prevent future ones. It was explained that this varies by program, with the overall goal of avoiding future deficits. The Psychology program was noted as relatively new but highly impacted and at capacity.

Committee members discussed the goal of serving as many students as possible, noting that increased resources allow programs to expand access. Matt Melendrez also expressed concern about economic volatility and the cumulative burden of student fees, asking how CPI factors into fee planning. Milton Ordonez requested clarification on CPI usage.

Alexis Suttle Chermock questioned why fees were increasing for the Psychology program given its newness. Program representatives explained that the program is highly impacted, and additional funding would allow for more course sections and increased admissions.

It was noted that many of the programs reviewed are fast-track programs. Alysa also highlighted the addition of online modalities, which help better serve working students. She concluded by noting that fees will be reviewed more regularly moving forward to avoid large increases.

For reference, the total program fee increase for MS Criminal Justice is \$3,600.

Decision: Unanimous approval

3. **Adjournment**

During final discussion:

- Beth Lesen noted that many of the programs continue to offer “bargain basement” pricing compared to peer institutions.
- Andre Achacon emphasized paying close attention to programs operating in the red to ensure fee increases do not harm programs.
- Saniya Bose encouraged gradual increases following larger adjustments and stressed the importance of financial audits.
- Matt Melendrez emphasized the need for regular evaluations and improved communication so students understand how comparatively low CSULB fees are.
- Praveen Soni asked for clarity on how funds are allocated when programs move from operating at a deficit to implementing increases of up to 17%.

The meeting was adjourned at **10:22 a.m.**