



DATE: 05/22/2026
FROM: Stefan Keslacy, Chair, Fiscal Policy Committee (FiPC)
TO: Jessica DeShazo, Academic Senate Chair
CC: Yohana Coronel, Rhonda Roquemore, Vanessa Shih
SUBJECT: Annual Senate Committee Report 2025-26AY

Policies/Items Completed During 2025-26

- **Budget Recommendation Memos:** Finalized and submitted formal budget recommendation memos to **VP Patrick Day** (Student Life/Athletics), **Provost Heather Lattimer** (Academic Affairs), and **VP Claudio Lindow** (Administration & Finance) to ensure faculty input in the early planning stages.
- **University Gift Card Policy:** Participated in the updated Appendix 7.4 of the University Gift Card Policy, specifically for **approved research**. The update streamlines disbursements by removing the requirement to report participant names to the university, shifting that responsibility to the participants for IRS reporting.
- **Institutional Fee Review:** Participated in the **Student Fee Advisory Committee** review of new Category II and III fees, including ASI inflation-adjusted fees and Student Affairs proposals for a new campus recreation center.

Ongoing Policies/Items

- **Committee Charge Revision:** The committee has recognized that its current charge is **outdated** and is drafting a revision to clarify membership and ensure the committee functions as a deliberative forum for pre-decision fiscal discussion.
- **Financial Transparency Dashboard:** Working with the University Budget and Planning, and **VP Claudio Lindow** office to develop a **public-facing dashboard** that will include quarterly spending data, term-to-term retention, and energy usage metrics to improve institutional literacy.
- **Academic Strategic Plan Review:** Conducted a special session with Chair Jessica DeShazo to provide feedback on the **Academic Plan**, emphasizing that aspirational goals for "high-impact practices" must be backed by **sustainable funding** and realistic assessment metrics.
- **Enrollment Management Monitoring:** Reviewing the structural reassignment of Enrollment Management and the impact of the **hiring freeze** on critical student-facing roles.

Future Policies/Items and Recommendations

- **Standardizing Dean Presentations:** Based on the success of this year's "Time Certain" sessions, the committee recommends making **annual fiscal reports from each College Dean** a permanent part of the FiPC spring calendar. Due to time constraints, the committee was unable to interview all deans from each college during the regularly scheduled meetings. To address this limitation, Chair Keslacy conducted individual meetings with five deans. Moving forward, it will be important to allocate sufficient time within the meeting schedule to ensure that all deans have the opportunity to

participate in the interview process. One possible strategy for improving efficiency would be to distribute interview questions to the deans well in advance, allowing the committee to interview two deans during each meeting session. Additionally, the committee may wish to consider revising the FiPC meeting schedule from biweekly to weekly meetings, at least for the Fall semester, to better accommodate these discussions and ensure comprehensive participation from all colleges.

- **Student Success Fee (SSF) Re-evaluation**: Proposing a formal audit of the SSF formula to repurpose funds from **discontinued programs** (such as the 24-hour Open Access Lab) toward modern priorities like the University Library.
- **College's RAAC Participation Standards**: Recommending that all colleges establish clear **constitutions and fiscal committees** to ensure departmental chairs are trained in budget management and that allocations are not solely centralized at the Dean's level. The committee discussed the importance of colleges maintaining clear and up-to-date constitutions, as well as establishing active fiscal committees to support transparency and shared governance in budget-related processes. Such structures may also help provide departmental chairs with greater familiarity and engagement in budget management practices, while encouraging broader participation in allocation discussions beyond the Dean's office. During the review process, it was noted that some colleges were able to provide detailed and updated constitutions, while others were either unable to provide a current version or indicated that revisions were still in progress. The committee has encouraged colleges over the past several years to continue reviewing and updating their constitutions as needed. In addition, colleges may benefit from continued collaboration through their fiscal committees to further develop and refine college-level policies and procedures related to budgeting and governance. These efforts could help strengthen transparency, consistency, and shared participation across departments and colleges.

Feedback and Recommendations

The committee conducted extensive interviews with Deans across the university to identify systemic fiscal pressures and opportunities for the 2026-27 budget cycle:

Professional & Global Education (PaGE):

- **Fiscal Reality**: The unit is currently operating at a **\$1.87 million deficit**.
- **Real Estate Divestment**: A critical recommendation is for the university to **exit the DTLA lease**, which costs \$400,000 annually. This physical footprint no longer aligns with the profile of the "modern learner," who favors flexible online upskilling over commuting.
- **Academic Modernization**: To stabilize, PaGE must shift from traditional degrees toward **nimble certificate pipelines** and micro-credentials in job-placement sectors like AI, Paralegal programs, or Pharmacy Technology.
- **Fee Structures**: Institutional professional fees have not been updated in **10 years**; a new, elevated fee schedule is recommended to offset operational deficits.
- **Staffing Model**: Recommendation of a baseline of **30% Tenure-Track to 70% Lecturer** allocations for high-capacity instruction to manage the university's largest overhead costs.

Arts & Letters (A&L):

- **Instructional Model Collapse**: The college's historical "cross-subsidization" model, where high-enrollment GE courses funded high-overhead labs and studios, has broken down due to enrollment declines and GE course migration.

- **Protecting Core Academics:** A major recommendation is to **decouple budgeting from strict FTES targets** to prevent a "death spiral" where enrollment drops trigger automatic cuts that eliminate essential creative environments.
- **Advising Infrastructure:** A&L staff advisors manage the **highest caseload volume on campus**. The committee recommends funding for a **Lead Advisor** and **Student Services Professional III (SSP3)** tier positions, which currently do not exist in the college.
- **Strategic Reinvestment:** Rather than passive cuts, the college should invest in **self-sustaining revenue mechanisms**. An example would be an in-house student-led Social Media Agency that provides career-ready internships while marketing college programs.

College of Natural and Social Sciences (NSS)

- **Systemic Crisis:** NSS shares a similar centralized management style and obsolete operational baseline as Arts & Letters. It is recommended that they also move away from **proportional budget cuts based on enrollment** to protect their core academic mission

Health and Human Services (HHS):

- **Staffing Priorities:** The most urgent recommendation is **restoring staffing levels** to prevent widespread faculty and staff burnout.
- **Accreditation Pressures:** The college faces high costs to maintain **program accreditation**, which mandates small class sizes and high levels of faculty oversight.
- **Instructional Innovation:** HHS intends to utilize **teaching assistants** for certain offerings and strategic scheduling to manage enrollment fluctuations.
- **Resource Management:** New initiatives are heavily reliant on external funding, such as the **\$48 million LOMA grant**, which is a primary driver for program expansion

Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology (ECST):

- **Mentorship and Retention:** To improve graduation rates, the college recommends mandatory **paid student mentorship networks**.
- **Infrastructure Needs:** There is an urgent, non-negotiable capital requirement for **dedicated Civil Engineering laboratory and instructional space**.
- **Cost Mitigation:** The Computer Science department has successfully lowered overhead by deploying **Graduate and Teaching Assistants** for introductory courses, a model that could be expanded.
- **Administrative Support:** The Dean's core currently operates under a structural deficit and requires an **Academic Scheduling Coordinator** to restore efficiency

College of Education (COE):

- **Revenue Capture:** The college is implementing a **"Plus-Three" section strategy**, encouraging programs to add three additional students per course section to maximize capacity and funding without changing existing schedules.
- **Budget Transparency:** The COE has successfully shared **internal budget breakdowns with department chairs**, which has increased faculty interest in the financial health and operational costs of their specific programs.
- **Staffing Flexibility:** To navigate hiring freezes, the college is prioritizing **cross-functional staffing models** where employees (such as those in the Credential Office) are trained to support multiple departments

Summary of 2026-27 Budget Recommendations:

- **Real Estate Divestment:** Exit the DTLA lease (\$400k/yr) and reinvest those funds into **online infrastructure and centralized recruitment marketing**.

- **Advising Infrastructure:** Fund **Student Services Professional III (SSP3)** tier positions and a Lead Advisor in high-volume colleges like Arts & Letters to address the highest caseloads on campus.
- **Budget Decentralization:** Mandate that college-level budgets be **shared transparently with department chairs** and distributed to the department level to foster ownership and accountability.
- **Strategic Staffing:** Prioritize **cross-functional staffing models** that allow personnel to support multiple departments, while exempting critical student-facing instructional roles from the hiring freeze.
- **Modernizing Revenue Streams:** Update the university's **administrative fee structures**, which have not been revised in 10 years, to align with peer CSU institutions.
- **Protecting Core Academics:** Shield high-overhead, low-capacity **specialized labs and studios** from proportional enrollment-based cuts to preserve the integrity of the degree programs.