

Senate Recommendation to VP of Administration & Finance

Originating Body: Faculty Senate

Originator: Anita Brown

Date Submitted: 4/21/2026

Requested Effective Date: 5/31/2026

Recommendation: The Motion for Transparency and Equity in Salary and Position Growth, passed on 11 March 2025, shall be amended so it is substituted with the following:

The Vice-President of Administration and Finance (VP A&F), or their designee, will present a budget update during a special meeting of the Faculty Senate (FS) at least once during each Fall and Spring semester. At that meeting, the VP A&F may determine the organization of presentation and discussion. However, to provide ample time for faculty to ask questions, at least half the allotted meeting time should involve discussion including faculty questions. The FS President will schedule the meeting in consultation with the VP A&F and distribute the date to the Faculty at least one month before the meeting. The VP A&F, or their designee, will send a detailed budget report to the FS President at least one week prior to the session for distribution to the Faculty. After consultation with the VP A&F, if the FS President determines that, for a particular semester, such a meeting need not occur, then at least a month prior to the expected meeting date, the FS President will notify the VP A&F of the cancellation of that semester's meeting and provide a justification for the cancellation.

In addition, the VP A&F will meet at least bi-annually with the Faculty Financial Oversight Committee (FFOC), providing a budget report and discussing issues of concern with the committee. The Chair of the FFOC will schedule these meetings in consultation with the VP A&F; they may also request specific data be included in the report. These meetings must be scheduled in a manner that permits significant direct discussion with the FFOC.

Date Approved by the Faculty Senate: 4/21/2026

President, Faculty Senate: Thomas W. Lamey **Date** 10/2/2026

Action Taken by VP of Administration & Finance

Date: 10/02/2026

☐ Recommendation Accepted

☒ Recommendation Not Accepted*

☒ Recommendation returned to the Originating Body for further review (see attached)

Disposition for Approved Recommendation:

☐ President

☐ VP Student Affairs

☐ Faculty Senate President

☐ XXX VP Finance

☐ Consortium Chair

☐ School Deans

☐ Webmaster

☐ Graduate Council

☐ Catalogue Editor

☐ Provost Council

Aurora Edenhart-Pepe

10/02/2026

VP of Administration & Finance

Date

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. David Keifer, Faculty Senate President

From: Aurora Edenhart-Pepe, Vice President for Administration and Finance

Date: November 25, 2025

Subject: Response to Faculty Senate Motion on Transparency and Equity in Salary and Position Growth

Thank you for the Faculty Senate's recommendation regarding budget-reporting practices and the proposed schedule of meetings with the Vice President for Administration and Finance. I appreciate the Senate's ongoing commitment to transparency, collaborative oversight, and shared governance in matters of university budgeting.

While I strongly support the Senate's goals of clarity, regular communication, and meaningful opportunities for dialogue, I am unable to accept the recommendation in its current form for several reasons.

First, the proposed timelines and meeting requirements may unintentionally conflict with existing obligations embedded in the university's annual financial-reporting cycle. Budget development, external audits, and state-mandated reporting deadlines vary from year to year, and in some semesters key financial data is not available by the October/November or March/April timeframes outlined in the recommendation. Mandating fixed meeting windows, regardless of data readiness, could lead to sessions in which the Administration is unable to furnish complete or accurate information, which would undermine the purpose of the meetings themselves. Flexibility is necessary to ensure that faculty receive meaningful, fully informed updates rather than partial or provisional data.

Second, the recommendation prescribes a specific format and duration for the presentation, including an executive summary capped at twenty minutes, followed by an open question-and-answer period for the remainder of the meeting. While we fully support a structured approach that prioritizes faculty engagement, codifying presentation length and format within policy would limit the Administration's ability to adjust the meeting to the complexity of the fiscal circumstances at hand. Some semesters may require more extensive explanation of state funding changes, bond-financed capital projects, or emergent budget pressures; others may require less. Establishing rigid time parameters could hinder clear communication rather than enhance it.

Third, although the Senate's intention is to strengthen transparency, the proposed requirement that the Faculty Senate President determine whether a meeting "need not occur" introduces ambiguity regarding authority and responsibility. As written, it is unclear what criteria would determine cancellation, how that decision aligns with existing shared governance structures, or how it interacts with the President's and VP A&F's responsibilities for institutional fiscal stewardship. For clarity and accountability, any cancellation or modification of these meetings should be guided by mutually understood benchmarks and by established governance processes, rather than unilateral judgment.

Fourth, I appreciate and support the Senate's interest in strengthening the relationship between the Administration and the Faculty Financial Oversight Committee (FFOC). However, the proposed

biannual meeting structure—while valuable—must be shaped around the individual who occupies the VPAF role and their specific skill set, in coordination with the Faculty Senate Liaison (the Provost). Each Administrator brings a distinct approach and expertise, and they should retain the flexibility to carry out their responsibilities in the manner that best aligns with both their professional strengths and the institution's needs at that time. Accordingly, meetings should be scheduled in a way that respects major institutional deadlines and the practical workload demands of the position.

That said, I want to reaffirm my strong support for enhanced communication and collaboration with faculty around financial matters. To that end, I am committed to the following:

- Ensuring that the VP A&F continues to provide budget updates to the Faculty Senate.
- Working collectively on projects that are moving the institution forward.
- Working together with the Faculty Senate to establish the balance of transparency with operational feasibility.
- Engaging in good-faith dialogue to address concerns raised and any subsequent analyses.

I value the Faculty Senate's dedication to transparency and shared governance. I look forward to continued collaboration as we refine these processes in a way that serves the entire university community.

Thank you for your continued partnership and for your commitment to the institution's well-being.