

**BUDGET COUNCIL MINUTES**  
**MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026**  
**DON LECTURE HALL MEETING**

**Table 1: Budget Council Members**

- **Cari Schwen**, Exec. Director of Fiscal Services (CHAIR)
- **Sandra Bauman**, Dean/CEO
- **Jessie Pate**, Director of IR & Effectiveness
- **Jason Grimmis**, Director of Crisis & Emerg. Resp
- **Amy Kong**, Director of eLearning & Fac. Dev.
- **Mel Ewing**, CIO
- **Robyn Kiesling**, Exec. Dir. Gen Ed & Transfer
- **Tod Dumas**, Aviation Instructor
- **Larry Taylor**, Anatomy & Physiology Instructor
- **Patricia Pierson**, Librarian
- **Paige Payne**, Executive Assistant (recorder)

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**BC Mission:** The Budget Council utilizes broad stakeholder representation to carry out responsible and realistic budget planning that aligns with the strategic goals of our campus and the Montana University System. We strive to foster a culture of financial integrity and collaborative governance, ultimately contributing to the sustained growth and success of our institution.

**Helena College Mission:** Helena College supports our diverse community by providing the paths and tools necessary to assist learners in achieving their educational and career goals.

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### Mastermind Discussion

#### Cost of Attendance (COA) for AY26-27 Review

- The COA is built annually to reflect the cost of attendance in the next academic year and to allow the Financial Aid office to award loan packages to the students.
- The budgets reflect information from the LivingWage Calculator for Lewis & Clark County in Montana.
  - There are three sets of numbers that Valerie uses for comparison. The College Board, National calculations and the LivingWage Calculator for Lewis & Clark County in Montana.
  - Last year, the College Board calculations for Denver were used.
- Books and supplies are averaged across the programs = \$1372. This was calculated for AY2526 and is calculated every other year.
  - Books and supplies also includes \$500 to allow for the purchase of a computer. (HC requirement)
    - Computer cost increased \$50 due to new requirements for software and systems.
  - Internet costs are built into books and supplies also. \$35/month.
- Parent plus loans will be limited in the future.
- The instate students who live with their parents have a lower COA because transportation is reduced by 25% and the food costs are reduced by 50%.
- There are increases in the out of state calculation and WUE increased the most.
- The Montana Board of Regents set the FY27 instate residential tuition and mandatory fee rate at \$2,359.95 for 12 credits. (OCHE is pushing for students to enroll in 15 credits per semester)

**Action:** Todd Dumas made the motion at accept the 252627 COA as presented to the Budget Council on January 26, 2026. Larry Taylor seconded the motion. Approved unanimously.

Full In-state (Autumn and Spring) COA 2026-2027. (COA 2025-2026 In-state (Autumn and Spring) = \$23,203)

**2026-2027**

Loan Fees	\$ 39.00
Books and Supplies:	\$ 2,168.00
In-State Fees for 12 cr.	\$ 4,600.00
Housing	\$ 8,423.00
Food	\$ 3,056.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 3,562.00
Transportation	<u>\$ 3,923.00</u>
	<u>\$ 25,771.00</u>

*Figure 1: 2026-2027 Cost of Attendance Full-time In-State Student*