

**BUDGET COUNCIL MINUTES
MONDAY, MARCH 23, 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)

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.*

Mastermind Discussion Agenda

Revenue Projections

- Reviewing the fixed costs, current unrestricted budgets, and personnel lines.
 - FY27
 - The current total is 1.9 million.
 - Projected for operating is 1.3 million.
 - The personnel budget is higher by 500K
 - Discussion: Leave some personnel in fee pots for this year with the goal of moving them incrementally to a budget line for the snapshot.
 - Currently \$500K over budget.
 - There may be some line items that can be moved around.
 - Example: Move phone bills, state mail, software subscription, affiliate cost share to IT fee pots.
 - FY26
 - Spring revenue is up this year by \$50K
 - The investment totals are lagging. Currently the total for FY26 is \$58K compared to over 100K last year.
 - Tuition is a variable. WUE student enrollment has declined significantly.
- Strategically General Education (Gen Ed) is planning to offer more Gen Ed courses over the summer and has added more sections of the popular courses to increase enrollment fall 2026.
- Hopefully, OTA will bring in up to 15 students in spring 2027, plus a new cohort of cosmetology students
- Dual Enrollment payments have not been finalized.

Review Submitted Budgets and Process

- Most of the budgets were submitted with comments to help the Budget Council evaluate the budget requests per line item. A handful of budgets only added a 3% inflation increase without an explanation, which makes it more difficult to evaluate the budget requests
- Cari is going to assign budgets to teams made up of the Budget council members to review each budget. The teams have the freedom to email the budget author if they need an explanation or clarification.