

Strategic Advisory Council (SAC)

Meeting Minutes

Date: December 4, 2025

Time: 1:00 – 2:30 PM

Rotating Notetaker: Erica Van Steenhuyse

Attendance

Christa Zinke, Greg Dempsey, Larry Cushnie, Lolita Khachaturova, Christina Kazaryan, Kat Koelho, Malcolm-Kijuan Tyson, Teal Christensen, Erica Van Steenhuyse

1. Welcome

1:00 – 1:05 | Greg Dempsey

Greg called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes (1/15/26)

1:05 – 1:10 | Christa Zinke

- Due to low attendance, the January 15, 2026 minutes will be distributed via Teams for electronic review and approval.
 - Voting members are asked to respond to Christa's message to record their approval.
-

3. South Budget Process Overview

1:10 – 1:25 | Lolita Khachaturova

Key Dates & Deadlines

- **February 27:** Budget submission deadline for budget managers to send to Lolita.
- Budget managers must submit all budget sheets to Lolita prior to this date.
- Once compiled, Lolita and Koh will review and forward approved budget sheets and funding request documents to SAC for recommendation.

- **March 12 (SAC meeting):** Possible planning session and decision matrix development added to agenda (pending receipt of compiled documents by end of February).
 - Possible additional meeting in March to finalize recommendations?
 - Possible to invite budget managers to this meeting IF processes are finalized beforehand
- **Preferred SAC recommendation deadline:** End of March (Lolita's preference).
 - **April 4:** Likely final deadline for SAC recommendations to Cabinet.
- **May:** Board of Trustees first read of budget development.

Timeline Confirmation

- Committee to discuss timeline feasibility.
- Greg to confirm final timeline with Lolita.

4. SAC Role in Budget Recommendation Process

Scope of Review

- Requests may range widely in number (campus-wide submissions).
 - Templates all budget managers were sent by Lolita:
 - [2627FY Budget Instructions.docx](#)
 - [2627FY South Seattle Funding Request.docx](#)
 -
- SAC will receive compiled and reviewed documents from Lolita.
- SAC will:
 - Rank and provide recommendations (not make final funding decisions).
 - Provide justifications for and against each request.
 - Identify gaps or missing priority areas.
- Cabinet retains final decision-making authority and should respond to SAC recommendations with the rationale for their final decisions.

Decision-Making Considerations

- Align recommendations with the Strategic Plan.
- Develop a SAC-specific decision matrix.
- Identify priority areas for this funding cycle to provide context.
- Consider whether decisions remain internal or involve broader campus input.

Possible Campus Engagement Opportunities

- Explore mechanisms for campus feedback (e.g., survey).
- SAC members to speak with constituents in advance to gather early feedback (early March).
- Empathy and transparency will be critical due to potential denials of funding due to lack of funds.

Communication & Transparency

- SAC must clearly articulate how and why recommendations were made.
 - Acknowledge current fiscal reality: District-wide \$11M deficit.
 - Requests may result in reallocation rather than new funding.
 - Reaching out to each requestor individually may be tricky due to tight timeline.
-

5. Leadership & Cabinet Context

- Dr. Monica expressed enthusiasm for SAC's engagement and offered to attend meetings as needed to support the process.
 - SAC expressed interest in better understanding Cabinet's priorities and decision-making lenses to:
 - Strengthen recommendations.
 - Help proposal submitters align requests appropriately.
 - Ensure scaffolded reasoning between SAC and Cabinet decisions.
-

6. How SAC Supports South's Budget Process

1:25 – 2:15 | All

Discussion focused on:

- Clarifying SAC's internal review process.
- Determining necessary documentation and evaluation criteria.
- Considering a campus-wide survey.
- Developing ranking methodology and recommendation format.

Committee members are encouraged to share decision-making ideas in Teams.

7. Housekeeping & Communications

2:15 – 2:30 | Greg & Christa

- **Greg to:**
 - Draft email to all budget managers informing them SAC will review requests in early March and may request additional information.
 - Emphasize tight turnaround timeline.
 - Speak with Vanessa regarding GP prioritization ranking results.
 - Follow up with Lolita and Monica for additional context to inform decision matrix development.
 - **Austin (absent):**
 - Website content prepared.
 - Plans to begin working with web team Tuesday.
 - Once launched, SAC will distribute updates via dedicated email address.
-

8. Future Process Considerations

- Consider opening March meeting to budget managers.
 - Allow limited presentation time (similar to BOT statements).
 - Ensure SAC has established guiding principles and decision framework *beforehand*.

- Consider earlier engagement in Fall:
 - Budget conversations with managers before formal submission period.
 - Invite Lolita to provide budget training for SAC.
-

Summary of Immediate Next Steps

- Confirm review timeline (Greg → Lolita).
- Develop SAC decision matrix.
- Conduct early March constituent outreach.
- Draft communication to budget managers.
- Prepare website for communication transparency.