

Committee and Council Report Out for AY25

Academics

Stephanie Hunthausen, Executive Director of Career Technical Education & Dual Enrollment

The Academic Planning and Support Committee is comprised of the Dean/CEO, who serves as the Chief Academic Officer, and all of the directors who oversee academic departments and/or divisions. This year, the committee drafted our bylaws, which included a clear mission statement, committee membership, and meeting details, which are all [included on the website](#). This is a decision-making committee with authority over academic planning matters. The committee spends time each meeting hearing updates from the Budget Council and Assessment Committee, as well as dedicating discussion to ongoing academic matters. This academic year, we identified necessary topics for campus conversation (such as organizing an Artificial Intelligence forum to be led by Mel Ewing), identified the need for an academic misconduct workgroup, and developed a plan to communicate the course evaluation timeline to faculty. In addition, we updated the syllabus template for 2025-2026, discussed faculty expectations for Canvas, recommended the purchase of eLumen, and began planning IDD for fall 2025.

Academic Equipment Fee Usage Committee

Sandra Bauman, Dean/CEO

This ad hoc committee meets when there is a request to utilize funds from the academic equipment fee pot. By Board of Regents policy, any spending from this fee pot must be authorized by a committee comprised of at least 50% students. At Helena College, we have formed this ad hoc committee of all students to consider requests that have been reviewed and approved by the Budget Council. Six students are serving on the committee this year, all nominated by faculty and representing a variety of academic programs.

This year, the committee approved all requests presented to them. They funded:

- The purchase of massage tables for the new first-year classroom in the Cosmetology program
- Five new beds for the Nursing program, to replace broken equipment
- New exhaust hoses are regarded for safe working conditions in the Automotive program
- Air filters are required for safe working conditions in the Welding & Fabrication program

Accessibility Council

Robyn Kiesling, Executive Director of General Education & Transfer

- The newly formed Accessibility Council is working on finalizing the council bylaws.
- Meetings will begin this summer.
- The council is tasked with overseeing the overall accessibility plan for the College and ensuring that all areas of the College meet the digital accessibility requirements by April 2026.

ASHC

Katelynn Eberhardt, Director of Student Wellbeing & Engagement

2024-25 was a year of transition in ASHC as Katelynn took on the role of advisor. The students worked hard to increase their presence on campus and bring engagement and belonging to their classmates and the community. They started with no senators and were able to grow to 6 chartered clubs, 7 senators, and host over 6 events. They worked with various groups on campus to support other initiatives such as TRIO's Earth Day Celebration, the first-ever Library Learning Hub Week of the Young Child Event, and the Art Showcase. They also hosted two events on APC. Beyond engagement, ASHC also worked on their bylaws and were able to edit them to be more straightforward for students and clubs to understand. They also added the ability for the ASHC Executive Team and the Advisor to have access to \$1,000.00 of the budget without senate approval to be used to support students and recruitment to ASHC. This is a huge advancement for ASHC and will allow them to market to students and grow their involvement on campus.

Looking forward, ASHC is well situated to serve their fellow students more efficiently with the editing of the bylaws and creation of various other documents. We look forward to taking what we learned this year in putting on events and making them even better next year!

Assessment Committee

Jessie Pate, Director of Institutional Research & Effectiveness, Accreditation Liaison Officer

The Assessment Committee was formed this year in response to recommendations from our Year 7 visit with NWCCU. The peer evaluators were satisfied with the work we've done around student learning outcome (SLO) assessment at the course level, and would like us to now focus on assessment at the program and institution level. The committee is composed of three faculty members, two members of the eLearning department, one academic director, and the Director of Institutional Research & Effectiveness.

The committee has had many thoughtful discussions around student learning outcomes assessment, including how to balance accreditation requirements with ever-increasing workloads. We have decided to use a product called eLumen Insights for Canvas Outcomes to help manage the process of mapping curriculum, assessing learning outcomes, and documenting efforts to improve student learning as a result. It will be incredibly convenient to have student learning outcomes assessment work be done completely in Canvas, rather than having to document it all in a separate database. It will also provide more information to faculty about their assessment work and help with big-picture evaluation.

In preparation for the implementation of eLumen, Jessie has been working with faculty in every program to update their learning outcomes and map course outcomes to program outcomes. The committee has outlined the basics of a program learning outcomes assessment process and will refine it in the coming year as we develop and pilot the use of eLumen in Canvas. Next year, the committee will also assemble a workgroup to update institutional learning outcomes. We also hope to figure out the role the committee will play in learning outcomes assessment once the process is in motion, which may come with a new, more descriptive name.

Budget Council

Cari Schwen, Executive Director of Fiscal Services

To better align with our new committee structure and help address our NWCCU recommendations, we have made some significant changes this year. First, we changed our name. We are no longer the Budget Management Team; we are the Budget Council. Additionally, we updated our mission, bylaws, and membership. Our council now includes 1 staff member, 2 faculty members, 2 non-cabinet-level directors, and 2 cabinet-level directors with rotating terms. In addition, the Council includes 3 permanent, cabinet-level members, including the chair.

This past year, we approved several purchases from our fee pots and spent a lot of time talking about the fund structure in the University System, what fees we collect, how we can spend them, and what our budget process looks like. Unfortunately, our budget work has been delayed due to the legislative process. Every 2 years, OCHE presents the appropriations budget to the Governor, who then passes it on to the legislature. Once it is approved, it goes back to the Governor for signing and then OCHE for allocation. As of this morning, I do not know what our allocation will be. Rest assured that as soon as we receive it, the Budget Council will be busy finalizing our FY26 budgets.

Campus Coordinating Committee

Valerie Curtin, Executive Director of Financial Aid

The Campus Coordinating Committee (CCC), formerly the Dean's Campus Advisory Council (DCAC), established bylaws to clarify its purpose, membership, and meeting structure. These bylaws support the CCC's mission to foster a connected campus through leadership development, professional growth, collaborative problem-solving, and shared successes—promoting a culture of innovation, transparency, and unity.

During the past academic year, the CCC addressed topics including KPI data and dashboards, document accessibility via the YuJa platform, Timely Care services for TRIO students, the Community Mentor Program, the Excellence in Library Research initiative, staffing in LLH, work-study funding, and employee satisfaction survey results. The council also hosted Jay Stephens, UM Vice President for People and Culture, for two sessions on cultivating a supportive workplace culture. The CCC remains committed to cross-campus collaboration and equipping members with the tools to lead effectively.

Dean's Cabinet

Sandra Bauman, Dean/CEO

The Dean's Cabinet meets weekly at the Airport Campus, Mondays from 3:30-5pm. For this group, there are always ongoing operational issues to address, as well as analysis and planning.

The annual goals for the Cabinet this year were:

1. Develop an institutional planning calendar. *Accomplished; developed as part of the institutional assessment calendar.*
2. Review and develop shared understanding of all Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to establish priorities for the College. *Accomplished; all current KPIs were reviewed and discussed, and will be incorporated into a transition to metrics tree format (more to come at State of the College).*

3. Review and make improvements to shared governance and committee structure, and document decision-making process and communication. *Significant progress; this will be discussed in detail during State of the College.*

I am pleased to report that we have made significant progress in all three of these areas. You will hear reports related to each during our State of the College presentations.

Faculty Senate

Seth Roby, Faculty Senate President

Faculty Senate and ECOS have focused energy on campus enrichment for faculty, staff, and administrators. This year was the kickstart to what should be a new tradition of gathering during the beginning and end of the school year. Faculty Senate also moved forward with a first-year training for new hires and a restructuring PAC to support all faculty.

IDEA Council

Jessie Pate, Director of Institutional Research & Effectiveness, Accreditation Liaison Officer

It has been a bit of a transitional year for IDEA as the college considers how it can improve in response to the recommendations from our Year 7 accreditation visit last spring.

- In accordance with Policy 100.5, IDEA has transitioned from a committee to a council to better reflect its role in monitoring mission fulfillment and progress on the strategic plan.
 - As the Dean's Cabinet develops a new institutional assessment plan, it will consider how IDEA can best be involved.
- We updated our list of [peer institutions](#) to better comply with NWCCU's requirements and take advantage of another benchmarking tool called the Postsecondary Data Partnership, which provides additional metrics for comparison to other colleges.
- The primary focus of the council's work this year has been on evaluating the value of annual plans and the overall process.
 - Lowered the number of goals required - areas now set between one and three goals.
 - Added a mid-year follow-up on areas that received constructive feedback on their initial plans.
 - Evaluated goals that have not been completed over the past 2 years to identify any trends in obstacles to goal completion. Plan developers now need to select from a list of reasons when marking a goal as not completed. IDEA and Cabinet will evaluate this information to see if anything can be done to promote goal completion.
- IDEA also discussed Strategic Goal IM-1 (Demonstrate campus-wide engagement with the community), as no targets have been set for this goal yet. The council has agreed that we want to be able to show the following, but are still working through the best ways to measure and document the work:
 - All employees describe the ways they do or can engage with the community in their position.
 - Key campus partners are widely known
 - The value of the partnership can be articulated by those involved.

- The external environment is regularly monitored to identify new opportunities for engagement.
- Resources are allocated to support successful community engagement with maximum potential impact.

Professional Development Committee

Jessie Pate, Director of Institutional Research & Effectiveness, Accreditation Liaison Officer

- Reviewed and scored 10 applications for funding. Awarded funds to:
 - Kasandra Reddington: AHEAD Annual Conference (Association on Higher Education and Disability)
 - Kas gained actionable insights on challenging accommodations, 508 compliance, and enhanced support for Career and Technical Education students. The conference also offered valuable networking opportunities and legal case studies to help improve practices and ensure compliance.
 - Stephanie Ratchford
 - Notary public training class, supplies, and conference – Stephanie is now one of two notaries on campus.
 - Webinar: “Modernizing Student Account Communications: Lessons from Industry Trends” (May 2025)
 - Cari Schwen: NACUBO Planning, Budgeting and Analytics Forum (National Association of College & University Business Officers)
 - Kim Caldwell: International College Learning Center Association Annual Conference
 - Kim’s key takeaways included personalized academic coaching strategies such as anticipatory problem solving, innovative tutoring methods such as online synchronous study/exam review groups, and new ideas for academic recovery programs. many of which have already been shared and implemented on campus.
 - Brad Collins: Ellucian Live
 - Brad attended sessions on a variety of topics related to Banner administration, such as automating Financial Aid data processing, integrations with Canvas, batch posting, and important technical updates.
 - Mary Twardos: CUPA-HR Intermountain West Chapter Conference (May 2025)
 - Marika Adamek: AACRAO Course: Registrar 101 (American Association of College Registrars and Admissions Officers; June-July 2025)
- The committee spent a great deal of time discussing how applications are reviewed and scored. By the fall, an updated rubric, application, and guidelines will be available. The changes are not significant, but should help the committee better evaluate each application for its potential to benefit the employee, department, and college as a whole.
- The PDC is also working to improve processes for reporting on the key takeaways from activities funded by the committee. There will now be a form to complete after participating in these activities.
- The committee will be looking for 1-2 faculty members in AY2526, and will also be open to one more staff or director, if anyone is interested in joining!

- Please take a moment to complete the [PD Interest Survey](#) if you haven't already!

Quality Work Life

Sandra Bauman, Dean/CEO

The Quality of Work Life committee has continued its good work by celebrating employee longevity and excellence while recognizing the need to revisit the mission and purpose of the group.

This year:

- Helped bring holiday cheer with the ornament exchange and door decorating events
- Conducted a successful basket raffle event, which raised over \$200 for the Melanie Heinitz Memorial Scholarship fund
- Presented longevity awards to our employees for years of service, recognizing and thanking people for their dedicated service to Helena College
- Awarded the Melanie Heinitz Employee Excellence Award

Next steps include a meeting to brainstorm a mission and purpose that supports employee wellbeing and engagement.

Safety Committee

Kelley Turner, Executive Director of Operations

It is the Mission of the Safety Committee of Helena College to promote a safe working environment for the Employees, Students, and the General Public by creating and maintaining an active interest in safety and to assist in the overall effort to minimize the frequency of accidents and to identify corrective measures needed to eliminate or control recognized safety hazards. In FY2025, the Safety Committee performed:

Personnel Training:

- Conducted onsite, hands on training for Active Shooter and Stop the Bleed taught by local professionals from HPD & DPHHS
- Reviewed and re-stocked all campus emergency trauma bags with Nolan Eggen, Jason Grimmis, & Tommi Haikka
- Tested & Operationalized Emergency Lock Down buttons, trained front office staff
- AED Training led by our Nursing staff
- Jason Grimmis conducted multiple "Campus Safety and Beyond" training sessions with staff & faculty, imparting his decades of professional expertise in first response & LE
- Tested the Regroup notification system along with Fire Drills
- Annual Fire Extinguisher training with Nolan Eggen

Physical Enhancements:

- Along with IT, installed six (6) new video surveillance cameras across both campuses & upgraded the video software
- Replaced/repairs Donaldson exterior building sconce lighting
- Activated Emergency Lockdown function on all doors with PDK actuators

Funds Balance:

- Received \$15k from OCHE; expended >51% including Ergonomic equipment

- Submitted \$15K in ERM & RMTD Grant funding to continue college improvements, security, & personnel training
- FY2026 projected to receive \$15k for future plans

Staff Senate

Melissa Mousel, Staff Senate President

The fall semester saw Staff Senate participate in the annual Festival of Trees with the donation of a tabletop tree that was dedicated to the Memory of Melanie Heinitz. All items on the tree were donated by staff members. Throughout the semester, Staff Senate invited guest speakers from different Helena College departments to keep us informed on a variety of topics across the campus. These topics included an update on the new procurement protocols and budgets from Cari Schwen, a description of the role of our new Director of Crisis and Emergency Management-Jason Grimmis, and an overview of the Donaldson Campus HVAC status and office placements from Dean Bauman. In the Spring Semester, Staff Senate heard from Ed Benasky and Beau Howard regarding IT and procurement updates, respectively, and will be hearing from Kelly Turner in May and Dean Sandra Bauman in June.

In January, the Staff Senate and Faculty Senate came together for a potluck lunch the week before the start of the spring semester. The event was well attended and gave all an opportunity to network and support each other. An all-campus potluck will be held at the end of the spring semester to continue the fostering of a sense of community between all employees and their families. We will have our Officer Elections in May to vote in a new President-Elect and Secretary for the upcoming AY 25/26. Melissa Mousel will step down as President, and Stephanie Ratchford will take on the role as Staff Senate President. Marika Adamek will step down as Secretary. Anna Thennis will continue as our Treasurer, and Beau Howard will continue as our MUSSA representative.

Technology Steering Committee

Mel Ewing, CIO

We are moving forward with preparing to have this committee up and functioning in the fall term of 2025. We are currently working on finalizing the bylaws.

The committee makeup will consist of:

- CIO (Chair)
- IT Rep #1
- IT Rep #2
- CFO or rep from Business Services
- CAO
- Librarian
- Director of eLearning
- Student representative
- Faculty Senate representative
- Classified staff representative