



Greetings!

To assist you in reporting to your department colleagues, please see the following summary of our last Representative Assembly meeting, held on **Thu. Sept 10**. Please follow the hyperlinks for more information.

WELCOME + A REVIEW OF THE FA's STRUCTURE AS AN INDEPENDENT UNION

- The SMC Faculty Association is an independent union, representing all faculty who work at SMC in both our credit and noncredit programs. That includes instructional and non-instructional faculty. Currently, we have about 1200+ faculty members. Relatively speaking, that makes us a big union.
- Our union structure is incredibly effective:
 - We have a dedicated role for the FA Director of Operations (Melissa Pardo)
 - There are four officer positions (President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Recording Secretary) to which members are elected every two years. Currently, those officeholders are: President - Peter Morse; Vice President - Elaine Roque; Treasurer - Kym McBride; and Recording Secretary - Diane Arieff
 - The fifth officer is in a non-elected position, appointed by the president and approved by the RA: that is the role of Chief Negotiator - Matt Hotsinpiller
 - Mario Martinez covers a lot of different areas, including being co-chair of the Grievances Committee. Grievances are *contractual* violations and cover working conditions, such as privacy, evaluations, intellectual property, etc. Mario is also the Benefits Committee Chair, and the Treasurer of the Faculty Association of California Community Colleges (FACCC).
 - The FA also has an Executive Committee of around 18 members, who are approved each year. They are recommended by the President and presented to the RA at the next meeting.
 - Finally, the FA's largest body is our Representative Assembly, made up of members from all departments of the college, serving two-year terms. Each area is guaranteed at minimum one FT and one PT representative to serve as a liaison between the department and the Representative Assembly, for a more democratic process. PT reps are paid for their time to attend Rep Assembly meetings and serve in this role.

ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FA REPRESENTATIVES AS A COLLECTIVE BODY

- The RA, as a whole, has a number of responsibilities, outlined in our [Bylaws](#), including approving the FA's annual budget in October, approving recommended appointments to the Executive Committee, upon recommendation of the Chief Negotiator and Negotiating Council, approving topics for negotiation and the "Sunshine Letter" which is presented to the district in Spring.

THE FACULTY ASSOCIATION WEBSITE

- Visit us at www.smcfa.org. The site is designed to be useful for all faculty, with a mix of permanent resources, along with current news updates, video messages, and other material that changes more frequently.
- Please log on and explore it yourself. Briefly, here are a few key features:
 - **Glossary:** an alphabetized list of key terms and acronyms with definitions - typically ones that come up in FA discussions. If you have found yourself wondering what “SCFF,” “COLA,” the “reserve,” or faculty “load” might be referring to, visit the glossary. New entries continue to be added. If you can’t find what you’re looking for and want to make a suggested addition, please write to Diane Arieff: arieff_diane@smc.edu
 - **FA Toolkits:** these are set up like two virtual file cabinets, one for full-time faculty and the other for part-time faculty. Each toolkit contains clearly labeled subtopics. Click one open and explore categories like pay, retirement, unemployment, academic freedom, and more.
 - Take note of ever-changing items, like videos, news updates, and announcements. Summaries of our minutes and upcoming meeting information are always posted, too.

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH UPDATE

- The screening committee met many times over summer, interviewed potential finalists, and forwarded names to the Board of Trustees
- The Board of Trustees announced they will be interviewing the **one** remaining finalist and have directed HR to set up a campus forum.

STATE AND COLLEGE BUDGET UPDATE

- The state provided a strong community college budget for 26-27, with a combined COLA of 4.31%, including funds for up to 14 weeks of paid pregnancy-related leave.
- As the Faculty Association predicted, the SMC [adopted budget](#) for 2026-27 proposed by VP Bonvenuto ended up millions (**\$4.1M**, actually) better than the tentative budget passed in June. This is completely in line with the trend of the college’s ending fund balance listed in its September *adopted* budget being on average [\\$3.7 million dollars higher](#) than in the *tentative* budget passed in June.
- It still does not include an estimated \$2M from an unrestricted block grant from the state and it is built on the assumption that the nonresident enrollment will be about 8.96% lower than last year. (VP Acosta, VPSS, reported on Tuesday night that the current NR enrollment is estimated at 4.64% lower for the year, and if that holds true, it will be about another \$1.2M in revenue.) As we’ve shown in the past, the college’s fiscal position on average ends the year about \$4M to the better than in the adopted budget precisely because of these and other annual one-time funds that appear.
- The VP of Business Services continues to talk about the large reduction in the college’s ending fund balance over the years since COVID without the context that the college received many tens of millions of dollars in COVID-related funds that greatly increased our traditional ending fund balance and then *had* to then be spent down. SMC has generally operated with an ending

fund balance of between 7.5% and 12.5% of expenditures so last year's ending balance of just over 8% was not unusual. (In fact it is exactly in line with the recent board goals of meeting "... the requirements for a 7% fund balance.")

In closing, *thank you* for the work you do to keep the Association strong. Please note that our next RA meeting of the semester is scheduled for **Thu. Oct. 1, 2026**.

Sarah Kurtoic
SMCFA Representative | FA Communications

Connect with the FA on multiple platforms:

- Visit [the website](#)
- Check out the [FA's YouTube Channel](#)
- Follow us on [Instagram](#)

Also, please be sure to check out our Tuesday Truths emails and weekly messages from the FA President, Peter Morse!