

# MSCF Minute



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## Sound Financial Advice & Planning is Valuable

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How would you like to have more money available to fund your retirement? I cannot promise to get you a raise, but I can make you aware of tools that might make retirement a bit easier and even earlier!

At the beginning of a career, planning can set you on the path to having thousands of dollars more at retirement. A mid-career check-up ensures you are on the right track for retirement, funding college needs of dependents, and prepared for other major financial events. Your transition to retirement requires crucial decisions that will affect the rest of your life. Sound financial advice and planning is a valuable benefit at any of these milestones.

MSCF members are fortunate to have advice and planning tools available at no extra charge through the SRP (Supplemental Retirement Plan) and the IRAP (Individual Retirement Account Plan). Faculty who did not choose the pension plan (TRA) option will have the IRAP and beginning in the third year of employment, all members participate in the SRP as well. The voluntary TSA (tax sheltered 403(b) plan) is another part of this mix.

Your yearly fee for the plan covers advice services and planning tools as well as expenses incurred in plan administration. TIAA, the record-keeper for your plan, provides the tools and advice to assist your financial navigation. MSCF wants you to be aware of these features so that you will use them to your advantage.

A variety of resources are available when you access the TIAA website ([www.tiaa.org/minnesotastate](http://www.tiaa.org/minnesotastate)). There you will find informative videos and calculators as well as general information about your plan. If you log in to your account, you will have access to portfolio management tools that even allow you to include assets from outside the plan such as IRA accounts, savings and even a partner's assets. Webinars are presented each semester. Topics range from life insurance to socially responsible investing to income during retirement. You should receive a notice from your campus HR director that lists the webinars for the semester. Some webinars are available as recordings for a few days following the live event.

MSCF members are fortunate to have the opportunity to meet face-to-face with TIAA advisors during campus visits.

At these visits, you can get advice regarding asset allocation, contribution rates, and expectations of meeting your financial goals. Your HR director should send out a schedule and sign-up instructions when TIAA is coming to your campus.

A personalized action plan that goes far beyond investments is available through TIAA's Individual Advisory Services. Factors such as estate planning, asset protection, charitable giving and more are addressed. This planning is appropriate for those with roughly \$200k in assets (all financial assets, including those of a partner, totaled) or those with fewer assets but complicated circumstances such as trust planning for a special needs child. This deep-dive consultation can be accomplished via phone, computer, or in person at TIAA's Bloomington, MN office. You can learn more about this service at [www.TIAA.org/individualadvisoryservices](http://www.TIAA.org/individualadvisoryservices) or by calling 866-220-6583.

It is important to note that the TIAA advisors within our plan function as fiduciaries. This is a critical point as brokers and insurance agents are not obligated to function

as fiduciaries and only need to provide advice that is "suitable" for the client, even if the client's interests and the broker's/agent's interests differ. True fiduciaries must do what is best for the client, even if that action is not in the best interest of the advisor.

You know that knowledge, appropriately applied, is power. That axiom certainly pertains to your financial future. Use these tools and set a strong course toward your goals.

If you have any questions about your plan, contact your Human Resources Department or your MSCF plan representatives Rick Nelson ([rick.nelson@edmn.org](mailto:rick.nelson@edmn.org)) and Shawn Bjerke ([shawn.bjerke@minnesota.edu](mailto:shawn.bjerke@minnesota.edu))

### Quote from Lake Superior Membership Visit

"I do think that the MSCF effort yesterday will increase engagement. The thing that occurred on our campus was that faculty got to know each other better with respect to their histories and concerns, and how they intersect with the union. It would be fair to say that there was some bonding going on between faculty that didn't really know each other prior to yesterday."