

College Council Meeting Minutes
FISHER COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS
1:30 – 3:30 p.m., May 10, 2024

2023-2024 Member Attendees Present

Biological Sciences: Daniel Caetano **Chemistry:** Hoa Tran-Ba, Nicole Carbonaro (Co--Secretary); **Computer and Information Sciences:** Yeong-Tae Song, Jinie Pak; **Mathematics:** Jing Tian (Vice-Chair), Na Zhang; **Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences:** Michelle Casey, Jia-An Yan; **At Large:** Faith Weeks (Biology; Co-Secretary), Pam Lottero-Perdue (Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences, Chair); **Students:** Madison Previti (Undergraduate Student), Marcus Rose (Graduate Student)

Dean: Matthew Nugent

2024-2025 Member Attendees Present and not included on the above list

Computer and Information Sciences: Nam Nguyen; **Staff:** Kara Berger, Hannah Berry, Kristin Pinkowski; **STEM Education:** Kristin Frank; **Lecturer:** Miriam Parnes; **Inclusive Student Success:** Nichole Mason

Absent:

Elana Ehrlich (Biological Sciences, 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 councils); Shannon Stitzel (Chemistry, 2024-2025 council); Parviz Ghavamian (PAGS, 2024-2025 council); Vonnie Shields (Associate Dean, 2023-2024 council)

Visitors: Howard Kaplon

1. Introductions
2. Approval of minutes from the April 12, 2024, FCSM Council meeting - voted on by only 2023–2024 voting members: 12 approved; 2 absent.
3. Announcements and remarks from the Dean
 - A. Dr. Ming Tomayko is the new Associate Dean for Teaching and Student Success in FCSM starting on July 1, 2024. Dr. Tomayko will develop, implement, and assess strategic initiatives to enhance the educational programs and student success in the College.
 - B. The Dean expressed gratitude to our Chair, Pamela Lottero-Perdue, and all other members who are stepping off the College Council.

- C. By May 15th more enrollment data will be available. As of now TU is 25% behind in contracts compared to last year, but 5 days remain. Last week financial aid commitments were sent to students.
4. Announcements from the Council Chairperson
- A. Roles of the Executive Committee (these are highlights; see also the roles in the Constitution, which were handed out at the meeting):
 - 1) Chair
 - a. Figure out the agenda for College Council meetings from hot topics and conversations.
 - b. Figure out the agenda for Executive Board meetings.
 - c. Host a Zoom Executive Board meeting the week before College Council meetings.
 - d. Lead College Council meetings following Robert's Rules of Order.
 - e. Author Annual Report of FCSM College Council activities.
 - f. Meet with other College Council Chairs once a semester.
 - 2) Vice Chair
 - a. Lead meetings when Chair is unable to attend.
 - b. Assist the Chair.
 - 3) Co-Secretary
 - a. Share minutes taking responsibilities with the other Co-Secretary.
 - b. Edit Minutes.
 - c. Send Minutes to the Executive Board for editing.
 - d. Send Minutes to the Dean and Associate Deans.
 - e. Send Minutes to Howard Kaplon for formatting edits.
5. Elections of the New Executive Committee – voted on by only 2024–2025 voting members. For each position (Chair, Vice Chair, and two Co-Secretaries), we used the following structured process:
- A. Review of who is eligible for the position.
 - B. Nominations by secret ballot: This was a paper ballot. Voting members were asked to write one or two names as nominees for each position. This could include self and other. The current Chair and two members who were rolling off the council counted the ballots (also counting the nominations from one member on Zoom).
 - C. Nominee check: Nominees with greater than two nominations were asked if they would be interested in serving (or willing to serve) in the role for which they were nominated. If they were not interested/willing, we removed their name from the list of nominees. For each position, we came up with a final list of nominees who were willing/interested and had been nominated by two or more voting members.
 - D. Elections by secret ballot. Voting members were asked to write one name on an election ballot for the position from the list of nominees for Chair and Vice Chair (two for Co--Secretary). The current Chair and two members who were rolling off the council counted the ballots (also counting the nominations from one member on Zoom).

- E. Elections resulted in the following who received the majority of votes:
 - 1) Parviz Ghavamian, Chair
 - 2) Nicole Carbonaro, Vice-Chair
 - 3) Daniel Caetano, Co-Secretary
 - 4) Kristin Frank, Co-Secretary
- 6. Highlights from FCSM Departments
 - A. Biological Sciences
 - 1) Our department has two new positions open:
 - a. Open new position for Assistant Professor in "Sustainability & Environmental Change". Search ad is found at the following link.
https://towson.taleo.net/careersection/fac_ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=240000A8
 - b. Open new position for "Instructional Lab Manager." Search ad is found at the following link.
<https://towson.taleo.net/careersection/ex/jobdetail.ftl?job=240000BE>
 - c. We appreciate your help in advertising these.
 - B. Chemistry
 - 1) The Chemistry Department is planning a Faculty Retreat to be held August 22nd. The theme is "Supporting Student Achievement." The goal is to "Identify strategies to support students with varying levels of preparation for success in CHEM and FRSC courses." Topics include:
 - a. Outreach and interventions before the first day of class.
 - b. Beyond the Syllabus: Communicating expectations and implementing student success strategies from the first day of class.
 - c. Engaging highly motivated students in traditional (non-honors) courses and in co-curricular programming.
 - C. Computer and Information Sciences
 - 1) None at this time.
 - D. Mathematics
 - 1) Mathematics Majors Spring Celebration on Wednesday, May 1st.
 - 2) Annual Regional Undergraduate Math Research Conference on April 6th.
 - 3) The department is currently conducting a search with the goal of hiring several new lecturers.
 - E. Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences
 - 1) PAGS is preparing to do three searches next year – two full-time lecturers (physics and science education) and one tenure-track replacement (physics).
 - 2) The PAGS Graduation Party is Wed., May 22nd at 11:30am in SC 2321.
 - 3) Tom Krause's retirement party is Fri., June 7th at 7pm at Liberatore's in Timonium.
 - F. Staff
 - 1) Excited for there to be four staff members on the College Council next year.
- 7. Standing Agenda Items:
 - A. DEIJ actions, opportunities, issues, and concerns

- 1) All members of the FCSM DEIJ committee have been elected: two staff, two at-Large, and one faculty member from every department.
 - 2) The FCSM representatives (Kristin Pinkowski and Michelle Casey) to the Diversity Action Committee (the University level DEIJ committee) have been working with OIIE to learn how FCSM contributes to university DEI.
 - a. Kristin and Michelle will attend a DEI summit to bring resources to the FCSM DEIJ committee.
 - b. There will be allyship training soon with how to be an ally and how to be an advocate for individuals from LGBT, undocumented, and disability backgrounds – find more info in TU Today soon.
- B. Senate update/communications:
- 1) The following are highlights from Senate representatives in FCSM:
 - a. 3% COLA is still on the books.
 - b. From Provost Melanie Perreault:
 - i. *Faculty Fall Welcome Back Party* will be August 21st.
 - ii. There are too many (>78%) asynchronous online classes for undergraduate students; this needs to be lowered to ensure student success (and enable students to see/interact with faculty).
 - iii. There was an increase of >20% for graduate student enrollment.
 - c. The Senate voted to charge the Executive Committee of the Senate with creating a new task force to develop new instruments for the teaching evaluation and peer observation forms.
 - d. Senators approved several new programs and passed various motions, including changes to the ART Document, i.e., Deans can no longer participate in departmental PTR meetings, whereas the role of chairs is still uncertain.
 - e. State Senators are still working on a new law regarding the Degree Program Approval.
 - 2) See the official minutes of the Academic Senate meeting on May 6, 2024 for more detailed information.
8. Ongoing Issues/Initiatives/Old Business:
- A. Elections process update (college-wide and departmental)
 - 1) Elections are now complete.
 - 2) It was a big lift this year with new committees and new positions on the College Council, but next year the lift should be less.
 - B. Feedback about suggestions from SOS (Student Outreach & Support) (visit from Visit from Jimmy Thren, Assistant Dean & Director, Student Outreach and Support and Alison Peer from Student Accountability and Restorative Practices (SARP)).
 - 1) SOS forms can be submitted if there is concern about a student.
 - 2) Incident Report Forms can be submitted if a student has violated policy, had an outburst, or created a disruption.

- 3) The SOS and SARP offices work together and communicate to track forms from both offices and see if there is overlap.
- 4) There is also the option to call SOS or SARP.
- 5) When a form is submitted, the office reads and reviews the form, checks to see if there are other forms for that student, and checks progress reports.
- 6) For every form submitted, the offices will reach out to students three times.
- 7) When a student is notified that an SOS form has been submitted, the student is told that a concerned member of the TU community thinks you need help with resources.
- 8) If behaviors continue reach back out to the SOS and/or SARP offices.
- 9) If a response is needed immediately, contact TUPD – SOS and SARP have no other first responders.
 - a. If this is a Title IX concern, reach out to those affected to ask whether they would like TUPD involved.
 - b. If not sure if the student is safe to self or others get that would be a situation to involve TUPD.
 - c. For suicide risk on campus, residence life goes with TUPD.
 - d. For risk off campus, TUPD will check in with those living with the individual.
- 10) There is a basic needs hub on campus with:
 - a. Food pantry
 - b. Hygiene items
 - c. Clothing closet
 - d. SNAP benefits assistance
 - e. Prescription drug benefits assistance
- 11) SOS has an emergency fund for assistance with unexpected expenses such as car repair, or medication. Expected expenses are not covered.
- 12) 3100 students so far this year were involved with SOS.
 - a. 8% of about 250 students have a letter sent on their behalf.
 - b. Some of these were letters for bereavement.
 - c. Some were absence notes, for instance with medical documentation.
 - d. 10% of those 250 (about 25) have letters sent based on extenuating circumstances.
 - i. Extenuating circumstances could be seeking ADS accommodations but not approved yet.
 - ii. Examples of extenuating circumstances include transient students trying to find a place to live or life in upheaval such as having to go to court.
 - iii. Letters are meant to open the line of communication between the students and professor.
 - e. Letters are 0% required to be followed.
 - f. Letters are for awareness only; accommodations are never required.
 - g. FERPA does not apply for communication between faculty and staff and the SOS and SARP offices.

- h. SOS will reach out to professors about how the student is doing in class, is the student eligible for an incomplete, and see what options are available to the student.
- i. The purpose of the letters is so that students do not have to send documentation which could contain sensitive information directly to the professor.
- j. SOS is trying to move away from letters for single day absences.
- k. In general SOS deals with longer absences (surgeries, hospitalizations).
- l. If you get a letter you can email to ask questions or call SOS. A student may say they missed three days when they missed five weeks. SOS would like to encourage communication with their office.
- m. Jimmy encouraged faculty and staff that more reports are better, even if another person has filed report having others' perspective can be helpful. The more touch points the better.
- n. Always assume no one has submitted a form.
- o. Jimmy also wants faculty and staff to be aware of the Employee Assistance Program that includes five visits to therapy and five more visits for each new issue. There is also legal support.

9. New Business

- A. USM Faculty and Staff Regents' awards: Who might you suggest for fall applications?
 - 1) The College Council does not nominate or vet.
 - 2) College Council representatives can remind colleagues about the opportunity to apply.
 - 3) Remember that the awards look back for the past three years.
 - 4) The award process starts in the fall but would be good for potential faculty and staff to start thinking about the application this summer.
 - 5) An email will be sent from the Council Chair next week to all full-time faculty in FCSM with a link to the USM Regents Faculty Awards:
<https://www.usmd.edu/usm/academicaffairs/regents-faculty-awards>
- B. Discussion of SGA Proposal regarding (a) personal wellness day and (b) removing requirement for documentation for excused absences.
 - 1) There was no agreement with the Academic Standards Committee.
 - 2) Faculty need more input from students about what experiences they have had that they are trying to prevent.
 - 3) It may be that students do not feel comfortable discussing potential accommodations with faculty.
 - 4) We would like to empower students to have conversations with faculty.
 - 5) Questions that arose:
 - a. What problem(s) are they trying to address?
 - b. Do they need policy to back them up?
 - c. Would the wellness day be on one calendar day for all classes or could students choose a wellness day for each class?

6) Points from our discussion to be shared with the Angel Kumchev, chair of the Academic Standards Committee:

a. Questions:

- i. When does the communication with the professor occur for a personal wellness day? (Ideally in advance but unclear from policy)
- ii. How does the idea of a personal wellness day integrate with SOS process?
- iii. Is this just something relevant to a few professors' policies? What problem is this solving?
- iv. What about many students taking wellness day on same day?
- v. Is this a way for the students to have an approachable framework for students to time off? Or way for faculty to participate in that conversation?

b. Thoughts:

- i. Many of us are already doing something like this (e.g., had 13 quizzes, drop lowest three – could be zeros)
- ii. But for labs, need to be present for X # of labs.
- iii. If no documentation is required for anything, could get out of control; we have worries that some students could manipulate the system.
- iv. Need support on other side (faculty) to match whatever the policy is? (Huge for lab classes, etc.)

C. Items from the floor – none

10. Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Carbonaro

Recording Secretary