

**College Council Meeting Minutes**  
**FISHER COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS**  
**1:30 – 2:50 p.m., September 13, 2024**

**2023-2024 Member Attendees Present**

**Biological Sciences:** Daniel Caetano (Co-Secretary) and Elana Ehrlich; **Chemistry:** Nicole Carbonaro (Vice-Chairperson) and Shannon Stitzel; **Computer and Information Sciences:** Jinie Pak and Nam Nguyen; **Mathematics:** Xiaoyin Wang and Na Zhang; **Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences:** Parviz Ghavamian (Chairperson) and Jia-An Yan; **Lecturers and Clinical Faculty:** Miriam Parnes; **Inclusive Student Success:** Nicole Mason; **STEM Education:** Kristin Frank (Co-Secretary) **Staff:** Kara Berger, Hannah Berry and Kristin Pinkowski; **Students:** Jaelyn McCracken (Chemistry; Undergraduate), Miracle Eze (Biology, Graduate)

**Non-Voting, Ex-Officio:**

**Dean:** Matthew Nugent; **Associate Dean:** Ming Tomayko; **Building Manager:** Josh Wilhide

**Visitors/Guests:** Will Shipley (Mathematics), Amanda Charles, Howard Kaplon, Jessica Murry Sellers (Student Affairs)

1. Approval of minutes from the May 10, 2024, FCSM Council Meeting was postponed. Approval will happen electronically via Microsoft Forms.
2. Guest speaker Jessica Murry Sellers (Student Outreach and Support Coordinator)
  - A. To contact Jessica: [jmurrysellers@towson.edu](mailto:jmurrysellers@towson.edu)
  - B. The speaker provided an overview of the services offered through the Student Affairs Student Outreach and Support (SOS) office and the types of cases they see including: working with students who need financial help; discussing withdrawal options (including medical withdrawals), supporting students with unmet food and housing needs, connecting students to academic coaching through TLC and academic advising for students who are not able to organize their academic schedule; and providing strategies for students who are struggling and need to miss classes.
  - C. The speaker highlighted that, because of new bereavement procedures, students should fill out SOS forms if they would like help communicating with professors due to their absence. Faculty can also submit an SOS form on a student's behalf.
  - D. There is an Academic Coaching service for students. This is run out of the One-Stop-Shop in Cook Library and intended to help students develop a plan to manage their commitments, such as navigating course syllabi, scheduling deadlines, and managing class schedules.
  - E. The speaker also explained that TU has a student emergency fund. Last year, TU invested about \$20,000 in student emergencies (with an average of \$300 per student). This fund can cover part of the rent, food supplies and other emergencies (such as medical expenses). However, this fund cannot be used for any expected expenses (such as fees, parking, course materials, etc.). If an emergency occurs, they will also help the student get out of it (such as helping them manage their finances and save money).
3. Announcements and remarks from the Dean Nugent.
  - A. Update on enrollment: University enrollment is currently at 19,403 compared to 19,527 last year. The FCSM enrollment is 4,330 (3821 undergraduate students and 509 graduate students) compared to 4,205 last year. FCSM welcomed 181 new graduate students. Strategies to increase enrollment seem to be working.

- B. This summer the OTS replaced all academic computers, and they upgraded computers not compatible to be upgraded to Windows 11 (a total of 430 in Science Complex and 7800 York Road). They were not able to replace secondary computers (such as faculty computers in labs). However, the Dean's office is working to upgrade secondary computers essential for scholarship (such as servers for computationally demanding research). So far, the Dean's office has invested \$75,000 to replace these computers.

The Sustainability and Environmental Change Ph.D. is a new proposed program submitted for approval in Spring 2023 to the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). Morgan State University objected to this new program claiming it duplicated a program they offer. USM and MHEC advised TU to withdraw the application. TU resubmitted the application in Summer 2024. Morgan State University objected to the proposal again and TU submitted an appeal. Dean Nugent (and others) met with MHEC in early September. MHEC to rule by early next week (mid-September).

- C. Faculty and Staff Awards Update:

- 1) Formerly, the Leadership Council was not eligible to nominate people nor be nominated.
- 2) The Awards Committee will no longer be comprised of leadership council. This will allow the leadership council to nominate people and be nominated themselves. The Awards Committee will now be comprised of last year's winners, Dean Nugent, and Associate Dean Tomayko. This will bring a lot of diversity to the selection committee, and it will inherently comprise faculty and staff.
- 3) Four awards: outstanding faculty, outstanding part-time faculty, outstanding staff, and outstanding lecturer, will be awarded each year for the same award amount. Other specialty awards will rotate every other year.
- 4) The newly appointed Awards Committee will develop rubric for the awards, and these will be made public to faculty and staff.
- 5) The Fall Forum is scheduled for Friday, December 13, 2024.

- D. The Big screen in the Science Commons will highlight University announcements and FCSM successes (e.g., publications, awards, students' success etc.). More information will be shared soon.

- E. Update on R2 status: TU does not currently award enough PhDs to be eligible for R2 classification. Dean affirms that there is no plan to undermine master's degree programs because of R2 status.

4. Announcements from the Council Chairperson

- A. Discussion about whether the December 13, 2024, College Council Meeting conflicted with finals or other college events. Following discussion, this does not seem to be a problem and the December 13, 2024, meeting will be held as scheduled.
- B. Permission settings for SharePoint are being updated to allow access to current college council members.

5. Highlights from FCSM Departments

A. Biological Sciences

- 1) New Faculty: Kishana Taylor.

B. Chemistry

- 1) New visiting professor.

C. Computer and Information Sciences

- 1) Updates on the size of the department: there are now 2200 undergraduates and 300 graduate students.
- 2) The department is discussing screening the major.

D. Mathematics

- 1) The department hired four new lecturers and 1 new assistant professor in Math Education.
- 2) The department ran a Math Bootcamp in August 2024 to support new students, including first-year students and transfer students.
- 3) The department ran an REU in Summer 2024 (this was the third summer).
- 4) The department secured budget approval to post the department coordinator position.

E. Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences

- 1) Open search for a tenure track position in Biophysics or Quantum Information.
- 2) There will be a PAGS Physics Seminar on September 20, 2024, from 11:00-11:50 a.m. Grant Colip will present a talk on “Seismic reflection imagery aids reconstructions of late Quaternary earthquake history.”

F. Lectures and Clinical Faculty

- 1) A Math bootcamp was held. This is a program where lecturers are heavily involved.

G. STEM Education

- 1) The STEM Education Committee is launching a seminar series. There will be two speakers in Fall 2024. On September 20, 2024, Ming Tomayko will give the inaugural seminar “Why Math Identities Matter” in SC5250 from 12:00-1:30 p.m. The second seminar will be on December 16, 2024, and will feature Dr. Juliann Dupuis from Notre Dame of Maryland University.
- 2) September Committee Meeting on Wednesday September 18, 2024. The committee is excited to welcome both Dean Nugent and Associate Dean Richman from COE.

H. Inclusive Student Success

- 1) STEM LLC and TOPS program will host a STEM Clubs Night on Tuesday, October 1, 2024, from 5-6:30 p.m. in UU Ballroom D.

I. Staff

- 1) College Council Staff representatives developed a staff email, [FCSMstaff@towson.edu](mailto:FCSMstaff@towson.edu). They emailed all staff welcoming them to the new school year, reminding them there are staff reps, and reintroducing them to the mission and vision of the College Council. They are establishing a communication schedule to streamline communication to staff throughout the year.
- 2) Staff representatives held a meet and greet event for FCSM staff Wednesday, September 4, 2024, both in person and via Zoom.
- 3) A monthly meeting will be established for FCSM staff to disseminate information from the College Council and learn about staff issues.

J. Students (Undergraduate, Graduate)

- 1) Interest in building a better community for graduate students across departments.
- 2) Students concerned with opportunities for research and students suggest developing an outreach system to find research opportunities.

6. Standing Agenda Items:

A. Senate update/communications

- 1) TURFA (TU Retired Faculty Association) asked that departments include Emeritus Faculty on their webpages. Many are still doing research and have grants or are writing grants.
- 2) Note there is a change in the bereavement policy – evidence of family death is not required. (Provost noted that these can be forged anyways and more importantly we should establish trust with our students.)

- 3) Note that faculty and staff cannot use university resources for politics. It is ok to have items in faculty offices, but faculty should be sensitive to students with different views – perhaps meet them outside their office for office hours. If in doubt, faculty should reach out to the provost’s office or the Office of General Counsel.
- 4) The Academic Senate is waiting to receive feedback on the student wellness day proposal (last semester AS sent this to the Academic Standards Committee who sent them to the CCs).
- 5) The Academic Executive Committee has asked each college to provide a faculty rep (preferably tenured) to serve on a new committee to develop tools for student and peer evaluations. (They are also ensuring a FACET member, lecturer, rep from Provost office, and rep from council of chairs are all included) The newly formed committee will consider all input from feedback received from College Councils. Let AS know by October 7.
- 6) FACET is available to provide AI presentations to depts.
- 7) President Ginsberg noted the following:
  - a) In addition to the funding cutbacks this year, we are likely facing the same, if not more, next year. He asked that we think about ways to raise money and/or reduce costs. He noted there may be a 2-3% tuition increase.
  - b) He is still working toward a performance-based merit system (and does not yet know what this looks like if there are cutbacks).
  - c) President Ginsberg praised the new high rankings of TU, including “*the #1 Public University in MD*”, he laid out some future directions, including R2 status, new merit ranking system, and addressed the current and future budget cuts, including “hiring pause”, and a potential up to 5% budget cut for the next fiscal year.
7. Ongoing Issues/Initiatives/Old Business:
  - A. None.
8. New Business
  - A. Board of Regents Faculty Awards: There is an internal deadline of September 27, 2024 (with USM deadline of November 15, 2024). Encourage deserving colleagues to apply and contact the Provost’s Office (and Jasmine Nance) for more information at [jnance@towon.edu](mailto:jnance@towon.edu).
  - B. Items from the floor
    - 1) Josh Wilhide announced that there are two iPad units that are available for faculty/staff to borrow for recording of classes, lab procedures etc. Recordings are automatically stored in Panopto for easy use and sharing.
9. Announcements from the Associate Dean Tomayko.
  - A. Associate Dean Tomayko’s role includes overseeing student advising, admissions events, and program assessments. She serves on the Academic Advising and Enrollment Council, FCSM DEIJ committee, and FCSM curriculum committee. She is involved in STEM programming including the STEM success camp.
  - B. FCSM is hiring a new STEM Program Director. Our graduate assistant to the STEM Program director is graduating in December. Let Dr. Tomayko know if you have recommendations for a new graduate assistant.
  - C. The STEM Academic Advisor, Zinah Aldulaimi, will now work out of both the Science Complex and 7800 York Road. On Monday and Tuesday, she will work out of room YR206 and the rest of the week she will be in SC. Ad Hoc alerts submitted through SSC will go through Zinah for all STEM majors.

- D. The Natural Science Tutoring Coordinator, Siamak Salmasi, posted the tutoring center hours for the semester. The tutoring center has four new Surface Pros.
- E. The Spring Commencement will include a Doctoral Hooding Ceremony the night before the first commencement. Doctoral students will also have an option to participate in the college commencement, but the hooding will no longer happen at the general commencement.
- F. The chairs and program directors have been asked to nominate student speakers and solicit faculty volunteers for Winter Commencement.
- G. The Career Center is hosting an Ask Me Anything STEM Workshop on Wednesday September 25, 2024, from 4-6 p.m. in SC 4230.
- H. Attendance Modification Policy: A student submits documentation for attendance modification through ADS and is reviewed by ADS annually. The outcome is intended to be a conversation between the student's ADS advisor and TU Faculty member to discuss whether the attendance modification policy fits their particular course (the TU Faculty does not need to have this conversation directly with the student). In FCSM, faculty should think about the ways this plays out for labs and other courses where content builds throughout the semester.

#### 10. Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,

Daniel Caetano and Kristin Frank  
Co-Secretaries.