

College Council Meeting Minutes
FISHER COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS
1:30 – 2:50 p.m., March 8, 2024

Member Attendees: **Biological Sciences:** Daniel Caetano, Elana Ehrlich; **Chemistry:** Hoa Tran-Ba, Nicole Carbonaro (Co-Secretary); **Computer and Information Sciences:** Yeong-Tae Song, Jinie Pak; **Mathematics:** 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).

Dean: Matthew Nugent; **Associate Dean:** Vonnie Shields.

Visitors/guests: Kristin Pinkowski, Jennifer Scott, Howard Kaplon.

Absent: Jing Tian (Vice Chairperson), Marcus Rose (Graduate Student).

1. Approval of minutes from the February 9, 2024 FCSM Council meeting: 12 approved; 2 absent.
2. Announcements and remarks from Dean Nugent
 - a. There is a regular building meeting to discuss information about the Science Complex.
 - b. The FCSM website will have policies and procedures for the Science Complex to reduce rumors and will have a specific place to find everything.
 - c. Aiming to link more events to the FCSM website – most department websites do not have events listed.
 - d. The Provost is directing faculty hires in two waves with the first wave for replacements.
 - e. April 15th the budget for TU should be forecast.
 - f. After April 15th decisions will be made about how to proceed with the Sustainability PhD. The final stage of approval for any program is made by MHEC.
3. Announcements and remarks from Associate Dean Shields
 - a. 105 students came to the open house and there was good representation from the College.
 - b. The time to nominate a Student Speaker for Graduation is now. Students can self-nominate, and faculty can also nominate a student. There is a form to aid with transparency.
4. Announcements from the Council Chairperson
 - a. Jane Wolfson shared a letter about prescription health benefits for retirees hired before 2011 being rescinded and set to expire January 2025, she and encouraged us to write letters and make calls to representatives in the State House to urge that these benefits be maintained. See towson.edu/TURFA for more information.
5. Highlights from FCSM Departments
 - a. Biological Sciences
 - 1) Nothing to share this week.
 - b. Chemistry
 - 1) New searches have not solidified yet. The department meeting is next week, and there are no announcements as of now.
 - c. Computer and Information Sciences
 - 1) Information Technology faculty search is complete. The candidate signed the contract, and he will start from Fall 2024.

- d. Mathematics
 - 1) Nothing to share this week.
- e. Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences
 - 1) Proposed majors in Biophysics and Applied Physics major were submitted. The department is waiting for the Community College articulation agreement and then it will be completed.
 - 2) External reviewers for program reviews coming in March. Geology: March 11-12th, Earth Space Science: March 13th.
- 6. Standing Agenda Items:
 - a. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) actions, opportunities, issues, and concerns
 - 1) The university level DEIJ committee will be looking at the university plan and what accomplished and what not accomplished and will write a new plan in Fall 2024 to launch in 2025.
 - 2) Department elections to the DEIJ committee are ongoing.
 - 3) There will be a meeting with staff about elections including for the two staff positions on the DEIJ committee and two staff positions on the College Council.
 - 4) PAGS DEI Committee will lead a book discussion on Thursday, March 28th from 3:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in which participants will discuss Chapters 3 & 4 of Inclusive Teaching: Strategies for Promoting Equity in the College Classroom by Kelly A. Hogan and Viji Sathy.
 - a) The meeting has a hybrid format meeting in SC 2122 or on Zoom. An electronic copy of the book is available through the TU library if you are interested in reading it.
 - b) Those outside of PAGs are welcome to attend. It would be helpful for them to contact Michelle Casey, PAGS DEI Committee chair.
 - c) Zoom information: Meeting ID: 931 8568 1457. Passcode: 54826743. <https://towson-edu.zoom.us/j/93185681457?pwd=YWFFLajBqUE10VXpRc0VvUjc3aWd0QT09>
 - b. Senate update/communications
 - 1) VP Boyd Bradshaw (Enrollment Management):
 - a) TU student retention rate is greater than 84%. Only six other institutions in the country have higher numbers.
 - b) Undergraduate enrollment for the Fall 2025 is up by 5.9% and 4.5% for graduates.
 - 2) Provost Perreault:
 - a) Thanked task force for CORE Evaluation and their report.
 - b) Updates to the appeal process for promotion and tenure will soon be announced; provost is proposing – faculty can put in rebuttal at each stage (not appeal) and next level would see that level; at provost’s stage, provost decides, and faculty member could then appeal the decision made by the provost.
 - c) Search for new Honors Dean received more than 150 applicants.
 - 3) Several motions passed, including the approval of the BS in Biophysics program and the BS in Interdisciplinary Physics.
 - 4) Student Senate representatives gave a presentation to advocate for a “One Excused Mental Health Day per semester.”
- 7. Ongoing Issues/Initiatives/Old Business
 - a. Future FCSM Awards discussion: additional feedback collected from departments is going to Dean Nugent and the leadership of the college.

- b. Summary of Feedback from FCSM Undergraduate majors from tabling events during week of February 26th.
 - 1) Using a Microsoft Form, students were asked at the tabling events what were their biggest supports, biggest challenges, and what they wanted to change in the college.
 - 2) 78 unique responses were gathered from across FCSM majors; 35 of these were from CIS. There was a relatively even mix of year 1, 2, 3, and 4 students.
 - 3) Council chair Lottero-Perdue (serving as a faculty advisor for the Undergraduate Student Council Ad-hoc committee of the FCSM College Council):
 - a) Reviewed qualitative responses, redacting one part of one comment that named a specific individual.
 - b) Did a cursory analysis of the feedback, finding the following supports, challenges, and suggestions (note that):
 - i. The biggest supports were professors (mentioned by 33% of respondents); peers (26%); tutors (23%); advisors (5%); self (5%); and family (5%).
 - ii. The biggest challenges were professors (mentioned by 19% of respondents); specific content (i.e., a particular type of content class in FCSM, e.g., calculus) (19%); students own time management (13%); workload (8%); quality/availability of tutoring/help (5%).
 - iii. Biggest suggestions were improve teaching (15%), improve/increase tutoring/help (12%), improve specific content courses (6%), improve parking (6%), improve tutoring/help (6%).
 - iv. Note 1: some responses had multiple components.
 - v. Note 2: not included in the summary were responses mentioned by 3 or fewer respondents, were "n/a" or no response, or were unclear.
 - c) Sent the redacted Excel file of raw data to Dean Nugent and shared this file with the undergraduate student council members.
 - 4) The Ad Hoc committee will meet on Zoom after spring break to discuss the results.
- c. Feedback on Peer/Classroom Visitation form and process proposed by Teaching Evaluation Task Force.
 - 1) 47 responses from full-time and part-time faculty in FCSM.
 - 2) About the form: 57% of respondents agreed with the proposed form as-is; 40% suggested minor modifications to the form; 3% (1 individual) found the form to be largely unacceptable.
 - 3) About the process: 62% of respondents agree with the proposed process as-is; 35% suggested minor modifications to the process; 3% (1 individual) found the process to be largely unacceptable.
 - 4) Council Chair Lottero-Perdue will send these results and qualitative feedback to the Academic Senate Chair.

8. New Business

- a. Updating of the Bylaws based on feedback from Elections Committee. The Chair has a living document of the Bylaws in SharePoint (to be passed along to the next chair) where edits can be made as needed in an ongoing process. As the Elections Committee has undertaken all these new elections based on the new Constitution, the Bylaws have needed changes to be made.

- b. Council members serving next year were asked to let the chair know if they will be on sabbatical or leave next year.
 - c. Elections process update: elections are ongoing for new positions on the FCSM council and on the council's standing committees.
 - d. Council Executive Committee positions for next year. Each member of the executive committee - chair, vice chair, and two co-secretaries - has a term of one-year. Being a member of the executive committee gives one a chance to learn about shared governance in a much deeper way. If interested in learning more, please reach out to the current Chair. Elections for the executive committee will take place at our May 10th meeting.
 - e. Items from the floor
 - 1) Concern from a lecturer outside of the council about the lack of financial compensation for being a course coordinator. They noted that being a course coordinator takes more time than noted for their service load on their annual report with sometimes as many as 18 sections being managed. Dean Nugent noted that this has been brought up at the Chairs meeting.
 - 2) No other items shared.
9. Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicole Carbonaro

Recording Secretary