University of Colorado
Boulder | Colorado Springs | Denver | Anschutz Medical Campus

Faculty Senate | Faculty Council
1800 Grant Street
Denver, CO 80203

Faculty Senate

Thursday, October 23rd, 2025
12:00–1:30 p.m.
Via Zoom Video Conference

Minutes

Attending: Jorge Chavez (Vice President, UCD), Diana White (Faculty Council Vice Chair, UCD), Monica Yoo (Faculty Council Secretary, UCCS), Alastair Norcross (Faculty Council Past Chair, UCB), Steve Cass (FSGC Chair, Anschutz), Todd Saliman (SYS, University President), Michael Lightner (SYS, VP Academic Affairs), Greg Kinney (Anschutz), Joanne Addison (UCD), Troyann Gentile (UCD), David Paradis (UCB), Ravinder Singh (UCB), Wendy Bolyard (UCD), Jay Dedrick (SYS), Anne Fleming (SYS), Shelly Miller (UCB), Alex Ilyasova (UCCS), Kathy Shaw (Anschutz), Markus Pflaum (UCB), Anthony Villany (UCD), Suzanne Cook (UCCS), Katie Sparks (UCB), Sasha Breger Bush (UCD), Kate Coleman-Minahan (Anschutz), Eric Ficke (UCD), Kristy Hawley (Anschutz), Jason Sanford (UCB), Maureen Durkin (SYS), Michaele Ferguson (UCB), Bobby Benim (UCB), Leah Parvez (UCB), Anna Kosloski (UCCS), Jackie Berning (UCCS), Valerie Otero (UCB), Burton St. John (UCB), Emily Mooney (UCCS), Kerry Peterson (Anschutz), Sherry McCormick (UCCS), Avedan Raggio (UCB), Carey Candrian (Anschutz), Dylan Harris (UCCS), Gordon Stringer (UCCS), Sloan G. Speck (UCB), Carole Woodall (UCCS), Esther Lamidi (UCCS), Jed Brown (UCB), Yelena Gordiyenko (UCD), Clint Carroll (UCB), Ethelyn Thomason (Anschutz), Sean Forrest (UCCS), Tony Kong (UCB), Amber Kelsie (UCB), Carol Cogswell (UCB), Jasimine Evans (UCB), Ethan Waddell (UCB), Angie Chuang (UCB), Karim Mattar (UCB), Katy Divittorio (UCD), Katie Sullivan (UCCS), Steven Dike (UCB), David Havlick (UCCS), Thomas Beck (UCD), Jeffrey Schrader (UCD), Claudia Amura (Anschutz), Elizabeth Novosel (UCB), Karin Larkin (UCCS), Rhonda Glazier (UCCS), Lauren Way (UCB), Ernesto Acevedo-Munoz (UCB), Xuedong Liu (UCB), Lauren Collins (UCB), Rachel Johnson (Anschutz), Dumayi Gutierrez (UCD), Andrea Dyrness (UCB), Amanda Schaetzel (UCB),

1. **12:00 p.m. Call to Order & Approval of April Faculty Senate (FS) Meeting Minutes**
   a. Motion to approve minutes; seconded; Minutes approved.

2. **12:00-12:15 p.m. Faculty Senate Grievance Committee Chair's Report, Stephen Cass**
   a. Dismissal for Cause
      - One case currently at the Board of Regents level, expected to conclude early next month.
      - One case initiated but suspended due to mediation; if mediation fails, the process will restart from the beginning.

   b. Tenure Denial Grievance
      - One submission received: currently under review.

   c. Other inquiries
      - Six additional faculty inquiries were received but not pursued as formal grievances or declined due to jurisdictional limitations under Regent Law and Policy.

   d. Committee Structure

- Committee is fully staffed. Shall have minimum of six members per campus. Members served staggered three-year terms, supporting continuity and institutional expertise. Emphasis is on retaining experienced members due to the complexity of grievance processes.

e. Committee Membership Update
   - New Boulder member approved by Boulder Faculty Assembly; pending Faculty Council vote directly after Faculty Senate meeting.
   - Future member (UCCS): prospective member identified; pending campus-level approval before Faculty Council consideration.
   - Additional nominations and renewals are expected in the spring.

3. 12:15 -12:30 p.m. Faculty Council Chair's Report, Jorge Chavez

a. November Faculty Council Meeting
   - Guest presenters: CFO Chad Marturano and Provost Lynn Vidler.
   - Topic: CU System Strategic Planning (co-chaired effort).
   - Purpose: Provide updates, gather feedback, and address faculty questions. Faculty participation is encouraged.

b. Board of Regents Engagement
   - Next Board of Regents meeting: November 6.
   - Faculty Council Chair will: deliver a 5-minute oral report and submit a comprehensive written report. Focus areas will include:
     - Faculty sentiment amid current uncertainty.
     - Concerns related to academic freedom.
   - Ongoing communication with Board of Regents and university leadership to elevate faculty concerns.
   - Call for input: Faculty Assembly chairs, faculty, and committee chairs are invited to submit items for inclusion in the Board report. Submission deadline is Monday, October 27.

c. Role of Faculty Council
   - Serves as a system-wide conduit between faculty, the President, and the Board of Regents.
   - Focus on issues impacting all campuses, not campus-specific matters.
   - Faculty encouraged to share concerns through campus Faculty Assembly Chairs and elevate system-wide issues to Faculty Council for broader advocacy.

4. 12:30-1:00 p.m. Academic Affairs Report, VP Michael Lightner

a. Work-Based Learning Bill (HB25-1186)
   - Ais to expand recognition of prior learning and experience (e.g., military, workforce) for academic credit.
   - Moves beyond general education (GT Pathways) into major-specific credit applicability.
   - Potential implications:
     - Increased pressure to evaluate non-traditional learning for degree credit.
     - Likely pilot efforts; possible future mandates.

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- Faculty encouraged to review and discuss implications at the campus and department level.

b. State Auditor Report on Transfer Credits
- Recently released report evaluating transfer credit systems statewide.
- Includes numerous recommendations under review by Colorado Commission on Higher Education (CCHE) and Colorado Department of Higher Education (CDHE)
- Key concern: this is based on outdated data (pre-2023) and does not reflect recent reforms (e.g., SB24-164) and may prompt new legislation, despite incomplete context.
- Potential impacts
  - Changes to credit transfer processes, especially for major requirements.
  - Increased administrative and faculty workload.
  - Possible erosion of faculty control over curriculum decisions.
- Faculty recommended to review State Auditor recommendations by departmental curriculum committees and college/school governance bodies. Identify and elevate concerns and risks to curriculum integrity and workload. Provide feedback to Michael Lightner (to relay to CCHE/CCDE) and campus leadership and governance bodies.:
- Faculty Concerns:
  - Curricular Authority: state law may override Regent Law, allowing CDHE to overturn faculty decisions on transfer credits in grievance cases.
  - Anticipated increase in faculty and administrative burden without additional funding.
  - Concerns about maintaining academic quality and student success under expanded transfer policies.
  - Suggestion to track outcomes (e.g., retention, graduation rates) for affected students. This is not currently required but recommended for accountability.

c. CU System Overview
- Michael Lightner provided a CU System structural overview. Described as administrative entity only (no teaching, research, or students). System provides coordination and shared services across campus.
- Governance Framework:
  - Board of Regents (constitutional authority): sets policy, approves budgets/tuition, appoints key officers.
  - Officers of the University (report directly to Regents): President, University Counsel, Treasurer, Secretary, Internal Audit
  - Chancellors: report to the President (not directly to Regents).
  - Faculty Council Chair serves as official faculty representative to the Board of Regents.
- Centralized services include:
  - IT systems (finance, HR, student systems)
  - Payroll, benefits, and HR policies
  - Procurement and contracts
  - Advancement

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- ➢ Risk Management and Insurance
- ➢ Government relations and communications

- o Budget decisions involve negotiation between campuses and system, not unilateral mandates. Faculty requested greater transparency into system-level budgeting. Faculty suggested sharing greater budget details with faculty governance committees.

5. 1:00-1:30 p.m. Faculty Senate President's Report, President Todd Saliman

a. Federal Landscape & Research Funding
   - o Grant Terminations: 87 grants terminated system-wide (~$50M impact over multiple years) and approximately 90 positions lost due to funding cuts.
   - o Outlook: federal budget proposals include potential cuts, but congressional markups suggest less severe reductions (some flat funding). There is continued advocacy at state and national levels to protect research funding.

b. Response to Faculty Request for a "Mutual Defense Compact"
   - o Reframed as a request to form a collaborative/legal cooperative rather than a formal compact. The request originated from Boulder and Denver Faculty Assemblies. The proposal may also be considered by Faculty Council. A formal response letter was distributed to faculty leadership addressing the resolutions.
   - o CU already collaborates through the Colorado Attorney General's Office and national partnerships.
   - o Example: Successful coordinated advocacy helped protect CIRES funding (~$120M/year).
   - o Conclusion: No need for an additional formal legal compact; current collaborations are effective.

c. Federal "Compact" Proposal (Trump Administration)
   - o CU leadership is conducting a thorough, ongoing review of the proposed federal "compact."
   - o Nonpartisan review process includes:
     - ➢ Analyzing individual components
     - ➢ Assessing alignment with current university practices
     - ➢ Evaluation of potential impacts on operations, governance, and autonomy
   - o Nonpartisan review process includes:
     - ➢ Analyzing individual components
     - ➢ Assessing alignment with current university practices
   - o Core priority is to preserve institutional independence and Board of Regents authority. Further discussion is planned with the Board of Regents, including legal considerations.

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d. Academic Freedom and Free Speech
   - President Saliman acknowledged that the compact's definition of academic freedom may differ from CU policy. He reaffirmed CU's definitions are ground in Regent Policy and there will be no changes to policies or their implementation. System-wide consistency in application remains in place.
   - Reaffirmed institutional commitment to academic freedom and freedom of speech.
   - Encouraged use of institutional reporting mechanisms for discrimination, harassment, and policy concerns.

e. Faculty Housing Assistance Program
   - Administration is reassessing potential expansion of FHAP due to:
     - Changing housing market conditions
     - Interest rates
     - Increased faculty need
   - Review underway by CFO and Treasurer.
   - Next steps:
     - Share findings with faculty leadership
     - Engage Faculty Council Committee on Personnel and Benefits
   - Emphasis on shared governance and responsiveness to faculty input on benefits.

f. Equal Pay for Equal Work Act (EPWA)
   - CU is fully compliant with the Equal Pay for Equal Work Act.
   - Compliance is embedded in routine operational processes.
   - During initial rollout of the law, CU conducted a comprehensive system-wide review; invested approximately $15M; adjusted salaries for ~ 2,300 employees.
   - Current phase has shifted from implementation to ongoing maintenance and monitoring.
   - Administration emphasized openness to addressing concerns and ensuring fair application of EPWA.

g. Sustainability
   - Sustainability is a defined priority in CU's current strategic plan and the university maintains system-wide sustainability goals.
   - CU conducts regular (approximately biennial) reporting on progress toward sustainability goals across the system.

h. Strategic Plan 2.0 Update

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- A new strategic planning process is currently underway (early stages). It includes campus representation and active involvement from campus chancellors.

i. Graduate Student Loan Caps (Federal Policy)
   - Significant concern about potential caps, especially for new students.
   - Risks depend on how "professional" programs are defined.
   - CU is monitoring developments and exploring (but not committed to) potential international support mechanisms.
   - Pell Grants currently projected to remain flat (not reduced).

j. State Budget Outlook
   - Anticipated challenging state funding environment.
   - CU will request funding based on standard cost drivers (compensation, benefits, inflation) and advocate for higher education funding.
   - Emphasized link between state funding and tuition levels.
   - Governor's budget (November 1) will provide further clarity.

k. Operational and Policy Updates
   - Return to campus policy: No system-wide mandate.
   - IT security policies: No new mandates; existing APS policies remain in place.
   - Continued communication via system and campus websites on federal changes

l. Faculty Senate Leadership Follow-Up (Jorge Chavez)
   - Reinforced importance of:
     - Academic freedom protections
     - Clear communication across campuses
     - Trust and transparency

6. 1:30 p.m. Faculty Senate Adjourns

Next Faculty Senate Meeting: April 23rd, 2026, at 12 PM