



**Faculty Council Personnel & Benefits Committee Meeting**

**1:00 to 3:00 PM, Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026**

**Zoom Video Conference**

**MINUTES**

**Attending:** Sherry McCormick (Chair, UCCS), Jeffrey Schrader (UCD), Steven Blackwell (SYS), Diana White (UCD), Joe Rosse (UCB), Katie Sullivan (UCCS), Sloan Speck (UCB), Lindsey Yates (Anschutz), Karen Sobel (UCD), Jeffrey Zax (UCB), Lisa Landis (SYS), Chad Marturano (SYS), Usha Sharma (SYS), Dan Montez (SYS)

**1. Call to Order, Chair’s Report, and Approval of Minutes (Sherry McCormick)**

- Chair called the meeting to order.
- March meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion was made and seconded; the minutes were approved.
- The committee discussed inviting Tony Gherardini, Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer (CU System), to attend the May PBC meeting.
- Erin Tilbury and Tony DeCrosta (Delta Dental/CU Health Plan) will be invited to return for a follow-up presentation during the fall semester.
- A tentative in-person PBC meeting is being planned for October.

**2. CU System & Benefits Update (Steven Blackwell)**

- Open Enrollment period confirmed as April 20 – May 8, with communications being distributed through multiple channels (email, mail, and online resources).
- Introduction of the “Benefits Bistro” platform as a centralized hub for employees to review plan options and updates.
- It was noted that premium rates and additional plan details were still pending release at the time of the meeting.
- A dedicated session on dental plan changes is scheduled.
- A request was made for a future presentation on disability insurance offerings, indicating interest in better understanding both short- and long-term disability coverage.
- Emphasis on ensuring that communications are clear and accessible, given the complexity of benefits decisions.

### **3. Faculty Housing Assistance Program (FHAP)**

**Presenters: Chad Marturano, Usha Sharma**

- Provided background on the Faculty Housing Assistance Program (FHAP), noting that it ceased accepting new applications in 2022 due to a combination of funding limitations and changing housing market conditions.
- The program had previously served as a recruitment and retention tool, particularly in high-cost housing areas.
- Discussion clarified that the program is subject to a regental funding cap (1.5% of a designated treasury pool segment), significantly limiting its scalability.
- Committee members discussed the increasing difficulty for faculty, especially junior and instructional faculty, to access affordable housing, raising concerns about equity and competitiveness.
- Broader discussion highlighted the need to balance financial risk with institutional priorities, particularly in supporting faculty recruitment and retention.
- Committee acknowledged that while interest in reviving the program is strong, feasibility remains uncertain without policy or funding changes.
- The committee agreed to form a small working subgroup with representatives from interested campuses to further develop program design options, eligibility criteria, and allocation mechanisms. Chad and Usha proposed meeting with this group over the summer, with the goal of continuing development and potentially moving toward implementation as early as fall, depending on progress and administrative setup.

### **4. Policy & Governance Update**

**Presenter: Dan Montez**

#### **A. Regent Laws and Policies – Review Process**

- Multi-step approval process for Regent Laws and Policies:
  - Initial review and discussion by the Regent Governance Committee
  - Presentation of a notice of motion to the full Board
  - Second discussion and potential action by the Governance Committee
  - Final approval by the full Board of Regents
- Process typically takes approximately 3–4 months. Policies may be presented as new items or revisions, and public feedback is gathered between review stages and shared with responsible offices for potential incorporation.
- Regents conduct a 5-year policy review cycle, established after an earlier comprehensive 10-year review effort. Each year, the Governance Committee also sets an annual work plan identifying policies scheduled for review.

- Additional administrative support is provided through the Laws and Policy Coordinating Committee, which includes representatives from key functional areas (e.g., Academic Affairs, Human Resources) and coordinates stakeholder engagement with campus leadership, Faculty Council, and Staff Council.

## **B. Administrative Policy Statements (APS) – Process Overview**

Key steps include:

- Policy kickoff meetings with functional leads to identify policies due for review.
- Development and posting of justification documents explaining proposed changes and stakeholder involvement.
- Targeted vetting with relevant stakeholders (e.g., Faculty Council, HR leadership, Staff Council).
- Broad dissemination for feedback through governance channels and public posting.
- Final approval by the President and campus chancellors (“the team”).
- Post-approval cleanup, publication, and implementation (including training where applicable).
- APSs are generally reviewed on a 3–4 year cycle, often aligned with related Regent policy updates.

## **C. Selection of Policies for Review**

Primary driver for selecting policies for review is the 5-year Regents review schedule, supplemented by:

- External legal or regulatory changes (federal or state)
- Administrative or Regent-initiated priorities
- Functional area recommendations or identified needs
- Emerging issues (e.g., artificial intelligence policy development)

## **D. Faculty role in policy review and initiation**

Faculty raised concerns that their role in policy development, specifically that faculty participation often appears reactive rather than proactive.

Dan acknowledged the concern and clarified that faculty or stakeholders seeking to initiate a policy review can:

- Submit suggestions via the public feedback form, even if no specific policy is currently under review.
- Work directly with relevant functional leads (e.g., academic policies through the designated

academic policy liaison).

- Raise issues through governance channels, which are then routed to appropriate committees and offices for consideration.

Dan noted that all feedback is directed to the appropriate offices and may be escalated or incorporated into future review cycles.

## **5. Benefits Benchmarking & Analysis (Lisa Landis)**

### **A. Tuition Benefit Update**

- Record participation in Spring tuition benefit program:
  - ~1,700–1,800 total applications (employees and dependents combined).
- Enrollment distribution:
  - Highest usage: CU Boulder and CU Denver.
    - Boulder: primarily undergraduate dependent participation.
    - Denver: high graduate/professional and post-bachelor usage (employees/spouses/dependents).
  - CU Colorado Springs: lower participation due to size and proximity factors.
  - CU Anschutz: smaller participation due to limited program eligibility (primarily nursing and public health programs).
- Tuition benefit policy update remains in progress; additional information to be shared later.

### **B. Benefit Index Survey Overview (Aon)**

- Conducted by Aon; CU participates approximately every 3 years (last conducted ~6 years ago due to COVID and leadership transitions).
- Uses a standardized methodology to compare employer benefits against peer institutions.
- Key metric:
  - Index score of 100 = market average.
  - Scores >100 indicate above-average benefits.
- Two key measures:
  - Employer value: value of benefit design.
  - Total value: includes employer contribution toward benefit cost.

### **C. Comparator Group & Methodology**

- Comparator group includes 15 large higher education institutions from Aon’s database (~600+ organizations total).
- Focus of current analysis: retirement benefits, to ensure “apples-to-apples” comparison.
- Key rationale:
  - CU and peers included all participate in Social Security.
  - Excludes private institutions due to structural differences in benefits.
- Weighting applied across benefit categories (retirement, health, welfare, time off, cash-based benefits) to avoid overemphasis on any single benefit.

#### **D. Overall CU Results (Faculty & Staff)**

- Faculty:
  - Employer value index: 109.1 (above average; ~3rd–4th among peers)
  - Total value index: 106.4
- Staff:
  - CU ranks 1st among peers in overall benefits index.
- CU benefits are generally uniform across employee groups, unlike some peer institutions.

#### **E. Category-Level Findings**

##### Retirement

- Strong performance:
  - Above market; CU ranks ~4th–5th depending on measure.
- CU contribution (~10%) is competitive when compared appropriately to peers (considering Social Security differences).

##### Active Health (Medical/Dental)

- Overall, slightly below market on total value (~99).
- Observations:
  - PPO design slightly below market.
  - Lack of Health Savings Account (HSA) employer contribution noted as gap.
  - Dental benefits identified as relatively low (ranked ~8th–9th among peers).
- Discussion noted potential trade-offs in funding (medical, dental, merit pool).

## Retiree Health & Welfare

- High index score but heavily skewed:
  - Only 8 of 15 peers offer comparable retiree medical subsidies.
- CU remains competitive among institutions that still offer this benefit.

## Active Welfare (Disability-related benefits)

- Currently lower relative performance.
- Expected to change with implementation of updated plan designs.

## Time Off

- Strong performance above market:
  - Includes parental leave and bereavement (CU offers 5 days vs. peer average of 3).
  - Inclusion of holidays such as Juneteenth contributes to higher index.

## Cash-Based Benefits (Tuition Benefit)

- Highly variable across institutions; comparisons are complex.
- When adjusted for more comparable peers (n=6), CU is approximately ~102 (above average).
- Unique CU feature: dependent/spousal graduate course eligibility, which is uncommon at peer institutions.

## 6. Committee Business & Elections (Sherry McCormick)

- Need Vice Chair and Secretary positions filled for next AY.
- Members were encouraged to consider nominations and self-nominations.
- Elections and/or confirmations expected to take place at the next (final) meeting of the academic year.

## 7. Adjournment

**Next meeting: Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026 @ 1 PM via Zoom**