



Faculty Council Personnel & Benefits Committee Meeting

1:00 to 3:00 PM, Friday, May 1st, 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), Karen Sobel (UCD), Jeffrey Zax (UCB), Celine Dauverd (UCB), Lisa Landis (SYS), Tony Gherardini (SYS), Tony DeCrosta (SYS), Erin Tilbury (SYS)

1. Call to Order / Chair's Report (Sherry McCormick)

- April meeting minutes were approved.
- Faculty Housing Assistance Benefit: A steering committee is being formed to support expansion of the benefit to full-time IRC faculty. Faculty representation is expected to include one IRC faculty member from each campus and Diana White as a prior program participant, along with HR and Legal representation.
- Impact Development Fund was selected to administer the IRC portion of the program, while Treasury will continue administering the tenure/tenure-track portion. The goal is to launch the expanded benefit in fall 2026.
- Sherry will continue outreach to identify IRC faculty representatives from each campus.

2. Tony Gherardini, Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer

- Discussion focused on CU's decentralized organizational structure, campus autonomy, shared governance, and the relationship between campus- and System-level HR authority.
- Tony identified early priorities including review of salary structures and approaches across campuses, assessment of HR staffing/resources, and developing a broader HR understanding of unionization and collective bargaining issues.
- Committee members raised longstanding concerns regarding salary benchmarking and consistency across campuses. Jeffrey Schrader will forward Tony and Sherry prior Faculty Council materials regarding salary benchmarks.
- Tony clarified that tenure-related policy matters would generally fall under Academic Affairs rather than his System HR portfolio.
- The committee also discussed collective bargaining and unionization concepts and the need

for continued education as System conversations develop.

3. CU System Update – Steven Blackwell

- Steven reviewed concerns raised regarding annual enrollment, FY27 health plan changes, communication of those changes, and the relationship between rising benefit costs and campus salary, merit, and cost-of-living decisions.
- Employee Services had limited advance notice of final rate changes. Steven reported that concerns regarding communication had been shared with the Benefits and Communications teams and that improvements would be considered for future enrollment cycles. A future discussion regarding the communications process may be scheduled for the fall.
- Steven noted that significant benefits information is available online but can be difficult to navigate. Employee Services will consider more concise communications highlighting major changes and key considerations.
- Steven also discussed the importance of ensuring campus leaders making salary/merit decisions understand the effect of benefit-cost increases on employees.

4. FY27 Health Plan Discussion – Tony DeCrosta and Erin Tilbury

- The committee discussed FY27 health plan rates, with particular concern regarding the significant increase to the Exclusive Plan and limited advance communication to employees.
- Tony explained that final rate changes were identified only a few weeks before release because actuarial and underwriting models rely on the most current claims data available.
- Factors contributing to increased Exclusive Plan costs included higher medical and prescription-drug utilization, significant GLP-1 utilization, and concerns regarding hospital-system pricing.
- Tony explained that the Pathway Plan had initially been priced conservatively because there was no actual claims experience. Subsequent claims data and stronger-than-anticipated provider discounts contributed to lower Pathway rates for FY27.
- Pathway now has a broader provider network than Exclusive, including Children's Hospital and HCA, although the plan designs are not identical.
- Erin clarified that the Pathway and Exclusive networks are very similar but not literally identical and encouraged employees to verify individual providers through Anthem's Provider Finder. CU continues to work with Anthem to improve network information.
- Erin confirmed that UCHHealth is currently in-network with Anthem plans, including Pathway, and clarified that emergency care is covered regardless of network, while scheduled/non-emergency care remains subject to plan-network requirements. - Tony reported that CU generally seeks to cover approximately 90% of aggregate health plan costs, with employees covering approximately 10%. Approximately \$55 million in additional employer funding was approved for the coming year.

- Tony discussed why plan enrollment percentages are not released, citing concerns related to privacy/HIPAA and adverse selection that could affect actuarial modeling and rate stability.
- Committee members requested clearer advance communication regarding significant future rate changes and easier-to-use plan comparison information.

5. CU System Update – Lisa Landis

- Lisa explained that Employee Services must present health plan information neutrally and cannot recommend one plan over another.
- Employee Services has expanded comparison resources highlighting factors such as plan cost, network, and other plan features to assist employees in evaluating their options.
- Lisa acknowledged concerns regarding communication of significant rate changes and noted that Employee Services would consider improvements for future enrollment cycles, while recognizing the short timeframe between final rate-setting and open enrollment.
- Lisa reported no major new Employee Services developments. Time and labor, the applicant tracking system, family-related programs, short- and long-term disability/life programs, and open enrollment remain underway.
- Employees will receive communications if significant changes occur over the summer. Lisa expects to provide the committee's annual utilization report in the fall.

6. Campus Updates / New Business

- Committee leadership for fall was reviewed. Jeffrey Zax remains Vice Chair; no secretary is currently identified. The committee will clarify whether a secretary position needs to be filled.
- Sherry reported receiving a response to the committee's submitted comments regarding Regent Policy 5F and will distribute the response to committee members.
- Members were encouraged to review pending 5F, 5G, and 5D materials and submit any committee feedback to Sherry before the May 14 discussion deadline.
- Committee membership and vacancies for fall were discussed. Sherry reported that Monica Fury had volunteered to serve as a UCCS representative. Faculty Assembly chairs will receive consolidated vacancy information and confirm campus representatives through their respective processes, including a replacement for the departing Anschutz representative.
- The committee briefly discussed difficulty identifying an eligible provider for a vision benefit involving corrective lenses following corrective eye surgery. Steven reported that Employee Services had worked with Anthem to identify possible providers and was continuing to assist.

7. Adjournment

Next meeting: Friday, September 4th, 2026 @ 1 PM via Zoom