



Minutes of the
Meeting of the Comets Affordable Learning Committee
September 15, 2025
4:00 – 5:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting
Room EDGE (H-108) & Zoom Location:
<https://palomar-edu.zoom.us/j/773647788>

APPROVED

PRESENT: Sarah Baker (arr 16:50), William Carrasco, Alexandra Doyle Bauer, Mohammed Elmatary (arr 16:10), Barbara Hammons, Erin Hiro, Ken McMullen, Elisha Rainwater (Zoom), Timothy Stamnitz (Zoom), Diane Studinka (arr 16:20), Alyssa Vafaei, Anastasia Zavodny (arr 16:10)

ABSENT:

GUESTS: Fari Towfiq (Zoom), Chris Norcross, Shahrzad Zahedi

CALL TO ORDER: A quorum was established and the meeting was called to order by Co-Chair William Carrasco at 16:03.

Announcements:

Agenda Changes: None

Approval of Minutes: **MSC: Hiro, McMullen. Motion to approve the minutes of May 19, 2025, as amended.**
The motion passed.

MSC: Doyle Bauer, Elmatary. Motion to approve the minutes of May 22, 2025.
Abstain Hiro.
The motion passed.

MSC: Hammons, Doyle Bauer. Motion to approve the minutes of August 25, 2025.
Abstain: McMullen, Hiro
The motion passed.

Information

A. ZTC Grant Update: Carrasco provided the committee with a brief overview of the pathway update forms
Pathway Status created and disbursed to grant pathway faculty. These pathway update forms will
Updates collect information as to the current status of course completions within each
pathway.

B. Pressbooks and
OER integration into

Canvas (Chris Norcross)

Carrasco introduced guest Chris Norcross, who provided a history of Pressbooks at Palomar College. ATRC and Instructional Designers all provide support for Pressbooks. Common concerns and challenges which Norcross, ARTC, and Instructional Designers can help with are: integrating materials into Canvas, best practices, accessibility, creation of ancillary materials via artificial intelligence and OER textbooks for faculty modification, and more.

Several committee members asked questions regarding the services and capabilities of the campus Pressbooks service. It was noted the state recently put out a quick turnaround RFP for a systemwide platform for textbook creation, with speculation LibreText may be a frontrunner.

C. Accessibility Training

Vafaei has created a bookings page for easily arranging a meeting to discuss accessibility. Committee members questioned the best timing for arranging their meeting; Vafaei noted the earlier the better to ensure a smooth content creation process.

Action

A. ZTC Pathway Milestone Presentation

French Pathway

FREN 140 – William Carrasco and Shahrzad Zahedi

The committee reviewed the submitted materials, with discussion focusing on ensuring accessibility for the LibreTexts book created. Carrasco provided information that he and Zahedi had previously worked with an accessibility specialist in creating other textbooks and they have applied this knowledge to the FREN 140 textbook.

Upon concluding his presentation, Carrasco left the room so that the committee could discuss the milestone.

The committee liked the video overview and the completed milestone submission form; no concerns were noted and everything appeared to meet accessibility requirements. The committee was impressed with the work accomplished given the submitted time. The design elements within the book were praised for ease of reading and learning.

MSC: Elmatary, Hammons. Motion to approve the work completed for FREN 140 and approve the Time and Effort Reports for Shahrzad Zahedi of 14.5 hours for Summer and 10 hours for Fall (August and September) for her work in collaboration on FREN 140, and William Carrasco of 15.75 hours for Summer and 7.75 hours for Fall (August and September) for his work on FREN 140.

Abstain: Carrasco

The motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting concluded at 16:54.

Respectfully submitted by Anastasia Zavodny