



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FACULTY SENATE

January 26, 2025

APPROVED

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Ben Adams, Russell Backman, Mary Ellen Brooks, Alexandra Doyle Bauer, Heather Elliott Pham, Kelly Falcone, Gene Gushansky, Jason Jarvinen, Scott Klinger, Lawrence Lawson, Melissa Martinez, Vicki Mellos, Michael Mufson (Zoom), Beth Pearson, Tanessa Sanchez, Karl Seiler, Russell Sheaffer, Nina Shmorhun, Nicole Siminski, Alyssa Vafaei, Anastasia Zavodny

ABSENT: William Dalrymple, Ashley Wolters

GUESTS: Gheni Alba, Sherehe Hollins, Mark Raymundo

All votes are presumed unanimous unless indicated otherwise.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Faculty Senate President, Elizabeth Pearson, in LRC-116 at 2:32 p.m. The meeting was also streamed live on ZOOM.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senator Adams announced the annual child cancer awareness baseball game and jersey auction scheduled for Saturday at noon. Proceeds from the auction will benefit the Vs. Cancer Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation.

Senator Doyle Bauer shared concerns regarding low enrollment, noting that the campus appeared quiet during Welcome Days. She highlighted technical barriers for students, including issues where Admissions and Information Services (IS) were unable to provide enrollment access to community members and students over the intersession.

Senator Shmorhun announced the Black History Month Fair, hosted by the Palomar Black Faculty and Staff

Association (PBFSA), on Wednesday, February 4th, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the Student Union. Volunteers and program tabling participants are still needed.

Senator Lawson informed the Senate that deans are requesting information regarding catalog hours and institutional responsibilities. He clarified that according to the contract, such requests must be made in writing to individual faculty members rather than as a general request in a meeting.

AGENDA CHANGES

Senator Sanchez recommended switching the order of the two discussion items, placing the Palomar Presidential Search first to ensure sufficient time for the topic.

MSC: Sanchez/Falcone

Faculty Senate to approve the agenda change to switch the order of the two discussion items, placing the Palomar Presidential Search discussion item first.

The motion carried.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MSC: Shmorhun/Adams

Faculty Senate to approve the minutes for December 15, 2025 as amended.

The motion carried.

Abstentions – 1: Senator Gushansky

MSC: Shmorhun/Sheaffer

Faculty Senate to approve the minutes for December 18, 2025 special meeting.

The motion carried.

Abstentions – 3 : Senators Doyle Bauer, Gushansky, Sanchez

ACTION

A. Senator Confirmation – (Exhibit 1), Pearson

MSC: Doyle Bauer/Lawson

Faculty Senate to confirm the membership of Russell Backman to the Faculty Senate with the term ending May 2028.

The motion carried.

B. Committees on Committees (Exhibit 2) – Zavodny

No Business.

C. Nominations for Senate President 2026-2028 - (Exhibit 3), Pearson

President Pearson opened the floor for nominations for the Faculty Senate President for the 2026-2028 term. Senator Doyle Bauer nominated Senator Shmorhun, who accepted the nomination. The official vote will take place at the second meeting of the spring semester.

MSC: Doyle Bauer/Lawson

Faculty Senate to nominate Nina Shmorhun as Faculty Senate President for the term 2026-2028.

The motion carried.

D. Emeritus Status - (Exhibit 4), Pearson

MSC: Gushansky/Shmorhun

Faculty Senate to approve Emeritus Status for Lillian Payn.

The motion carried.

INFORMATION

A. ASG Report – No Current Representative

No Report

B. PRP Timeline Update - (Exhibit 5), Pearson

President Pearson presented the updated Program Review and Planning (PRP) timeline, noting that deadlines have been moved significantly earlier to ensure that funding requests align more effectively with the district's budgeting process.

The updated schedule requires training to be completed in February, with the final PRPs due in early March, utilizing a streamlined annual report and a retooled comprehensive form intended to make the process less tedious.

A senator inquired about how this new timeline specifically relates to funding requests, prompting an explanation that the earlier dates are meant to ensure the budget matches recent requests rather than relying on old information that may no longer be relevant by the time funds are distributed.

Another senator, drawing on experience, noted that the review and approval process has historically taken an entire academic year; the intent of the current shift is to "tighten" this period so that feedback and prioritization happen more quickly. It was also suggested that the process should include a follow-up mechanism to verify that distributed funds were actually used for their intended purposes.

Concern was raised regarding the impact of the timeline on faculty hiring and recruitment. A senator pointed out that the prioritization cycle was previously conducted in the spring to ensure the college remained competitive during the fall hiring season, but recent delays meant the committee did not even meet until November and lacked certainty about hiring as late as December. This delay reportedly caused the college to lose its competitive edge compared to other institutions that were already actively recruiting. Consequently, a senator suggested that faculty prioritization discussions should begin immediately after the PRPs are completed in the spring, allowing the committee to move rapidly at the start of the fall semester.

Another senator recommended that future timeline presentations include more "thorough understanding" of the outcomes, specifically, clear dates for when departments can expect to be notified of their resource allocations or their ranking on the faculty priority list.

Finally, a senator suggested that while the earlier deadlines are a positive step, the college must ensure there is enough "runway" at the end of the spring semester for committees to meet and act on the information provided.

C. ASCCC Webinar - Addressing the Challenge of Agentic AI - Policies, Technology, Instruction, Assessment, and Learning Design Webinar - (Exhibit 6), Falcone

Senator Falcone announced a webinar on "Addressing the Challenge of Agentic AI" hosted by the Chancellor's Office and State Academic Senate on Friday from 1:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. The EDGE Center will host a livestream and follow-up discussion for faculty.

DISCUSSION

A. NEW DE Resolution Adoption of Simple Syllabus - (Exhibits 7.1, 7.2, 7.3)

Moved to Discussion Item B.

Tabled.

B. Palomar Presidential Search Update - (Exhibit 8), Pearson

Moved to Discussion Item A.

President Pearson led an extensive discussion regarding the upcoming search for a new Superintendent-President following the departure of Dr. Rivera Lacey. Consultants are currently seeking feedback from constituent groups with a goal of presenting the search committee composition to the Governing Board by the February 11th meeting.

Feedback and discussion items included:

A suggestion of increasing faculty representation to mirror historical searches, noting that the current proposal of four faculty members is significantly lower than past committees which included between six and eleven representatives.

Several senators emphasized that the body should scrutinize the ratio of faculty to administrators rather than just raw numbers, suggesting a proportional representation formula based on the actual number of employees in each group to avoid a disproportionate amount of administration.

A senator recommended reducing the involvement of "acting" or "temporary" administrators on the committee, arguing that permanent hiring decisions should be influenced by long-term faculty rather than those with a "visiting" status.

Regarding board involvement, a senator advocated for zero board members to serve on the search committee, citing consultant advice that their presence could create legal issues and internal information imbalances.

A senator suggested extending the application period to at least eight weeks to comply with administrative procedures for educational administrators, rather than the proposed seven-week timeline.

To ensure student and faculty engagement, a senator recommended that finalist college visits occur on instructional days during the spring or fall semesters rather than in late June.

Multiple senators advocated for a timeline that avoids "summer surprises" by moving major hiring decisions and interviews to the Fall of 2026, particularly to avoid the influence of the upcoming board election and the current board environment.

A senator stipulated that any faculty required to meet over the summer must be compensated, and another recommended that the first-level search committee be allowed to view candidate reference checks during the screening process.

It was also suggested that the role of the community member be specifically clarified as a member of the Palomar College Foundation board.

Significant concern was raised regarding the chair of the committee; several senators recommended that the Vice President of Human Resources recuse herself or be replaced due to a conflict of interest stemming from her role on the MiraCosta College board, which is conducting a concurrent search.

For the recruitment materials, senators recommended seeking a candidate with teaching experience who can balance a "politically hostile board" while championing anti-racism, DEIA, and accessibility.

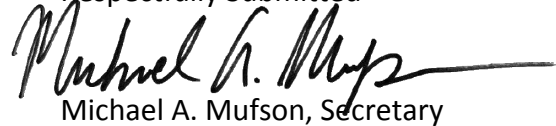
Further suggestions for candidate qualifications included a leader who will "stand and fight" for the institution, someone capable of resolving technical enrollment barriers such as password and ID issues, and a president who maintains open dialogue with constituent leads while remaining highly visible to students.

Finally, it was recommended that the Senate host an open listening session, conduct a written survey, and poll senators to prioritize these qualifications and potentially contact faculty at a candidate's previous place of employment for more authentic references.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael A. Mufson", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael A. Mufson, Secretary