



## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FACULTY SENATE

February 9, 2026

**APPROVED**

### **ATTENDANCE**

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

**ABSENT:**

**GUESTS:** Gheni Abla, Matt Grills, Kristen Marjanovic, Lene Reynolds, Marjan Vena, Elena Villa Fernández de Castro

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**

Senator Lawson made a comment addressing recent workplace confrontations. He emphasized his commitment to defending the collective bargaining agreement, securing lost wages, and pushing forward grievances, noting he had put up with problematic behavior in the past to make progress on faculty needs. He detailed a recent meeting where an administrator treated him inappropriately, and despite calls to stop the behavior and end the meeting, the administrator grew more incensed and later acted in a potentially retaliatory fashion. He explained they were speaking up now because they realized his silence had empowered the person to continue this behavior with others and expressed a commitment to following college policy to ensure such incidents do not happen again.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

During announcements, Senator Sanchez shared flyers for a fundraiser tomorrow at Oath's Kitchen between 11:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. to benefit the Early Childhood Education Lab School. She also announced that the AI Book Club would meet on February 20th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Senator Adams announced that a student-athlete, Ian Mowad, had earned a scholarship to St. John's to attend law school while playing sports. He also invited the Senate to the Men's Cancer Awareness baseball game this Saturday, February 14th, at 11:00 a.m., where the team will wear powder blue jerseys.

Senator Mellos provided an update on Common Course Numbering, noting that while Phase two courses are moving forward with a Fall 2026 effective date, Phase three courses are temporarily paused due to ongoing negotiations with the UCs and CSUs.

Senator Dalrymple reminded the body that open enrollment for part-time faculty healthcare is ongoing throughout the month and emphasized that faculty must re-enroll every semester using a simple one-page form. He noted that the benefits office is holding office hours, with the next session on Wednesday, February 11th, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Senator Siminski reported on discrepancies in FTE calculations for ESL classes under the new attendance accounting method, noting that a six-unit class historically at 40% load is now being calculated at 38%. She encouraged other departments to report if they are seeing similar issues.

President Pearson provided a detailed update on the Brown Act, explaining that recent provisions allowing remote attendance and voting via Zoom have sunsetted. She noted that unless senators are willing to post their home addresses on the agenda and open their homes to the public, remote attendees are currently restricted to observer status and cannot vote. She mentioned new legislation, SB707, which will allow remote attendance for "just cause" starting July 1st, and highlighted an upcoming ASCCC webinar on February 25th regarding these changes.

President Pearson offered an apology for the previous meeting, which ran significantly over time without a formal vote to extend the meeting. She stated her intention to better manage the time moving forward but noted she was glad the healthy conversation took place.

## **AGENDA CHANGES**

None.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MSC: Adams/Sanchez**

Faculty Senate to approve the minutes for February 9, 2026 as amended.

The motion carried.

## **ACTION**

### **A. Committees on Committees (Exhibit 1) – Zavodny**

**MSC: /**

Faculty Senate to confirm the results of the ballot for the regular committee appointments.

The Motion Carried.

**MSC: /**

Faculty Senate to confirm the results of the ballot for the hiring committee for the Associate Dean: Workforce Community, and Continuing Education.

The Motion Carried.

**Yvonne Hardy (Workforce Development), Faculty**

### **B. Curriculum Committee- (Exhibit 2), Mellos**

**MSC: Shmorhun/Mufson**

Faculty Senate to approve the curriculum items from the February 20<sup>th</sup> = meeting excluding the Graphics Arts non-credit program.

The motion carried.

#### **Results of the vote:**

**In Favor – 14**

**Opposed- 3: Senators Backman, Falcone, Jarvinen**

**Abstentions – 6: Senators Adams, Elliott-Pham, Martinez, Shmorhun, Wolters & Zavodny**

Discussion points included:

Senator Mellos presented curriculum changes made during the February 4th Curriculum Meeting.

A senator raised a significant objection to the inclusion of "Graphic Designer 1: Foundations of Digital Imaging," arguing that the course description, focusing on photo enhancement, editing, and compositing constituted a territorial overlap with Photography and Media Studies. A debate followed regarding the lack of communication between overlapping departments. It was noted

the course was a non-credit mirror of an existing credit course and that the department and dean had followed proper proposal channels.

Senators expressed concern that pulling the course would delay the certificate program by a full year for students, but a Senator mentioned a feeling of "subject creep" remained as an unresolved historical issue.

It was suggested that broader representation on the Curriculum Committee could prevent such conflicts in the future. The amended motion to approve the curriculum minus the Graphic Arts program carried.

## **INFORMATION**

### **A. ASG Report – No Current Representative**

No Report

### **B. Equitizing the Course Outline of Record - (Exhibit 3), Mellos**

Senator Mellos updated the body on equitizing the Course Outline of Record, noting new Title V requirements that mandate DEI components in at least two areas for new or changing courses and one for programs. She encouraged departments to utilize training materials on Canvas and offered support from curriculum representatives.

### **C. Update on Interim VPI Hiring Process - (Exhibit 4), Pearson, Shmorhun**

President Pearson initiated the update by acknowledging an administrative error regarding the initial placement of a faculty member on the Vice President of Instruction (VPI) hiring committee. She explained that she had improperly placed a volunteer on the committee and that the individual had since graciously stepped down to allow the Senate to follow the correct governance process. A new call for volunteers was issued earlier that day, and Human Resources (HR) has allowed the window for placement to remain open until the next Senate meeting on February 23rd to ensure the position is filled properly.

The discussion shifted to a significant objection regarding the composition of the selection committee, specifically how the district is interpreting Board Policy (BP) 7120. It was explained that the district maintains ultimate authority over the hiring process. The core of the dispute centers on Table 3 of the policy, which outlines committee membership. HR insisted on following a truncated "interim" row for the VPI search, whereas faculty leaders argue that the VPI position is of such institutional importance and can be held for up to two years that it should follow the more robust "permanent" row. It was noted that faculty voices are more limited in the "interim" composition compared to the "permanent" row, which includes a much larger cadre of representatives.

Senator Shmorhun emphasized two primary points to HR: first, that the Faculty Senate must be given adequate time to follow its internal governance processes for call-outs rather than being rushed during a time Senate cannot meet, and that the language in Table 3 explicitly states it "applies to both permanent and interim appointments". HR and the district representatives maintained a different interpretation of the policy language.

The district presented three possible options for moving forward: continuing with the current committee as-is - minus the Senate appointment, beginning a "re-engagement" process, or moving to a direct appointment of a VPI. While HR expressed a desire to avoid direct appointment, they asserted that policy and education code grant them the legal authority to choose any of these paths.

Another senator added that the faculty's concern is about the "voice" of the committee rather than the "length" of the process. They pointed out that HR's goal was to streamline the search by avoiding the forums and second-level committees required by the "permanent" row, but faculty believe a two-year VPI appointment justifies the full process.

The body discussed the precedent being set by HR, who claimed that ten interim positions since 2023, including an interim library manager, have followed the truncated committee row. It was argued that using these "smaller positions" as precedent for the VPI role is problematic and that faculty should not let such instances go uncontested in the future.

There was also a specific debate regarding the phrase "if applicable" in the policy; faculty argued it meant the truncated row only applied to positions not already listed in the table, but HR did not agree with this interpretation.

The district is currently engaging legal counsel regarding these interpretations, and the Senate was informed that the choice between the three options now rests with the district.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **A. President Search Listening Session Feedback - (Exhibit 5), Pearson, Shmorhun**

Senator Shmorhun provided a detailed overview of the faculty feedback gathered during the listening session held on February 5th regarding the search for a new Superintendent-President.

Approximately twenty faculty members attended the session, participating both in person and via Zoom to contribute to a "wish list" of qualifications for the next leader. Shmorhun noted that the sentiments expressed during the session largely mirrored previous discussions within the Faculty Senate.

### **B. Pride Center Faculty Coordinator Job Description Update – (Exhibit 6.1 & 6.2), Mudgett**

Benjamin Mudgett, currently serving as the Faculty Pride Center Coordinator, presented proposed revisions to the position's job description alongside Lene Reynolds, the center's full-time Classified Coordinator.

The revised description emphasizes the coordinator's responsibility for educational program development, student success standards, and faculty involvement in governance and accreditation

processes. It was highlighted that the coordinator is deeply involved in professional development specifically noting the upcoming launch of a Safe Zone training as well as program review and institutional planning in collaboration with the classified coordinator.

A substantive change presented was the request to extend the coordinator's term from two years to three years. It was argued that a three-year cycle is more effective, as the first year involves a steep learning curve, the second allows for growth and the establishment of a leadership style, and the third year provides the opportunity for that leadership to "blossom" while maintaining continuity for students and staff.


A Senator clarified that the move toward using the broader term "affinity groups" was intentional, as the center has expanded its work to include Chicano Studies, Black Africana Studies, and various other groups. It was emphasized that the queer experience is multifaceted and not monolithic, and the job description should reflect the multifaceted nature of those intersections rather than being limited to a single program.

**C. Increase in Senate Part Time Membership Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) Update – (Exhibit 7.1 & 7.2) – Shmorhun, Dalrymple, Martinez, Siminski.**

Tabled.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52 pm.

Respectfully Submitted  
  
Michael A. Mufson, Secretary