



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FACULTY SENATE

May 4, 2026

APPROVED

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT: Ben Adams, Russell Backman, Elijah Barnes (ASG), Mary Ellen Brooks, , William Dalrymple, Heather Elliott Pham, Gene Gushansky, Jason Jarvinen, Scott Klinger Lawrence Lawson, Melissa Martinez, Michael Mufson, Beth Pearson, Russell Sheaffer, Tanessa Sanchez, Karl Seiler, Nina Shmorhun, Nicole Siminski (Zoom), Alyssa Vafaei, Ashley Wolters, Anastasia Zavodny

ABSENT: Alexandra Doyle Bauer, Kelly Falcone, Vickie Mellos

GUESTS: Erin Feld, Matt Grills, Sherehe Hollins, Elena Villa Fernandez 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 Adams addressed the body regarding remarks made concerning General Education (GE) requirements, specifically those related to health. He expressed that the rationale that health information is easily accessible via the internet was not collegial and was offensive to the profession. Adams argued that such a perspective undermines all disciplines because, while information exists online, the role of professors is to guide students in filtering and using that information to make wise life decisions. He concluded that these comments demonstrated exactly why such requirements are essential for teaching students a necessary skill set for their quality of life.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Senator Mufson highlighted an event report from "One College Many Stories," drawing particular attention to the recommendations section.

Senator Mufson announced the closing weekend of "Dracula," describing it as a relevant feminist revenge fantasy.

Senator Adams announced a report on athletic successes, noting that the baseball, softball, and women's sand volleyball teams all won their respective competitions over the weekend. While the volleyball team was scheduled to compete at Mt. SAC, both the baseball and softball teams will have upcoming home games. The baseball schedule was set for Thursday through Saturday while softball was scheduled for Friday through Sunday.

President Beth Pearson provided several administrative updates, starting with the approval of a sixth faculty hiring position. While five positions had been previously approved, a sixth was added for nursing faculty because the program cannot remain compliant with accreditation requirements without that faculty.

President Pearson also addressed a concern regarding the position announcement for the Dean of Math, Science, and Engineering (MSE), which had been released without faculty consultation. She reported that there was no "past practice" of reaching out to faculty for dean announcements, though it was noted that faculty feedback from a previous search had been incorporated. She noted that faculty would still be involved in developing screening materials and interview questions.

President Pearson announced that two actionable items had been completed regarding the Enrollment Task Force,: a student-staffed call center went live to ensure a "real person" answers the phone, and outreach letters were mailed to the families of graduating high school seniors to encourage Palomar enrollment.

Senator Dalrymple announced a successful One Faculty Week, which included a screening of a film followed by discussion, messaging to the Governing Board, and listening sessions for both full-time and part-time faculty that provided valuable community feedback.

Senator Seiler announced a reports of extreme understaffing in IS, describing an instructor who was left on hold for 45 minutes only to reach a recording stating the office was closed.

AGENDA CHANGES

None.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MSC: Adams/Sanchez

Faculty Senate to approve the minutes for April 27, 2026 as amended.

The motion carried.

ACTION

A. Committee on Committees - (Exhibit 1), Zavodny

MSC: Zavodny/Shmorhun

Faculty Senate to approve the results of the hiring committee ballot.

The Motion Carried.

Hiring Committee: Manager Tutoring Services - Yuan-Lin (Annie) Lee (Math), Faculty

Hiring Committee: Director Information Services - Jason Jarvinen (Workforce Development)

Hiring Committee: Dean MSE (Nursing)- Camille Chae (Nursing), Faculty

Hiring Committee: Dean MSE (Math) - Annette Squires (Math), Faculty

Hiring Committee: Dean MSE (ESES) - Catherine Jain (Cathy) (Earth, Space & Environmental Sciences), Faculty

Hiring Committee: Dean MSE (Biology) - Lesley Blankenship-Williams (Biology), Faculty

Hiring Committee: Dean MSE (Chemistry) - Shannon Andrews (Chemistry), Faculty

Hiring Committee: Dean MSE (CSIT) - Ghenni Abila (CSIT), Faculty

Hiring Committee: Dean MSE (Physics/Engineering) - Quan Nguyen (Physics/Engineering), Faculty

B. Faculty Senate Discussion regarding updates to Faculty Senate Constitution- (Exhibit 2.1, 2.2, & 2.3), Shmorhun, Dalrymple, Martinez

MSC: Gushansky/Lawson

Faculty Senate to approve a single ballot with two separate and anonymous constitution voting items for a one-week period.

The Motion Carried.

Discussion points included:

The body debated whether to send these changes to the full faculty as a single item or to split them; the consensus was that the technical "cleanup" edits should be separated from the more significant eligibility change.

Members discussed the timeline for the vote, settling on a one-week window to ensure results before the end of the semester.

Clarification was sought regarding the rights of individual senators to express their personal opinions via campus-wide emails during the voting period, and the Senate leadership agreed to research governance documents on this matter.

C. President/Superintendent Hiring Committee - (Exhibit 6), Zavodny – (Moved to action from Discussion Item A)

MSC: Sheaffer/Adams

Faculty Senate to approve the three questions (The two standard interest and equity questions and the newly proposed question regarding presidential qualities) to be sent out with the call for volunteers with a timeline of May 15th.

The Motion Carried.

INFORMATION

A. ASG Report, Barnes

Elijah Barnes presented the Associated Student Government (ASG) report, highlighting several upcoming student-involved events, including a Cinco de Mayo celebration featuring various campus clubs and a mental health-focused event scheduled for the 13th of May. Miller also informed the Senate that the ASG is currently conducting elections for next semester's board members. Because many experienced student representatives are transferring out of the institution after the current term, the Senate was advised to expect several new student faces participating in campus committees moving forward.

B. Great Committee Call – (Exhibit 3), Zavodny

Senator Zavodny presented the list of open committee seats for Fall 2026 that has been updated. Committees that have confirmed their meeting times with chairs were specially marked. The current round for volunteers closes at noon on Friday, after which a detailed packet of volunteer information will be sent to senators for review over the weekend in preparation for Monday's confirmations.

C. Call for New Senators – (Exhibit 4), Pearson

President Pearson presented a detailed chart that organize available senate seats by terms ending in 2027, 2028, and 2029. Pearson emphasized that departments are limited to two full-time faculty representatives and noted the addition of two part-time seats in each of the three senator classes. There is a full class of seats available for 2029 terms.

President Pearson encouraged members to self-nominate or recruit colleagues to ensure a full Senate, noting that interest has been high thus far.

D. Notice of Council Position up-coming Elections - (Exhibit 5), Pearson

President Pearson presented a notice of upcoming elections for Senate Council positions, which are held annually at the end of the semester for the roles of Vice President, Secretary, and a newly proposed "Historian" position. The Historian title is a suggested replacement for the "Past President" position.

President Pearson clarified the associated release time for these roles, noting that while the Vice President and Secretary receive 20% release time, the At-large and Historian positions do not. Nominations are limited to sitting senators, and the duties of the Council include weekly Wednesday meetings to set the Senate agenda.

DISCUSSION

A. President/Superintendent Hiring Committee - (Exhibit 6), Zavodny

Senator Zavodny presented regarding the hiring committee for the President/Superintendent.

It was explained that the district had requested names for the committee, specifically two full-time and one part-time faculty member, extremely quickly. While the Senate leadership pushed back on the timeline to ensure proper consultation, the body focused the discussion on what specific questions should be asked of faculty volunteers.

A senator proposed that in addition to the standard interest and equity questions, volunteers should be asked what they believe are the most important qualities in an incoming president. The Senate agreed this was a vital addition, and the item was elevated to action and approved.

(See Action Item B)

B. AI Syllabus Policy statement recommendations - (Exhibit 7), Shmorhun

Senator Shmorhun presented the recommended AI syllabus policy statements, which were developed in conjunction with the college's AI coordinator and the Academic Standards and Practices Committee (ASP). Senator Shmorhun emphasized that these drafts are intended as optional resources for faculty to support transparency, rather than mandatory templates.

A senator sought clarification on the default policy if an instructor does not include an AI statement; it was noted that under administrative procedures (AP 5505), unauthorized AI use is currently treated similarly to receiving unapproved assistance from another person.

It was shared that students have specifically requested more transparent policies because they are confused by the differing standards across various classrooms.

A senator pointed out that some language in the draft regarding FERPA and health data appeared to be directed at instructors rather than students; Senator Shmorhun acknowledged this was a placeholder and stated that the language would be refined by the AI task force and privacy experts before finalization.

C. Eligible subsidiary bodies of Senate- (Exhibit 8), Zavodny

Senator Zavodny presented a document concerning the possible identification of eligible subsidiary bodies of the Senate under the Brown Act.

It was explained that if a committee is designated as an eligible subsidiary body, it significantly eases teleconferencing requirements: only one member needs to be at a physical location open to the public, and other members can participate remotely without opening their private residences to the public.

Senator Zavodny noted that for a committee to qualify, it must generally serve an advisory role rather than having final decision-making authority.

A senator questioned where the line is drawn between a "decision" and a "recommendation," noting that while groups like the Curriculum Committee or FSA Review Committee make impactful choices, their actions are technically subject to final approval by the Senate or the Governing Board.

A senator strongly advocated for designating as many committees as possible as subsidiary bodies, arguing that the current strict teleconferencing rules are a major barrier for part-time faculty and those working at satellite centers.

Senators, especially those serving on the listed committees, were asked to review the provided chart and document and send feedback to Senator Zavodny so the discussion can be finalized at the next meeting.

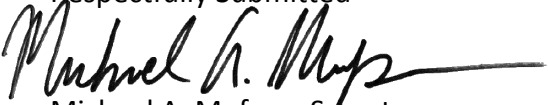
D. College Hour, Pearson

Tabled.

ADJOURNMENT:

The meeting was adjourned at 3:52pm.

Respectfully Submitted



Michael A. Mufson, Secretary