



CMU Faculty Senate MEETING MINUTES

Date: September 4, 2025, 3:30 – 5:00pm

Venue: Library 331 Conference Room

Senators/Representatives present:

Karl Castleton, Cassie Fenton, Ann Gillies, Eli Hall, Yen-Sheng Lee, Christopher McKim, Steve Merino, Josh Meuwly, Christine Noel, James Perez, Jenny Radomski, Markus Reitenbach, Stacie Schreiner, Megan Sherbenou, Rachel Weinzimmer, Cher Hendricks, Leilani Domingo

Senators/Representatives Absent:

Kathy Diehl, Richard Scott

Guests:

Chad Middleton, Mary Jo Stanley, David Weinberg, James Ayers, Margot Beckett, David Collins, Kyle McQuade, Zeynep Ozsoy, Lisa Driskell, Denita Weeks, Cassie Fenton

Renae Phillips- Recorder

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call by Sign-In
 - a. President Merino calls meeting to order at 3:30pm

- II. Consent Agenda

- a. DFAC Year-End Report 2024-2025
 - b. DFAC Meeting Minutes from November 19, 2024
 - c. UCC Meeting Minutes from August 28, 2025

**Motion: to accept the Consent Agenda
(Schreiner, Seconded Weinzimmer); Motion Carried**

- III. Approve Faculty Senate Minutes from May 1, 2025

**Motion: to approve Faculty Senate Minutes from May 1, 2025
(Hall, Seconded McKim); Motion Carried (Sherbenou/Lee/Perez abstained)**

- IV. Information Items

- a. Possible Senate involvement in Academic Open House
 - i. Discussion: Rachel Weinzimmer and Chris McKim shared they would be interested in helping plan. (October 24th)
 - b. Streamlined Emeritus process
 - i. Chad Middleton discussed that he has been working on the process to create a system like Tenure/Promotion to implement a newly streamlined process for Emeritus Faculty. Chad Middleton will update the Faculty Senate webpage, to include the application and the process for applying. Chad Middleton wants to pilot the new process/application starting 2025-2026 academic year.

V. Continuing Business

- a. Climate Survey results and new Senate priorities
 - i. President Marshall discussed the priority list from the climate survey and believes in its effectiveness. Cher Hendricks shared the complete survey results with Merino, and he has requested that the Faculty Senators review the results for the next Faculty Senate meeting. Markus Reitenbach believes that we should create a process on how to best build the priorities from the survey.

VI. New Business

- a. President Marshall on state funding and CMU's budget picture
 - i. President Marshall: Has meetings/conversations with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee and would like to discuss any concerns and comments being brought forward at today's meeting. Discussed the financial and non-financial priorities for the Faculty Senate to focus on throughout the year/years, understanding that many of the items would be multi-year goals. President Marshall is pleased with the progress on those priorities. President Marshall wants to identify that setting goals was very useful to make progress with clarity and transparency. He feels that it was a useful process and would like to continue to create goals and priorities to focus on along with the Faculty Senate. He also discussed that there has been a recession from the State of Colorado for the current 2025-2026 fiscal year and anticipate the continuation of such in upcoming years. Discussions are continuing with the health insurance brokers to create the 2026 coverage. The quote provided is extremely high and thus the team are working on a plan to help minimize the impact on all employees and the university.
 - ii. Discussion: Chris McKim asked if there have been estimates on how much the budget recession was this year and what to expect for future years on the state budget. The current recession was \$500,000 and had to be returned immediately upon recession. The budget contingency has covered that recession for this fiscal year. It is unknown and hard to predict what the next fiscal year(s) will budget change will be and how it will affect CMU overall. Eli Hall asked for clarification on where the conversation currently is for the state funding formula changes. The budget committee is reviewing the funding formula and President Marshall is strongly lobbying for CMU. Megan Sherbenou asked if the COLA decision changed based on the current fiscal year or if it was a prior decision? President Marshall discussed the fact that COLA was changed prior to the current fiscal year to focus creating a plan. Megan Sherbenou wanted clarity on if the 5-year cycle on COLA means that the departments will not see increases in salaries for 5 years. President

Marshall explained that there is a need to focus on costs that are static (i.e. electricity, food, etc.) and that the university will add investment to people as the budget allows. Megan Sherbenou emphasized that the biggest concern for faculty is that a 5-year cycle may make/break an individual's ability to pay their living costs. Karl Castleton asked President Marshall if he believes we've done enough for adjunct faculty pay over the last two years and with the decrease in budget, how are they going to be affected? President Marshall stated that there have been communications about where and how the available funds are utilized across the board. Thus, where are funds distributed across the board. President Marshall stated that the tenure/tenure-track faculty are the backbone of the university, and the negotiation of how funds are distributed. President Marshall stated that adjunct faculty tend to teach courses and understand that the pay is seen as an "honorarium," as adjunct faculty tend to have employment elsewhere. President Marshall reiterated that there are numerous tenure/tenure-track positions currently posted and encourage those adjunct faculty looking to move into a full-time position to seek out those opportunities. Chris McKim stated that he believes that adjunct faculty do not see their pay as an "honorarium," but as necessary employment, and that the only option in some departments to gain employment as a faculty member is through adjunct positions. Cassie Fenton encouraged President Marshall to provide more communication announcements on why changes are/were made to refresh the review of the priorities. David Weinberg expressed that he has not been able to identify any faculty member who understands the COLA changes and the long-term financial discrepancy of losing those funds. He shared an example that through a 5-year plan, that would mean that there would need to be an 11% increase in those 5 years to match what COLA would have given. However, the long-term financial discrepancy would be thousands of dollars as it is not being compounded per year. President Marshall believes that if another survey were given, that the impact of COLA on faculty pay would be different than the priority presented three years ago, as the effect is being seen now. President Marshall asks for help on how to move forward. David Weinberg stated that he believes that without COLA, faculty are losing salary each year and identifies how it is currently being presented as a false dilemma. Denita Weeks asked why there was a decision to do a 5-year cycle instead of a 3-year cycle. President Marshall stated it was based on what the university believes can reasonably be done financially across the board for increases. Stacie Schreiner stated that the faculty who have reached out to her recently, have communicated that there is a great deal of fear with pay versus living expenses. Stacie Schreiner reiterated the fact that many of the faculty who communicated with her, as the Faculty Representative to the BOT, feel that CMU's investment to keep/retain them employed at CMU is not matching. Stacie Schreiner stated that many have indicated that they need to seek employment in their industry and thus leave higher education, she asks how we best

communicate with those who are not present at the Faculty Senate meetings what administration is doing, i.e. communicating processes, steps in those processes, changes, updates, etc. President Marshall asked for reflection and feedback on how to do that effectively from his end.

VII. Reports

a. Provost Report, Cher Hendricks

- i. At the August Board of Trustees meeting, she shared the two chapters of the handbook, including the changes to the instructor ranking. The BOT will review and vote on those changes at the October meeting. If approved by the Board of Trustees, faculty would be able to apply for promotion beginning in Fall 2026.
- ii. Has the Faculty Senate provided an open forum option during meetings? There is a suggestion that Faculty Senate might investigate creating something that allows for “public comments” in the meeting.

b. Faculty Trustee Report, Stacie Schreiner

- i. First Board of Trustee meeting was on August 22, 2025
 1. Wayne Smith received the Human Scale University Champion Award
- ii. Census/Retention:
 1. The census is flat from 2024-2025. After having a greater than 3-% increase in the incoming freshman class, the 2025-2026 freshmen class enrollment has held steady. CMU has just over 11000 students enrolled in Fall 2025.
 2. Retention rate was 78% from last year to this year.
- iii. Budget:
 1. When looking at key expenditures, university compensation is the biggest at 38% (\$84 million) which is up 20% from 2 years ago.
- iv. Housing update:
 1. Phase I of the new campus apartments will increase beds by roughly 330. The building will also include small retail options. When looking at the cost of room/board (for 10 months), CMU is competitive in Grand Junction to encourage and make it feasible for students to live on campus.
 2. Phase II plan could happen in the future for growth, but not at this time.
 3. There is land near CMU Tech that could be developed for housing (like faculty/staff) in the future. This would not include any retail. There is also a plot of land on 20 Road that could be a development at some point in the future.
- v. Marketing:

1. New marketing campaign with bold colors and new graphics that will include our core values is starting to roll out this month, and will be seen in billboards, paper graphics (bilingual), video marketing, etc.
 2. There will be video ads being released in September that take a different approach to marketing. Not like every other University. A fictitious “Featherstone University,” will be a perspective of “its not who you know, but who you are.”
- vi. AI/Data Protection:
1. This summer there was an increase in ghost applications that were admitted and received financial aid. Some even were in classes. It is a new way to gain financial aid through scamming institutions.
- vii. CMU 100 Year Anniversary/Celebration:
1. Following the BOT meeting there was the kickoff for the CMU 100 Year Anniversary Celebration and then there was a ribbon cutting for the Davis House on 7th Street.
 2. It is important to note that the 100 Year Celebration is being funded through foundation/donations and is not being sponsored and paid for by state funding.
- c. CFAC report, Christine Noel
- i. Next CFAC meeting is scheduled for Friday, September 12th from 9-12pm on Zoom. Noel cannot be present, so looking for a proxy. Megan Sherbenou will cover the meeting on Noel’s behalf.
- d. VP report, Christopher McKim
- i. Gathering final reports from standing committees. Working on best options for creating/recreating Standing Committee lists.
- e. Student Government Report, Leilani Domingo
- i. Initiative for the year will continue to focus on safety, especially crossing 12th Street as we’ve continued to see pedestrian/car accidents. ASG Senate/House has passed resolution on how clubs will be funded this year.
- f. Executive Committee Report, Markus Reitenbach
- i. Asked President Marshall to join the Faculty Senate meeting. Some point this year we should focus on reviewing the Senate committees.
- g. President’s Report, Stephen Merino
- i. No report

VIII. Adjourn

Motion: to adjourn the meeting

(McKim, Seconded Castleton); Motion carried 4:58p