

CMU Faculty Senate MEETING MINUTES

Date: February 19, 2026, 3:30 – 5:00pm

Venue: Center for Teaching and Learning

Senators/Representatives present:

Karl Castleton, Kathy Diehl, 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, Richard Scott,

Senators/Representatives Absent:

Leilani Domingo

Guests:

Mary Jo Stanley, Chad Middleton, Margot Beckett, Dave Weinberg

Rena Phillips- Recorder

- I. Call to Order and Roll Call by Sign-In
 - a. President Merino calls meeting to order at 3:31pm

- II. Committee Minutes and Reports to Approve
 - a. CMU Tech Curriculum Committee meeting minutes from February 10, 2026
Motion: to approve CMU Tech Curriculum Committee meeting minutes from February 10, 2026 (Schreiner, Seconded Reitenbach); Motion Carried
 - i. Discussion: NA

- III. Approve Faculty Senate Minutes from February 5, 2026
Motion: to approve Faculty Senate Minutes from February 5, 2026 (Reitenbach, Seconded McKim); Motion Carried; abstained Noel
 - i. Discussion: NA

- IV. Information Items
 - a. Faculty Senate Officers for 2026-2027 AY
 - i. Discussion: Speak with Merino if you have any questions about the different positions.

- V. Continuing Business
 - a. New Faculty Senate priorities

- i. Discussion: Most are being worked on and looked at. Financial priorities are the largest theme. There will be open forums with President Marshall hosted by Stacie Schreiner in March for faculty ask and questions they desire. The location, dates and times will be determined and shared. Sherbenou shared that she wished that the town halls would have more concrete updates on budget areas, including enrollment, salaries, etc. It would be nice to see/hear what President Marshall shares with the Senate Committee on the state budget. Also, there is a strong desire to have even more transparency, to fully understand areas that seem to be countering themselves. Weinberg would like to see the historical aspect, too. Weinzimmer would like to revisit the timeline for progression of Faculty Senate priorities.

b. Assessing and improving the Policy and Procedures Manual for Faculty Senate Standing Committees

- i. Discussion: Reviewed the Side-By-Side Comparison form handed out by Merino.
 1. Academic Policies Committee. McKim asking if the third bullet point “Establish policies regarding student grievances and academic appeals issues” is what the committee does. Sherbenou stated that the committee does provide recommendations. Hendricks believes that the second bullet point “Recommend to Faculty Senate specific modifications to the CMU PPEH as needed to reflect academic policies approved by the Faculty Senate” should be removed. Merino questioned the fourth bullet point “Study learning resources needs in relation to overall University programs and make recommendations.” It was determined to remove the fourth bullet point.
 2. Faculty Success. Hendricks believes that the second bullet point “Establish and review policies relative to faculty publications and research activities” spirit is more about tenure and promotion criteria, review/recommend changes and updates. Hendricks shared that it might be best to add periodic review of course evaluation and modification to the fourth bullet point, “Determine best practices for faculty success at a national level for CMU consideration”. Merino recommends that the Faculty Success Committee should be known as Faculty Policy Committee.
 3. Distance Learning and Technology. Middleton had suggested having the committee dissolved as it doesn’t meet very often. Castleton fears that faculty insight will not be shared if the committee is dissolved. Hendricks recommends that there is a meeting expectation for committees if it is not dissolved. Fenton shared that another option is to add a bullet point under the Faculty Policy Committee to cover these specific committee needs. Weinzimmer recommended changing the Faculty Policy

Committee to Faculty Success Committee and add the bullet point that it serves as an advisory to issues related to teaching technology, then dissolve the Distance Learning and Technology Committee.

4. Library Advisory Committee. Middleton stated that he spoke with Sylvia Rael, Library Director, and she is strongly against dissolving the committee. Scott shared a statement from Rael indicating her strong belief in keeping the committee. Scott shared that the committee does meet twice a semester.
5. Pre-Tenure Review Committee. Weinzimmer recommends that it be called “Pre-Tenure and Promotion Review Committee”.
6. Distinguished Faculty Award Committee. Discussed the elimination of the anonymous aspect of the committee.
7. Curriculum Committees (Graduate, CMU Tech, Undergraduate). Hall reminded to updating the Vice President to Provost.
8. Faculty Salary and Benefits. Merino stated that there was discussion on the Executive Committee about the proposed changes. Weinzimmer wants clarity on the term usage of “liaison”. Weinberg stated that they survey and lobby on behalf of those surveyed to the Faculty Senate. Reitenbach recommends that the discussion on this committee be tabled for today.

c. Updating Faculty Senate’s Constitution and Bylaws to reflect changes to PPEH/CHAPS and an opportunity for other changes and updates

- i. Discussion: McKim/Sherbenou/Hall recommends that there is a seat at the table for non-tenure track and adjunct faculty per department decision.

VI. New Business

- a. Proposal to add honors recognition to graduate degrees
 - i. Discussion: tabled to next meeting

VII. Reports

- a. Provost Report, Cher Hendricks
 - i. No Report
- b. Faculty Trustee Report, Stacie Schreiner
 - i. Faculty & Academic Affairs Highlights
 1. Human Scale University Award was presented to Verner Johnson in celebration of his 50th year of teaching at CMU.
 - ii. Strategic Conversations: Adult Learners
 1. There were ongoing discussions focused on adult learners and the development of a long-term institutional strategy related to

programming, delivery models, and future student population trends. These conversations emphasize aligning academic offerings with workforce needs while maintaining CMU's commitment to access, quality, and student success across diverse learner demographics.

iii. State Budget & Higher Education Funding Updates

1. Updates were provided regarding the state budget outlook and the higher education budget hearing process. This included discussion of the state funding formula working group, on which Michelle Quinn is serving. These updates highlighted the evolving landscape of state funding priorities and their implications for institutions of higher education across Colorado.
2. It was determined by the BOD to give a one-time cash bonus for all permanent non-executive employees. Ongoing evaluations will be done after reports from the JBC on state funding for the next fiscal year.

iv. Treasurer's Report

1. The Treasurer reported that CMU's Commerce investment portfolio balance stands at \$45,924,117. A preliminary state budget forecast for FY 2026-27 indicates a projected \$1.3 million change in funding for CMU.
2. On January 9, President Marshall presented to the Joint Budget Committee (JBC), highlighting inequities within the current higher education funding formula. Despite CMU's enrollment growth outpacing all other Colorado institutions since 2000, the formula has not kept pace with the university's growth or mission. The presentation emphasized CMU's improved retention rates for first-generation and Pell-eligible students, as well as the university's lowest tuition revenue per student among state institutions—reflecting both declining support and CMU's ongoing commitment to affordability.

v. Enrollment Update

1. Current enrollment stands at 9,832 students. While overall headcount is down slightly, full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment is up. This shift is partially attributed to a decrease in high school concurrent enrollment, with those students taking fewer credit hours.

vi. Operating Expenditures

1. For FY 2026, operating expenditures are budgeted as:
 - a. Compensation: 39% (\$95,510,081, up from just over \$84 million actual in FY 2025)
 - b. Student Financial Aid: 25%
 - c. All Other Operating Costs: 27%
 - d. Debt Service: 6%
 - e. Student Hourly Wages: 3%

vii. Federal Higher Education Legislation

1. The One Big Beautiful Act was signed into law in July 2025 and will take effect beginning July 2026. This legislation includes several significant changes to federal student aid programs:
 - a. Graduate PLUS loans will be eliminated
 - b. Parent PLUS loans will be capped at \$20,000 annually and \$65,000 aggregate per dependent
 - c. Federal student loan limits will be adjusted for students enrolled less than full time
 - d. Workforce Pell Grant eligibility will be expanded to include short-term programs (8-15 weeks in length)

viii. Housing, Facilities, and Academic Planning Updates

1. Housing & Parking Planning

- a. The Housing Working Group provided an update on ongoing discussions related to future campus infrastructure needs, including proposals for a parking structure and additional on-campus housing options. Potential locations were reviewed, with estimated costs of approximately \$50,000 per parking space for a structured garage. No decisions have been made at this time, and evaluation of options is ongoing.

2. Dining Services

- a. Construction of the new dining hall is currently underway, representing continued investment in student services and campus life.

- ix. President Marshall and Stacie Schreiner will do a question-and-answer type of open forum with dates and times to be shared.

c. CFAC report, Christine Noel

i. New reduced credit bachelor's degree

1. CO statute currently mandates 120 credit hours
2. Between 90-120 credit hours for a bachelor's degree
3. Current stance:
 - a. 43% support in principle w/safeguards
 - b. 26% open to pilots but cautious about broad adoption
4. Preferred path:
 - a. 48% support creating a defined "reduced-credit bachelor's degree" program type in statute
 - b. 17% support creating an intermediate credential between associates and a bachelors
5. Essential safeguards priorities
 - a. 59% clear student disclosures
 - b. 55% bachelor's level learning outcomes and rigor demonstrated

- c. 46% clear credential labeling, e.g., “applied bachelors”
- d. 46% HLC aligned review and approval process
- 6. Biggest risks prioritized:
 - a. 74% student confusion
 - b. 57% transfer misalignment
 - c. 39% licensure, specialized accreditation issues
 - d. 35% erosion of gen ed breadth
- 7. Most potential value:
 - a. 57% applied technology, IT, data programs
- 8. Willing to pilot?
 - a. 39% yes
 - b. 39% possibly
 - c. 22% no

d. VP report, Christopher McKim

- i. No report

e. Student Government Report, Leilani Domingo

- i. No report

f. Executive Committee Report, Markus Reitenbach

- i. No report

g. President’s Report, Stephen Merino

- i. No report

VIII. Adjourn

Motion: to adjourn the meeting

(Weinzimmer, Seconded Hall); Motion carried 4:57p