

College Council Meeting Minutes
FISHER COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS
1:30-3:30pm, May 9, 2025

2024-2025 Member Attendees Present

Biological Sciences: Daniel Caetano (Co-Secretary) and Elana Ehrlich; **Chemistry:** Nicole Carbonaro (Vice-Chairperson) and Shannon Stitzel; **Computer and Information Sciences:** Jinie Pak; **Mathematics:** Jing Tian and Na Zhang; **Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences:** Parviz Ghavamian (Chairperson) and Jia-An Yan; **STEM Education:** Kristin Frank (Co-Secretary); **Lecturers and Clinical Faculty:** Miriam Parnes; **Staff:** Kara Berger, Hannah Berry, Kristin Pinkowski; **Students:** Jaelyn McCracken (Chemistry; Undergraduate), Miracle Eze (Biology, Graduate).

2025-2026 Member Attendees Present

Biology: Vonnie Shields; **Computer and Information Sciences:** Weixian Liao; **Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences:** Alan Jackson, **Staff:** Jennifer Streb.

Non-Voting, Ex-Officio Members Present:

Dean: Matthew Nugent; **Associate Dean:** Ming Tomayko; **Building Manager:** Josh Wilhide.

Visitors: Steve Book, Amanda Charles, Cynthia Cooper, Mary Devadas, Ellen Hondrogiannis, Howard Kaplon, William Shipley.

Absent: Nam Nguyen, Nichole Mason, Christopher Salice.

1. Approval of the minutes from the April 11, 2025 FCSM Council meeting with unanimous consent.
2. Announcements and remarks from Dean Nugent.
 - A. End of year FCSM social/town hall will be held on Friday, May 23, 2025.
 - B. Enrollment Update for AY25-26
 - 1) 72% of current FCSM students that can re-enroll have enrolled. 460 undergraduates have advising holds preventing them from enrolling. 100+ undergraduates without advising holds are still not enrolled. Advisors should reach out to their advisees that have not re-enrolled to understand why they might not be enrolled.
 - 2) As of May 9, 2025, there are 3,142 TU contracts for incoming students (these are admitted students who have submitted a deposit and intend to enroll). FCSM has 782 first-year student contracts, 174 transfer student contracts and 109 graduate student contracts.
 - C. The U.S. Department of Education issued a "Dear Colleague Letter" to institutions of higher education to inform them that they are going to be held responsible for students defaulting on student loans. The proposal described in the letter is that if more than 30% of students default on the loan the government will withhold funding, such as Pell Grants.
 - D. Human Resources is updating the language of faculty job postings so new faculty positions will not be posted until after June 15, 2025.
 - E. Research Conference on Artificial Intelligence in Interdisciplinary Research is May 19, 2025.
 - F. The Dean's office will fund approximately 40 student researchers in summer 2025.

- G. Associate Dean Chris Salice is establishing a writing club to provide faculty with a planned time to focus on writing papers and grants.
- H. Associate Dean Chris Salice and Chemistry Department Chair, John Sivey, are planning an event for assistant professors about building a research portfolio on June 12, 2025.
- 3. Updates and announcements from Associate Dean Tomayko
 - A. FCSM will pilot a model like CBE where student ambassadors are hired to support the college at admissions events. Students will receive a \$1000 scholarship for the 2025–2026 academic year.
 - B. Collegewide guidance for best practices around academic integrity is being established. Associate Dean Tomayko is working with department chairs to identify faculty and staff who can provide insights and contribute to this work.
 - C. Student trained advisors, modeled after the CIS advising hub, may be piloted for some biology majors in AY 25–26.
 - D. Planning is underway for fall semester professional development events, book club, and community time events. There will also be career center events throughout the fall for FCSM students including a field trip on the Friday of Fall Break to local industries.
- 4. Announcements from Council Chairperson
 - A. The Fisher College Council Chair is developing a document for best practices for what College Council members can share as announcements and issues to bring to the council.
- 5. Notes from the visit from Vice Provost, Cynthia Cooper, and Steve Book from the Office of General Council on the TU Policy on Appointment, Rank and Tenure of Faculty (ART).
 - A. Revision of the TU ART document began in 2016. Parties involved include a task-force committee, Provost's Office, and TU Office of General Counsel, and Office of the Attorney General (lawyers at the USM level).
 - B. TU ART document must align with the USM Policy on Appointment, Rank, and Tenure of Faculty. This USM Policy requires TU ART document be approved by Office of the Attorney General and USM Chancellor.
 - C. The new ART document will require departments and colleges to establish some of their own rules and procedures in their own PTR documents. Additionally, where possible, procedures about how policies are implemented are being removed from the TU ART document so they can be modified without needing to go through the full ART document review that includes the Office of the Attorney General and USM Chancellor.
 - D. Feedback can be sent to artrevision@towson.edu.
- 6. Highlights from FCSM Departments
 - A. The following full-time FCSM faculty members were promoted to higher ranks effective August 2025:
 - 1) Mary Devadas (Chemistry), Matthew Hemm (Biology), Keith Reiber (Chemistry), and Mircea Voisei (Mathematics) were promoted to Full Professor.
 - 2) Stephen Hancock (Chemistry), Khanh-Hoa Tran-Ba (Chemistry), and Neda Saeedloei (Computer & Information Sciences) were promoted to Associate Professor.
 - 3) Mona Tavakolan (Computer & Information Sciences) was promoted to Clinical Associate Professor.
 - 4) Andrew Hawkins (Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences), Nicolas Kudsieh (Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences), Emily Morsberger (Mathematics), Miriam Parnes (Mathematics), Christa Partain (Biology), Eriks Perkons (Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences), and Tevis Tsai (Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences), were promoted to Associate Teaching Professor (formerly known as Lecturer II).

5) Dimitra Douskas (Chemistry), Daniel Macks (Chemistry), Stanley Max (Mathematics), and Rajeev Walia (Mathematics) were promoted to Teaching Professor (formerly known as Lecturer III).

- B. The Biology Department is working to revise the curriculum with a focus on the content of classes so that prerequisite courses cover fundamental concepts.
 - C. The first cohort of the MD HIRE program, which aims to expand the capacity of Biology faculty to incorporate undergraduate students in their lab, finished the week of April 28, 2025. Faculty were trained in resolving conflicts, optimizing the advising role, and making the interactions with the students more structured, effective, and efficient.
 - D. Sonia Shah, a 2024 Guggenheim fellow and author of *The Next Great Migration*, will give a seminar on September 12, 2025.
 - E. Cindy Wolfe, Chemistry Administrative Assistant II, recently completed the Building Bridges Across Maryland staff development program.
 - F. A new Graduate Certificate Program in Forensic Firearms and Toolmarks has been approved by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) and USM. This program will be in the Department of Chemistry.
 - G. Two Computer and Information Sciences (CIS) PhD students defended their dissertations today, May 9, 2025. Presentations for master's program case study and independent study projects were also held on May 9, 2025.
 - H. Kristin Pinkowski, the Hill-Lopes Scholars Program Coordinator, and Katie Sayers, Clinical Assistant Professor of Biology, represented FCSM on the TU Interfaith America grant committee for AY24-25. This group produced a Religious Accommodations Syllabus Statement that will be presented to Academic Senate for approval as well as a guide for students on how to engage in religious, spiritual, or secular conversations/dialogue in and outside of the classroom, including information on how to request religious accommodations.
 - I. Four undergraduate mathematics majors defended their undergraduate thesis. They will graduate with departmental honors.
 - J. The Department of Physics, Astronomy & Geosciences (PAGS) held an open house for their master's program.
 - K. PAGS held a Society of Physics Students (SPS) ceremony on May 2, 2025. Dr Stephanie Getty, Deputy Director of Solar System Exploration at NASA/Goddard gave a talk and 7-8 students were inducted into SPS society.
 - L. Staff representatives planned a potluck to get staff together at the end of the semester.
 - M. STEM Ed faculty continue to work on program changes aligned with the Blueprint for Maryland's future. Program changes are mostly complete, and this summer faculty will work on curriculum changes to many of the STEM Ed courses.
 - N. Undergraduate clubs are hosting study sessions for final exams. There are numerous events on campus recognizing and honoring graduates. STEM students are being recognized in these events.
 - O. The Graduate student representative developed a survey to distribute to graduate students prior to summer.
7. Standing Agenda Items
- A. Senate update/communications
 - 1) The Provost reported that while this year's budget cuts are manageable, the financial outlook for future fiscal years remains uncertain. One upside: first-year student enrollment for AY 25-26 has surpassed 3,100 students and continues to grow.

- 2) The Senate held elections for the positions of Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and Member-at-Large for the 2025–2027 academic years.
 - 3) Senators approved the list of faculty receiving Emeritus status for this year.
 - 4) There was an in-depth discussion of the proposed Attendance Policy, which includes provisions for a Wellness Day. The Senate overwhelmingly recommended that the Provost approve the policy as presented, without amendments.
 - 5) The Senate passed a motion to pause the disbanding of the Women's and Gender Studies (WGS) Department. This pause will allow affected faculty, departments, and programs to submit a proposal to the University Curriculum Committee outlining a rationale for the next steps
8. Ongoing Issues/Initiatives/Old Business
- A. Nicole Carbonaro provided an update on the results from the Spring 2025 lecturer survey. FCSM Lecturers expressed concern over pay, job security, work environment, and promotion and advancement opportunities. A summary and details of the responses will be shared with the Dean and department chairs.
 - B. Motion to request of the Dean to request a faculty member of College Council be on the Science Complex (SC) building committee. Vote: 15 in favor, 0 against, and no abstentions.
 - C. Motion to request a member of the University Space Committee attend the Science Complex (SC) building committee meeting. Vote: 15 in favor, 0 against, and no abstentions.
9. New Business
- A. Elections for 2025-2026 FCSM Council. Shannon Stitzel was elected Council Chairperson. Nicole Carbonaro was elected Council Vice-Chairperson. Jennifer Streb and Kristin Pinkowski were elected co-secretaries.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kristin Frank, co-secretary