

College Council Meeting Minutes
FISHER COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS
1:30–3:30 p.m., September 12, 2025

1. Attendance

A. 2025–2026 Member Attendees Present

Biological Sciences: Daniel Caetano and Vonnice Shields; **Chemistry & Forensic Science:** Nicole Carbonaro (Vice-Chairperson) and Shannon Stitzel (Chairperson); **Computer and Information Sciences:** Nam Nguyen; **Mathematics & STEM Education:** Kimberly Corum and Na Zhang; **Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences:** Alan Jackson and James Overduin; **Teaching Professors and Clinical Faculty:** Miriam Parnes; **Staff:** Kara Berger, Hannah Berry, Jennifer Streb (Co-secretary); **Students:** Kamiya Plummer (Biology; Undergraduate), Urja Desai (Chemistry and Forensic Science; Graduate).

B. Non-Voting, Ex-Officio Members Present

Associate Dean for Teaching & Student Success: Ming Tomayko; **Associate Dean for Research & Faculty Success:** Chris Salice; **Building Manager:** Josh Wilhide.

C. Visitors

Ellen Hondrogiannis, Howard Kaplon.

D. Absent

Weixan Liao, Dean Matt Nugent, Kristin Pinkowski (Co-secretary).

2. Approval of Minutes

The minutes from the May 9, 2025 FCSM Council meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

3. Announcements and Remarks from the Dean's Office

- A. The Dean's Office announced Fall semester events and workshops. These include Community Time (September 30 from 2-3 p.m. in SC 5220), an Effective Feedback workshop (October 16 from 12-1 p.m. in SC 4230), a session on Presenting versus Teaching Science (September 16 from 10-11 a.m. in SC 4230), a workshop on Letters of Recommendation (September 25 from 3-4 p.m. in SC 4230), and a Going Beyond Topic session (September 29 from 3-4 p.m. in YR 320).
- B. Faculty were invited to attend workshops on finding Funding Opportunities with the Office of Sponsored Programs and Research. These workshops are scheduled for September 24, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. in SC 4230, and on September 30, 2025, from 1 to 3 p.m. in SC 4230.
- C. Announcements regarding Undergraduate Research (UGR) included the upcoming conference on September 25, 2025, with abstracts due on September 17. Additionally, UGR grant proposals are due on September 26, 2025.

4. Announcements from the Council Chairperson

- A. The Academic Senate provided updates including an attendance policy revision and the addition of a Wellness Day to not be used during final exams. The wellness policy will take effect in spring 2026.
- B. Council members were reminded of federal digital accessibility compliance requirements for posted documents. By April 2026, documents must be provided in searchable PDF format. Faculty are encouraged to demonstrate progress toward this goal, even if perfection is not yet possible. Questions should be directed to Alissa Herrington at FACET.

5. Highlights from FCSM Departments

- A. Biology:
 - 1) The biology department will host a seminar/workshop on effective teaching on September 17th at 10AM in SC4230: Series: Presenting vs. Teaching Science and How to Evolve. Topic: Teaching students to become problem solvers (critical thinkers): how and why to focus on mental model development
 - 2) MS BIOL 4th Annual Gradfest: Friday 26. September & Friday 3. October. SC 2226. 12-1:30 p.m.
 - 3) New faculty starting this semester: Nicole Barbour, Carmen Falcone, Krista Kraskura, and Crystal Uminski.
 - 4) Search for a new Vertebrate Physiologist.
- B. Chemistry & Forensic Science:
 - 1) Accolades and Achievements
 - a) Congratulations to Sonali Raje and Mary Devadas on the renewal of their MHEC grant, entitled Enhanced College and Career Readiness for Oxon Hill and Charles H. Flowers Scholars.
 - b) Kelly Elkins and alum Kelsey Marlette (BS FCHM 2020, MS FRSC 2022) published a book chapter entitled Spectroscopic Analysis of Counterfeit Wood Products and Application of Forensic Botany to Solve Criminal Cases.
 - c) Ryan Kearney (BS CHEM 2022, MS ENVS 2024), Seth McCoy (BS CHEM 2022), current CHEM major Lucas Hoffman, Keith Reber, and John Sivey published an article.
 - 2) Upcoming Seminars (unless otherwise noted, all seminars start at 11 a.m. in SC 4230)
 - a) October 9: Sweeting Student Seminar – Sophia Smithson (PI: Stephen Hancock)
 - b) October 23: Raspet Student Seminar – Amie Yansane (PI: Stephen Hancock)
 - c) November 6: Raspet Student Seminar – Lucas Hoffman (PI: John Sivey)
 - d) November 13: Jean Dreyfus Faculty Seminar – Prof. Karthis Manthiriram, Caltech (Host: Mary Devadas)
- C. Mathematics:
 - 1) New Faculty Welcome
 - a) Nicholas Witt, Visiting Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education
 - b) Ali Gurbuz, Postdoctoral Teaching Assistant Professor
 - 2) Upcoming Events
 - a) Actuarial Science and Risk Management (ASRM) Job Fair – Friday, 9/19/2025, 12-3 p.m. (UU Ballroom A)

- b) Mathematics Colloquium – Monday, 9/22/2025, 3:30 – 4:30 p.m. (YR 320)
 - i. Dr. Bimal Sinha (UMBC, Department of Mathematics and Statistics)
 - i) An Introduction to Statistical Meta-Analysis with an application.
 - ii) Statistical Meta-Analysis (SMA) deals with developing valid statistical methods which can be used to combine results from several independent studies all with a common goal. Applications of SMA abound in the literature. In this talk I will present a variety of scenarios requiring SMA and discuss one application in detail, which is the celebrated common mean problem based on samples from independent normal populations with unequal and unknown variances.
 - iii) Refreshments will begin at 3 p.m.
 - iv) Note: This talk would be accessible to both faculty and students. Please see the flyer in the MATH announcements folder and distribute it to your students!
- c) Differentiation Bee – Thursday, 10/23/25, 6:30 p.m. (Location TBD) This event is open to all undergraduate students! All derivatives can be solved using techniques from MATH 273. Please see the flyer in the MATH announcements folder and distribute it to your students!

D. PAGS

- 1) This semester we welcome a new faculty member in the area of computational biophysics, Dr. Abdul Naseer Malmi-Kakkada.
- 2) Alan Jackson is the college's newest Fisher Endowed Chair.
- 3) Earlier this morning (9/12/25) our department seminar was given by one of our own alumnae, Kielan Hoch (TU '18), who received her PhD in astrophysics from UCSD (2022), won a prestigious Giacconi Fellowship at the Space Telescope Science Institute, and has just published her first first-author paper in the prestigious journal *Nature* ("Silicate clouds and a circumplanetary disk in the YSES-1 exoplanet system," 2025).

E. STEM Education

- 1) Updates:
 - a) Course revisions to support COE changes related to the Blueprint a.
 - i. New courses: PHSC 141 / BIOL 123 to be offered beginning in Fall 2026.
 - ii. Revised courses: MATH 204 (offered this semester), MATH 205 (to be offered beginning Spring 2026)
 - b) COE is offering an online integrated STEM pedagogy course for their Mathematics MAT and Science MAT graduate students.
- 2) Upcoming Events:
 - a) Sabbatical Talk – Peggy McNeal (PAGS) Friday, September 26th at 11 a.m. in SC 1230.

6. Old Business

- A. Building meetings will occur on the first Wednesday of each month from 1:30 to 2:00 p.m. in SC 5220. Nicole Carbonaro volunteered to serve as the CC member representative, with Ellen Hondrogiannis serving as backup.

7. New Business

- A. Faculty were reminded that applications for the Board of Regents Faculty Awards are due November 14, 2025. Faculty interested in applying must obtain Dean approval and submit the first five pages of the application to the Office of the Provost by September 29, 2025.
- B. The FCSM Elections Procedures Document is outdated and requires revision to align with current practices. Cody Sandifer will attend the October meeting to discuss his draft of the updated protocol. The council will vote on the draft before it moves to the Academic Senate. Related changes to the bylaws will also be considered.
- C. Council members discussed factors influencing student success in FCSM courses, noting that the highest percentage of spring 2025 courses with DFW rates exceeding 35% were in the FSCM College. The Council agreed to begin a process of brainstorming and forming working groups to identify strategies for improving student outcomes. Suggested areas for exploration include course design, advising, interventions, student ownership, and social and emotional factors.
- D. The Council agreed to initiate the brainstorming exercise, with a motion made by Nicole Carbonaro and seconded by Daniel Caetano. The motion was approved.

7. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Streb, Co-Secretary