

# Constitution of the Jess and Mildred Fisher College of Science and Mathematics

Ratified by the Academic Senate, September 11, 2023

The mission of the FCSM College Council (hereafter, “Council”) is to enact, ensure, and enhance shared governance within the college, working with the Dean and appointed representatives to develop, recommend, review, or provide feedback about policy, initiatives, or other issues that impact the well-being, working conditions, and betterment of the college community in support of the FCSM College mission.

Working towards this mission, the Council will be representative, advisory, collaborative, and active. It is **representative** in that it welcomes input and includes voices from key stakeholders in the community, including students, faculty, and staff. It is **advisory** in that it recognizes that the ultimate approval of college-level policy is within the purview of the Office of the Dean (except for that which falls under university policy). It uses a **collaborative** approach in its interactions with the Dean’s office, college committees, and the broader FCSM community. It is **active** in its approach to shared governance, including in its participation in the enactment and dissemination of policy.

## 1) Membership of the Council

- a) Table 1 describes the Council’s voting members, their electorates, eligibility, and term lengths.
- b) Non-voting, ex-officio members, i.e.:
  - i) The Dean and Associate/Assistant Dean(s) of the college
  - ii) The Science Complex Building Manager
  - iii) An individual in the Dean’s office, if assigned, who occupies a position that focuses on efforts related to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ)
- c) Electorates relevant to the Council
  - i) Groups who elect members of the council are specified in Table 1.
  - ii) For matters requiring a college-wide vote, the college-level electorate includes:
    - (1) Full-time faculty members (i.e., tenured faculty, tenure-track faculty, clinical faculty, and lecturers) who are not acting as full-time administrators,
    - (2) Department chairpersons regardless of their teaching load, and
    - (3) Full-time staff members.
  - iii) The electorate for the College Promotion and Tenure Committee consists only of those full-time faculty members of the College and departments in tenured or tenure-track positions.

## 2) Officers of the Council

- a) See Table 2 for the Officers of the Council, their major responsibilities, and eligibility. Officer terms:
  - i) All officer positions have a term length of one year.
  - ii) Officers may run again so long as they will continue to serve as a member of the council.
- b) Officer elections:
  - i) Officers will be elected at the May meeting of the year preceding the year of service.
  - ii) Those eligible to vote in this election are the voting members of the council that will serve during the year in which the officers being elected will serve.

**Table 1.** Voting members of the Council

Category	Number	Electorate	Eligibility	Term
Departmental Faculty Representatives	2 per department	Full-time faculty members of each department	Must be full-time faculty members; at least one member from each department must be tenured; department chairs are not eligible	3 years
STEM Education Faculty Representative	1 for the college	Full-time STEM education faculty members	Must be a STEM education faculty member (with a primary responsibility towards pre- or in-service teacher education); must be tenured	3 years
Inclusive Student Success Program Representative	1 for the college	Staff and faculty who work within or are formally affiliated with programs that support the success of students from groups who have been historically marginalized in STEM (e.g., Bridges, Hill-Lopes, TOPS)	Must be a staff or faculty member who works within or is formally affiliated with programs that support the success of students from groups who have been historically marginalized in STEM (e.g., Bridges, Hill-Lopes, TOPS)	3 years
Lecturer / Clinical Faculty Representative	1 for the college	Full-time lecturers and clinical faculty	Must be a lecturer or clinical faculty member, having taught full time in the college for at least two consecutive years prior to serving on the Council	3 years
Staff Representatives	3 for the college	Full-time staff members	Must be full-time staff members, each having served for at least two consecutive years prior to the first year of service on the council	3 years
Student Representatives	2 for the college	Appointed by the Council Chair*	Must be full-time students; one should be an undergraduate and the other a graduate student; their majors should be in different departments	1 year

\* The Chair will make appointments in consultation with graduate program directors (for graduate student representatives) and department chairs or faculty advisors (for undergraduate representatives). Efforts will be made to rotate departments from which students are appointed each year. Also, if a formal FCSM Student Council (graduate and/or undergraduate) is formed, these student representatives may be elected by those groups instead of being appointed by the Council Chair.

**Table 2.** Officers of the Council

Position	Number	Major responsibilities	Eligibility
Chair	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serving as presiding officer of the Council and Chair of the Executive Committee</li> <li>• Generating and overseeing the distribution of Council and Executive Committee Meeting agendas</li> <li>• Appointing student/faculty representatives to Council and college committees as specified in the Constitution and Bylaws</li> <li>• Liaising with the standing and other committees of the council (as described in the bylaws)</li> <li>• Liaising with the FCSM staff (or Staff Group/Council if formed) and FCSM students through SGA/GSA representatives and/or FCSM Undergraduate or Graduate Student Groups/Councils (if formed)</li> <li>• Managing the document sharing site for the Council</li> <li>• Liaising with Academic Senate and Towson University Staff Senate and disseminating relevant information from these university groups to the Council</li> <li>• Attend College Council Chairs meetings with the Academic Senate Executive Committee once per semester (or find a replacement from the FCSM Council Executive Committee to serve in this capacity)</li> <li>• Writing and submitting an annual report to the Academic Senate for the year served as Chair</li> </ul>	Must be a tenured faculty member
Vice Chair	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assisting the Chair and presiding over Council meetings in the Chair's absence</li> <li>• Ensuring that Roberts Rules of order are followed during Council meetings</li> <li>• Facilitating college-wide gathering of information (e.g., through surveys/forms) not including elections</li> <li>• Assisting the Chair with activities related to liaising with university senates, college committees, and college staff or student groups</li> <li>• Corresponding with those invited to visit the Council</li> </ul>	Can be any voting member of the council
Co-Secretary	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recording, updating, finalizing, and disseminating minutes for all Council and Executive Committee meetings</li> <li>• Corresponding with invited guests and others at the request of the Chair</li> </ul>	

### **3) The Executive Committee**

- a) The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Council, the Dean and Associate/Assistant Dean(s) of the College who serve in a non-voting capacity.
- b) The duties of the Executive Committee are:
  - i) Executing the decisions of the Council.
  - ii) Preparing and distributing the agenda of Council meetings to the electorate in advance of regularly scheduled meetings.
  - iii) Assuming interim responsibilities, as may be assigned to it by the Council, between regularly scheduled meetings of the Council.
  - iv) Initiating emergency action, subject to Council review at the Council's next meeting.
  - v) Seeing that information concerning all proceedings of the Council shall be disseminated to the college electorate, to the Member At large of the University Senate Executive Committee, and to appropriate members of the University community.
  - vi) Maintaining communication with standing committees of the council, including:
    - (1) At the beginning of each academic year to inform each committee of its membership, requirements for committee operation as per the bylaws, and secure electronic folder that serves as a repository for past and future committee information,
    - (2) Throughout the academic year as needs arise, and
    - (3) At the end of the year to gather annual reports and communicate changes in membership.

### **4) Council Agendas**

- a) Any group, organization, or faculty member may submit agenda items.
- b) All agenda items submitted shall be presented to the Council's Executive Committee at least one week before the meeting.
- c) Agenda items submitted by Council members must be included on the agenda by the second meeting of the Council after submission.

### **5) Meetings**

- a) The Council shall schedule monthly meetings during the fall and spring semesters.
- b) Cancellation of meetings for lack of business shall be made known to the College electorate.
- c) Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order, except that decisions shall be arrived at by a majority of those present and voting.
- d) A quorum shall consist of two-thirds of the voting membership of the Council. A quorum is required for any business to be transacted.
- e) The May meeting of the Council shall be a joint meeting of the outgoing and newly elected Councils. The incumbent Chair shall preside until the new Council elects its own officers.
- f) Meetings shall be open to all members of the University community and communicated each month to the college electorate, but participation is limited to representatives unless the presiding officer invites a non-member of the Council to speak on a particular issue.
- g) The Executive Committee may convene a special session of the Council when necessary and will be required to do so when requested by the Dean, Council Chair, or presented with a petition signed by one-third of the voting members of the Council.

- 6) Responsibilities of the Council.** The FCSM College Council operates within Towson University, the University of Maryland System, and the State of Maryland. As such, the FCSM College Council is subject to rules and regulations of those entities. The FCSM College Council shall have primary authority in the following areas.
- a) Through the Council:
    - i) Providing a forum for discussion on college issues that impact or have the potential to impact the well-being, working conditions, and betterment of the college community (i.e., FCSM students, faculty, and staff).
    - ii) Advising the Dean on matters of importance to the college community, including but not limited to policies, strategic planning, budget, and resource allocations.
    - iii) Determining, communicating, and promoting the position of the college community on all matters of university import, especially those relevant to the college.
    - iv) Communicating college-, university-, and system-level award opportunities to faculty and staff and contributing to the development of new or revised college-level awards.
    - v) Any other self-assigned responsibilities deemed consistent with the mission and initiatives of the college and university.
  - b) Through the Executive Committee:
    - i) Selecting members of standing and Ad Hoc committees that are appointed by the council chair, maintaining communication with these committees, and ensuring that these committees exercise their responsibilities.
    - ii) Generating, collecting, and archiving a written record of College Council meetings
      - (1) Minutes should have sufficient detail to enable a person not in attendance to follow the main idea of the topics/issues discussed, yet not be a verbatim record of all that was shared.
      - (2) Written records include minutes generated during general, Executive Committee, and Ad Hoc Committee meetings and other documents (e.g., policies approved by the council).
      - (3) Written records also include annual reports and minutes of college-level standing committees, gathered from these standing committees by the Executive Committee.
      - (4) The collection and archival of minutes, reports, and other documents related to Council business will be archived in a secure document sharing site for the Council (e.g., SharePoint)
      - (5) Minutes will also be shared with the college community on the FCSM website or college-wide document sharing site.
  - c) Through its college-level standing committees, which report to the Council and are required to provide an annual report to the Council in writing:
    - i) Maintaining standards and procedures for evaluation of faculty in the process of their appointment, retention, and promotion. (FCSM Promotions and Tenure Committee)
    - ii) Reviewing new or revised undergraduate and graduate courses and academic programs, and maintaining curricular standards for the college. (FCSM Curriculum Committee)
    - iii) Monitoring, implementing, promoting, and setting priorities for college-level diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) initiatives (FCSM DEIJ Committee; name of this committee is subject to change)

- iv) Communicating, advocating, and serving as a liaison with respect to recruitment, retention, reporting, scheduling, enrollment, and assessment work related to the preparation and professional learning of teachers by FCSM STEM education faculty and staff (FCSM STEM Education Committee)
  - v) Establishing and reviewing election procedures to nominate and elect college-wide representatives (e.g., on the FCSM Promotion and Tenure Committee), to ratify the FCSM Constitution, or vote for changes to the FCSM Promotion, Tenure/Reappointment, and Merit Committee Policies, Procedures, Criteria and Standards document. (FCSM Elections Committee)
  - vi) Reviewing student applications for college-level scholarships and encouraging the establishment of other scholarships in the college. (FCSM Scholarship Committee)
- 7) **Bylaws.** The Bylaws of this Constitution shall be approved by the Council by a two-thirds vote of all the voting members of the Council. The Bylaws must be ratified by the Academic Senate prior to implementation.
- 8) **Amendments.** Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by two-thirds of the voting membership of the College Council or by petition of 20% of the electorate of the College or by petition of 10% of those students whose declared majors are within the disciplines of the College. Ratification of a properly proposed amendment shall be by action of a simple majority of the electorate of the College or two-thirds of those voting. The Constitution must be ratified by the Academic Senate prior to implementation.

**Bylaws of the Jess and Mildred Fisher College of Science and Mathematics**  
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**1) General Considerations for Standing Committees**

- a) The committee structure of the Council shall be based upon the guiding principles of faculty-student shared governance, and, in addition, on the necessity for a committee structure that provides efficiency and establishes clear lines of authority and responsibility.
- b) Except as mandated by the Academic Senate, committees are agents of the Council, are responsible to the Council and shall submit their recommendations to the Council.
- c) In general, committee meetings shall be open except when matters concerning evaluation of faculty or students are involved. Dates, times and location of College committee meetings shall be publicized in advance.
- d) New committees may be formed, and present ones abolished by the Council as needed provided such action conforms to the Academic Senate policy.
- e) Each new committee shall, within two months of its formation (unless a different date is stipulated by the Council in creating the committee), submit its statement of duties and rules of procedure to the Council for approval. The statement of duties and the rules of procedure must be consistent with the motion creating the committee and with College Council and Academic Senate policy.

**2) Operating Procedures for All Standing Committees**

- a) Terms and Time of Election or Appointment
  - i) The terms of office for elected committees are three years for a faculty member and one year for a student.
  - ii) New committee members are elected or appointed (depending upon the committee) in the spring for the following fall; appointments may continue into the summer.
- b) Officers
  - i) Officers, which must include a chair, who also serves as a liaison to the Council, and a secretary.
    - (1) The duties of the chair include:
      - (a) organizing and leading meetings and other work related to the committee that occurs outside of meetings;
      - (b) following, revising, and maintaining procedures related to the committee, and keeping updated records of committee procedures within the secure electronic file sharing folder (e.g., SharePoint) provided by the Council;
      - (c) serving as a liaison to the Council, engaging in bi-direction communication with the Council Chair to, for example, provide updates about committee work, communicate about the annual report, etc.; and
      - (d) writing and submitting the annual report.
    - (2) The duties of the secretary include the recording of minutes, including attendance, and maintaining updated minutes within the committee's secure electronic file sharing folder provided by the Council.
  - ii) All officers serve for a one-year term.

- c) Meeting Frequency, Operation, and Voting
  - i) Meetings must occur at least once per academic semester.
  - ii) Robert's Rules of Order are followed.
  - iii) Votes are to be recorded at least by number.
  - iv) A quorum-number is a simple majority of the number of voting members on the committee.
- d) Documentation and record keeping
  - i) Each committee is expected to maintain a folder within the Council's secure electronic sharing site (e.g., SharePoint) that includes meeting minutes, committee procedures and policies, and the annual report.
  - ii) Committees that work with sensitive documents (e.g., the Promotion and Tenure Committee) should keep these sensitive documents in a separate location.
- e) Annual report
  - i) An end-of-year report is to be submitted by May 31 to the Council by its inclusion in the committee's secure electronic sharing site. Once uploaded, the committee chair/liaison must notify the Council Chair that it has been submitted.
  - ii) The report shall contain an outline of major accomplishments, substantive changes in procedure, and significant problems which need attention.

### 3) Standing Committees of the Council with Elected Representatives

- a) **Promotion and Tenure Committee.** The composition, election and duties of the Promotions and Tenure Committee are listed in the appropriate section of the FCSM Promotion, Tenure/Reappointment, and Merit Committee Policies, Procedures, Criteria and Standards document; the Towson University Policy on Appointment, Rank, and Tenure of Faculty document; and the Towson University Faculty Handbook. An additional proviso is that the Assistant and Associate Deans of the College are also excluded from service on this committee.

#### b) Curriculum Committee

- i) Composition and Selection
  - (1) The Curriculum Committee shall be composed of five full-time faculty members and two students, with one full-time faculty member elected from each department of the College. The Dean of the College shall serve *ex officio* and in a nonvoting capacity.
  - (2) Graduate program directors and directors of interdisciplinary undergraduate programs shall serve *ex-officio* in a non-voting capacity, and shall be invited to, and expected to participate in, deliberations that focus on their programs.
  - (3) Student membership shall be by appointment by the Council Chair in consultation with the Dean of the College. These appointments should be based on nominations made by the chairs of the departments after consultation with student club officers. Student members must be declared majors within the disciplines of different departments of the College. In the event of a vacancy, the terms shall be filled by appointment by the Dean of the College.

ii) Responsibilities

- (1) Evaluate all new courses and academic programs, as well as changes to existing courses and academic programs, both graduate and undergraduate, proposed by FCSM departments. Proposals will be considered in a timely manner, and small changes to courses and programs may be approved upon receipt. New courses or programs and major revisions shall be discussed at formal meetings of the committee.
- (2) Uphold College-wide guidelines concerning course and program changes, and disseminate to FCSM departments any changes to similar guidelines at the University level.
- (3) Provide a written outline of the basis for denial of a course or program within the University curriculum system, along with any minority opinion.
- (4) Administer the appeals process. The written basis of the denial, along with a written response from the department, shall serve as a basis for the appeals process.

c) **DEIJ (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Committee (name subject to change)**

i) Composition and Selection: The DEIJ Committee shall be composed of seven full-time faculty members, two staff members, one administrative representative, and two student members.

- (1) One departmental representative shall be elected by and from the faculty members of each department.
- (2) Two faculty “Representatives-at-large”, from two different departments, shall be elected by and from the faculty members of the College
- (3) Two staff members shall be elected by and from the staff of the College
- (4) A member of the Dean’s office occupying a position that focuses on efforts related to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) shall serve ex officio.
- (5) Two student representatives whose declared majors are within the disciplines of different departments of the College shall be appointed by the Council Chair in consultation with the Dean of the College based on nominations of student representatives made by the Chairs of the Departments of the College, student clubs, and the Graduate Student Association. Efforts should be made to have one undergraduate student and one graduate student.

ii) Responsibilities. The DEIJ Committee shall:

- (1) Meet at least monthly during the Fall and Spring terms.
- (2) Establish and promote a FCSM-wide agenda to enhance diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility in the learning and scholarly environments in the College.
- (3) Oversee the development and maintenance of a College-level strategic DEIJ plan (in alignment with University strategic plans), including attention to ongoing accountability, and monitor departmental plans that support the institutional plan.
- (4) Liaise regularly about DEIJ-related issues and efforts with University- and department-level diversity committees, the College Council, the Dean’s Office, and the FCSM community generally.
- (5) Identify and support opportunities for education and professional development around DEIJ issues within FCSM for faculty, staff and students, in partnership with other University bodies and offices.

- (6) Advocate for diversity, equity, inclusion, justice, and accessibility initiatives within the departments and the College.
- (7) Participate in ongoing professional and personal development related to DEIJ.

**d) Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education Committee**

- i) Composition and Selection. The STEM Education Committee shall be composed of seven STEM education faculty and staff.
  - (1) There shall be two faculty representatives from mathematical and computing sciences education (Departments of Mathematics and Computer and Information Sciences).
  - (2) There shall be two faculty representatives from biological and physical sciences education (Departments of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences).
  - (3) There shall be one representative (faculty or staff) each from Towson UTeach and the Towson University Center for STEM Excellence.
  - (4) Members shall be elected by and from the full-time STEM Education faculty and staff of each group named above.
  - (5) The FCSM STEM Education Director/Coordinator shall serve, ex officio, as chair of the committee.
- ii) Responsibilities
  - (1) Provide opportunities for communication and coordination of recruitment, retention, reporting, scheduling, placement, enrollment, and assessment work related to the preparation and professional learning of teachers by FCSM STEM education faculty and staff.
  - (2) Communicate mechanisms for dissemination of information and promote collaborative opportunities across FCSM STEM education faculty and staff.
  - (3) Serve as a liaison with College of Education and FCSM offices and committees on issues related to STEM Education
  - (4) Advocate for, and offer strategic guidance and mentoring to, the FCSM STEM education community.

**4) Standing Committees of the Council with Appointed Representatives**

**a) Elections Committee**

- i) Composition and Selection
  - (1) The Elections Committee shall be composed of three faculty members, each from a different department.
  - (2) Membership shall be by appointment of the Chair of the College Council in consultation with department chairs of faculty being considered for appointment.
  - (3) The chair of the Elections Committee is the individual on the committee with the most experience on the committee, typically the individual in their third year of service, unless the members unanimously agree otherwise.

ii) Responsibilities

(1) At the beginning of each fall semester:

- (a) Review the FCSM Elections Procedures document; if revisions are required, edit and submit changes to the Council for approval.
- (b) Provide an election plan (including timeframe) to the Council for the academic year for all known upcoming elections for that academic year; include the relevant electorates for each election.

(2) Conduct elections procedures, including:

- (a) A nominations and elections phase to fill the positions of outgoing at-large members of the College Council; the College Promotions and Tenure Committee; and the Resource Planning and Advisory Committee (RPAC).
- (b) Those related to the ratification of the FCSM Constitution or vote to approve changes to the FCSM Promotion and Tenure document.
- (c) Special elections, if needed, to fill positions vacated by committee members caused by leaves, sabbaticals, sickness, resignations, etc.

(3) In conjunction with the Dean's Executive Assistant and Council Chair, maintain committee and council membership lists including expiration dates of terms.

**b) Scholarship Committee**

i) Composition and Selection

- (1) The Scholarship committee shall be composed of one faculty member from each department plus one student.
- (2) Membership shall be by appointment of the Chair of the College Council in consultation with department chairs from each department.

ii) Responsibilities

- (1) Review scholarship applications and provide rankings to the Dean.
- (2) Encourage the establishment of other scholarships within the College.

**5) Amending Bylaws.** These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the total Council membership providing that the motion to amend was introduced at the regular meeting preceding the one at which vote is taken.