

**College Council Meeting Minutes**  
**FISHER COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS**  
**1:30 – 3:30 p.m., April 10, 2026**

**Voting Members Present:**

**Biological Sciences:** Daniel Caetano and Vonnie Shields; **Chemistry & Forensic Science:** Nicole Carbonaro (Vice-Chairperson) and Shannon Stitzel (Chairperson); **Computer and Information Sciences:** Weixian Liao and Nam Nguyen; **Mathematics:** Kimberly Corum and Na Zhang; **Physics, Astronomy, & Geosciences:** Parviz Ghavamian and Jia-An Yan; **Teaching Professors and Clinical Faculty:** Miriam Parnes; **STEM Education:** Kristin Frank; **Inclusive Student Success:** Siamak Khalizadeh Salmasi; **Staff:** Hannah Berry (Co-secretary) and Jennifer Streb (Co-secretary); **Students:** Kamiya Plummer (Biology; Undergraduate), Urja Desai (Forensic Science; Graduate)

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

**Ex-Officio: Dean:** Matthew Nugent; **Associate Dean:** Ming Tomayko

**Visitors:**

William Shipley, Denise Hayman

1. Approval of the minutes of March 13, 2026, FCSM Council meeting.  
The minutes were approved with unanimous consent.
2. Announcements and remarks from Dean Nugent
  - A. Honors convocation will be celebrating student awards and scholarship winners.
  - B. Biotech Day, 10 vendors will be meeting with students and faculty.
  - C. Student enrollment for Fall is looking strong. Contracts for committed students are up at both University and FCSM levels. We look to be on target for meeting our enrollment goal for incoming class.
  - D. Budget – April 13, 2026, is the date the legislative budgets are set. USM is making up the difference of the cut for TU this year. The FY27 budget should be flat but we were advised to expect potential challenges for the following years.
  - E. The Simplification Task Force passed changes to faculty timesheets through the President’s Cabinet. Update includes faculty only submitting to document an exception. Work is also being done to improve processes for staff timesheets.
  - F. Business Travel is planning two pop-up dates for travel help with FCSM. Representatives for the Travel Office will visit the Science Complex and 7800 York Road to provide one-on-one assistance to process travel authorizations and travel expense forms in Stratus. Look out for the announcement.
  - G. Updates to Compliance Training include a few areas that provide test-out options.
  - H. University is Piloting a program called Finish in Four
    - 1) Program sets track and pace to keep students on track.
    - 2) If students cannot finish in four years due to scheduling issues, the University will cover the tuition cost to complete graduation requirements.
    - 3) Goal is to increase four-year graduation rate.

- I. The Forensics Ph.D. program is moving forward. The goal is to have a program open to accept students to start in Fall 2027.
  - J. The state has approved a 1.5% increase in COLA this year.
  - K. Science Complex Building HVAC was reviewed by 3Flow, who are working with Facilities to rebalance twelve spaces to help temperature and energy costs. Work will be over the summer.
  - L. The University Budget Office put out a call for funding requests. FCSM submitted for and received \$700,000 in support of equipment including NMR upgrades.
  - M. The Federal Bill updates requirements for Financial Aid. Potential challenges are expected, and Financial Aid will provide guidance.
  - N. Workload Guidelines – comments from departments were collected and compiled and went to the Deans and Chairs. Edits will be ongoing.
  - O. Big Give, April 22, 2026. Dean Nugent is challenging departments to donate and will reward the top departments operating funding. Donations can be used to support FUSE funding for student summer research.
  - P. Over 60 Applications received for FUSE program, with current funding able to support up to 40. Finalizations will be made and shared soon.
3. Announcements and remarks from the Associate Dean Ming Tomayko
- A. Final Admitted Student Day is April 11, 2026.
  - B. Call for Student Ambassador applicants for next year. Chairs can share application information, due May 1, 2026.
  - C. Academic Advising is looking for FYE Advisors. If interested, please contact Ming for more information.
  - D. Marketing and Communication asked for volunteers interested in becoming faculty experts. Training for media interaction is provided.
  - E. Doctoral Hooding Ceremony Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 3:30 p.m.
  - F. FCSM Commencement Wednesday, May 20, at 3 p.m. Department volunteers are needed.
  - G. FCSM Professional Advisor is currently out on leave, so duties are being redistributed temporarily. If you find any gaps or issues, please contact Ming to be sure students are supported to the best of our abilities, especially during reenrollment season.
  - H. The Equal Pay Symposium will take place on Saturday, April 18, 2026, at the Science Complex.
  - I. Community Time with Chris and Ming
    - 1) Thursday, April 23, 2026, 2-3 p.m., YR 208
    - 2) Tuesday, April 28, 2026, 2-3 p.m., SC 5220
4. Highlights from FCSM Departments and Constituencies
- A. Biological Sciences
    - 1) The Biology Department held an external review with Dr. Gail Hollowell from the North Carolina Central University (NCCU) and will receive a report and recommendation soon.
    - 2) Biology will have an election for the new College Council representative next week on Faculty meeting (April 14, 2026, 3:30 p.m.)

## B. Chemistry and Forensic Science

- 1) The following seminars will be held in SC 4230 from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
  - a. April 16, 2026 - Dogs Are Amazing Hazardous Substance Detectors, What Can New Technology Teach Us About Enhancing Canine Detection? The speaker is Bill MacCrehan, Ph.D. NIST Associate (retired) and Affiliate Professor Auburn University
  - b. April 23, 2026- Hooked on f-Elements: Addressing Needs in Energy and Sustainability. The speaker is Dr. Karah Knope, Georgetown University

## C. Mathematics

- 1) TU Actuarial Science & Risk Management (ASRM) Alumni Event. Wednesday, April 15, 2026, 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. (SC 2226) (Please RSVP!) Insight and Innovation: How Actuaries Turn Ideas into Impact.
- 2) Mathematics Majors: Celebration and Awards. Thursday, May 7, 2026, 3:30 – 4:45 p.m. (tentatively in YR 205) Join your fellow math majors and faculty as we recognize student achievements!
- 3) Integration Bee. Thursday, April 16, 2026, 6:30 p.m. (SC 2226). Please encourage your students to attend! (All integrals can be solved using techniques from MATH 274).
- 4) The following seminars will be held from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. in YR 321 with refreshments beginning at 3:30 p.m.
  - a. Monday, April 13, 2026 – Xiaoyin Wang (sabbatical talk)
  - b. Wednesday, April 29, 2026 – Miriam Parnes
  - c. Wednesday, April 22, 2026: Imtiaz Humayun

## D. Physics, Astronomy, and Geosciences

- 1) Tyler Hannesson is the new Goldwater Scholar. He works with Dr. Vera Smolyaninova.
- 2) May 1, Sigma Pi Sigma, Speaker: Dr. Macarena Garcia Marin, James Webb Telescope Project Scientist, Space Telescope Science Institute
- 3) Departmental Seminars:
  - a. April 10, 2026: Parviz Ghavamian sabbatical talk: “Collisionless Shock Physics & the Identification of Type Ia supernova Progenitors”
  - b. April 17, 2026: Christopher Stiles from JHU Applied Physics Laboratory to give a talk (title TBD).
  - c. April 24, 2026: Katherine Turk from NMNH, Smithsonian Institution to give a talk (title TBD).
  - d. May 8, 2026: Jia-An Yan sabbatical talk.

## E. STEM Ed

- 1) The STEM Ed faculty are working to increase interest in our programs and STEM education while also facilitating communication between FCSM and COE. Our faculty are supporting two events this spring. First faculty are attending the TU admitted student days to talk with students, pass out brochures, and share STEM education active learning (such as math games). Additionally, UTeach faculty and students will host a table at the Educators Rising Conference held on April 30.
- 2) STEM educators in FCSM are working to structure new courses for preservice elementary and middle school teachers that were formed from the consolidation of existing courses in response to changes made by College of Education in response to the Maryland Blueprint.
- 3) STEM Ed faculty are interested and willing to contribute to the next steps of the College Council project on Student Success. Some ideas for how STEM Ed faculty can contribute include: qualitative analysis of survey feedback, professional development, etc.

5. Standing Agenda Items
  - A. Senate update/communications
    - 1) Several Old Business motions were discussed. The first-review motion to amend the membership and charge of the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee passed by a vote of 13-7-3. A motion seeking clarification of the department chair's role in departmental PTR deliberations was postponed (24-0-0).
    - 2) Multiple Consent Agenda items were approved, including a second-review motion to amend the membership and charge of the Academic Assessment Council.
    - 3) Following substantial discussion, a motion addressing RPAC bylaws changes was postponed (18-5-0).
6. Ongoing Issues/Initiatives/Old Business
  - A. Workload Guidelines
    - 1) Feedback and comments from departments were collected and have been shared with Dean's Office and will be discussed amongst the leadership team. Discussions were held over key points and questions. Dean Nugent included encouragement to individual departments to specify further details within their own department documents.
7. Ongoing Issues/Initiatives/Old Business
  - A. FCSM College Bylaws – Vote
    - 1) Previously passed edits to the FCSM College Council Constitution
    - 2) Review of proposed edits to Bylaws, which include updates to keep language consistent, and including updates to committee chair positions. The Chair of the committee shall be determined by the committee. If there are no volunteers, the chair of the Curriculum Committee will be an individual with the most experience on the committee, typically an individual in their third year of service.
    - 3) Motion to pass amended FCSM College Council Bylaws was proposed and seconded. Vote (16-0-0) passed to accept the amended Bylaws proposed on the March 13, 2026, meeting.
  - B. Student Success Working Group Discussions
    - 1) Split into two working groups. Faculty perspectives of student success and one from student perspectives for suggestions of actionable items and recommendations. Last time, both sides discussed study guides. Goal is to work with the STEM Education group before formally presenting recommendations.
    - 2) Results shared – Students utilizing Tutoring Center, with piloting programs including virtual instructors, students stimulated and engaged when using STEM to solve urban problems.
    - 3) Results shared – Faculty perspective encourage conversation of impact of research and R2 goals on the importance of teaching. Resources for new faculty to learn how to teach at TU, considering our student diversity and culture. Faculty making office hours and extra help nonintimidating and inviting as a “Coaching Class” Class creation for a “Welcome to being a STEM major.”
8. New Business
  - A. Appendix 3 from ART Document
    - 1) Academic Senate is setting up faculty working groups to participate in discussion of aspects of the document, with a goal of gathering feedback by May 11, 2026.
    - 2) Brief discussion of key topics and clarification of proposed changes of Appendix 3.
9. Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Hannah Berry and Jennifer Streb