

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

1. Attendance

A. 2025–2026 Member Attendees 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:** Alan Jackson and James Overduin; **Teaching Professors and Clinical Faculty:** Miriam Parnes; **STEM Education:** Kimberly Corum; **Student Success:** Kristin Pinkowski (Co-secretary); **Staff:** Kara Berger, Hannah Berry, and Jennifer Streb (Co-secretary); **Students:** Kamiya Plummer (Biology; Undergraduate), Urja Desai (Forensic Science; Graduate)

B. Non-Voting, Ex-Officio Members Present

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

C. Visitors/Guests: Amanda Charles, Howard Kaplon, William Shipley (Mathematics)

2. Approval of minutes

The minutes from November 14, 2025, FCSM Council meeting were approved by unanimous consent.

3. Announcements and Remarks from the Office of the Dean

A. Announcements from Dean Matt Nugent

- 1) A reminder to attend the upcoming Fall forum
- 2) The Dean will provide regular updates from the building committee
- 3) The simplification workgroup has started their work
- 4) 10 areas of improvement were identified by the Busy work survey that will focus the simplification workgroups deliberations.
- 5) Will consult with folks to simplify procedures, including advising

B. Announcements from Associate Dean Ming Tomayko

- 1) Book club will resume next semester, and another book will be chosen for 26-27
- 2) Commencement will be Wed. December 17th at 10 a.m.
- 3) Ambassadors have been doing a great job with recruitment events
- 4) Digital accessibility – progress not perfection – faculty are encouraged to go a little at a time

4. Highlights from FCSM Departments & Constituencies

A. Biology

- 1) Mr. Jeremy Doggett has accepted the position of new Operations Manager for the Biology department and will be on January 7th.
- 2) The Biology Department is currently interviewing three finalist candidates for the Vertebrate Physiology Assistant Professor position. Two candidates visited the week of December 8th, and the final candidate will visit next week (week of December 15th).

B. Chemistry & Forensic Science

- 1) TU was represented well at the 2025 International Symposium on Human Identification in Palm Beach, FL. Congratulations to all our student and faculty presenters.
- 2) Lucas Hoffman (CHEM major) was selected as a TU nominee for a 2026 Goldwater Scholarship.
- 3) Chemistry and Forensic Science Organic Search is ongoing.

C. PAGS

- 1) The search for a new electronics shop manager (replacing Jeff Klupt after his retirement) is ongoing. Candidates have been identified for interviews with the hope of getting these done before Christmas.
- 2) We will have two new Teaching Assistant Professors in the Spring. Karen Cimino is shifting from staff to teaching faculty in science education, and Christy Metzger is joining the department in physics.
- 3) The annual Society for Physics Students “physics pumpkin drop” was held at the Science Complex Terrace on 31st October. Students were divided into six groups and had to use their estimation skills to predict the distance that the furthest seed would fly from a pumpkin dropped off the terrace onto the patio below. Six physics professors were dropped in effigy with their likenesses attached to the pumpkins. The winning group was “Pumpkin Kolagani” with a predicted distance of 1.7m and a measured distance of 2.5m.
- 4) On November 14th, a celebration of life was held in the Science Complex for Eddie Loh, a longtime PAGS chair and benefactor of many students through his generous scholarships.
- 5) A documentary on the interstellar object 1I/‘Oumuamua has just been broadcast on French television featuring contributions from PAGS faculty Alan Jackson and Chris Ready. This documentary was partly filmed in the TU planetarium.
Link: <https://www.france.tv/documentaires/documentaires-science/7696773-oumuamua-i-inconnu-venu-de-l-espace.html>

D. Student Success

- 1) FCSM will have 4 nominees for the Goldwater applications
- 2) This is the first time in the history of TU that we have 4 nominations Nominees
 - a. Anna Christou - Biology (Harberts)
 - b. Isabel Cole - Mathematics (McNew)
 - c. Tyler Hannesson - Physics (Smolyaninova)
 - d. Lucas Hoffman - Chemistry (Sivey)

5. Standing Announcements and Updates

A. Announcements from the Council Chairperson Shannon Stitzel

- 1) Academic Senate updates were shared. President Mark Ginsberg highlighted several achievements and challenges including that TU has secured over \$100 million in donations and more than \$50 million in research grants, but budget challenges from the state side may still happen.
- 2) Passed multiple motions, including the creation of new BS programs, such as Climate Change and Community Resilience.
- 3) Campus Engagement Survey results were presented by Steven Jones (SVP for Campus Operations) and Jennifer Stano (AVP for Human Resources). Faculty and staff responses showed notable improvement, contributing to TU being named one of only 76 universities nationwide to earn the prestigious “**America’s 2025 Great Colleges to Work For®**” designation.

B. Update from the Science Complex Building Committee

None

6. Ongoing Issues/Initiatives/Old Business

A. FCSM College Constitution Vote

- 1) Motion to vote by Nicole, seconded by Daniel
- 2) Discussion -none
- 3) Constitution was passed with all yes votes, no abstentions and no “no” votes
- 4) Next steps – will be sent out by the elections committee to the entire college for an all-college vote.

- B. Possible New FCSM Committee – Feedback from members
 - 1) Discussion of the possible new FCSM committee. PAGS voiced concern about circling back to lack of oversight, Biology department agrees, and no other feedback was shared.
 - 2) Members are encouraged to go back to their constituencies
- C. Factors for Student Success in FCSM Courses
 - 1) Discussion of Student Feedback Mechanisms
 - 2) Summary of Student Trial Survey
 - a. 42 student responses with 28 including short answer responses
 - b. Lack of time due to commitments, lack of motivation, and lack of focus cited as main hurdles
 - 3) January Working Group – Student Survey
 - a. Would work on zoom to tailor survey to targeted questions and set up a plan
 - b. Vonne, Jen, Kim, Kamiya and Urja volunteered
 - 4) Time Working Group
 - a. How to tackle this?
 - b. Vonne volunteered
 - 5) All council members are encouraged to think of their top 2 concerns/ideas to bring to February
 - 6) What campus resources already exist; how can we better collaborate

7. Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Streb and Kristin Pinkowski

Co-Secretaries.