

COLLEGE OF MARIN
ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES
March 5, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: 12:45 PM AC 303

Senators Present: Maria Coulson, Dave King, Caitlin Rolston, Cara Kreit, Kristin Perrone, Luna Finlayson, LyRyan Russell, Ian Sethre, Ron Oxford, Kyle Beattie, Rebecca Beal, Gina Cullen, Kevin Muller, Alex Jones

Senators Absent: Logan Wood

Invited Guests: Jonathan Eldridge

- I. **Agenda** approved (Muller/Jones).
- II. **Minutes** corrected to clarify information about Program Review (King/Muller).
- III. **Public Requests: Colleen Mihal, submitted via email and read aloud. Comment time extended by two minutes (King/Muller). Full text as follows:**
 1. Thank you for hearing my public comment. I have been a member of PRAC since 2019 and have serious concerns about the current state of the committee. My concerns are summarized as follows:
 2. **10+1 Concerns:** A new "temporary" PRAC process, including presentation template and rating process was proposed this semester. My concerns with this new process are as follows:
 - a. The author(s) or process used in writing the new process was not initially shared. The VP later said she created the document. Processes for participatory governance should be created via a collaborative, participatory method, not by one person.
 - b. Why did we need a "temporary" process? If the process is being revamped via Academic Senate in collaboration with PRAC, we should use the previous approved processes until the new one is ready.
 - c. Creating a temporary process creates confusion and added work.
 3. **Rating system devalues critical thinking capacity, favors managers:** The new rating system provided in the PRAC Instructions creates a new rating system for use by both PRAC and managers. There are three main concerns I have with the rating system:
 - a. **No criteria:** It is a 1-5 scale without descriptors/criteria, meaning there is no indication of how the rating should align with institutional mission or goals; equity-mindedness does not appear to be a factor.
 - b. **Defeats the purpose of PRAC:** This scale system attempts to expedite decision-making, but in the process, defeats the purpose of PRAC and devalues our critical thinking capacity. PRAC is comprised of a diverse set of representatives well-equipped to discuss, evaluate, and prioritize. WE are the rating system. We deliberate and have vibrant discussion that centers students, equity, and our institutional values, resulting in our recommendations.
 4. **Lack of clarity:** My concerns related to lack of clarity address requests and program review.
 - a. It is unclear what budget requests (new or otherwise) come to PRAC and which do not. New positions have been created at COM that did not come to PRAC. It feels as if faculty and instructional requests receive extra scrutiny while other positions do not.
 - b. Non-instructional programs have not submitted a Program Review to PRAC. The only Program Reviews we receive are ones written by faculty and instructional programs.
 5. **More transparency needed:** In some cases, PRAC has not recommended a budget item, yet it later goes forward. This creates confusion and mistrust. In these cases, the committee should receive notice of the initiative's funding and rationale for the decision. This process would promote transparency around budget and resource allocation and increase PRAC understanding of institutional decision-making. The President's memo should include not only the budget requests from PRAC that will go forward or not; but a list of *all* budget requests that will go forward, even if we did not recommend them or they did come to PRAC.
 6. **Meeting day/time change:** The day and time of the PRAC meeting was changed Fall 2025 without any consultation from the committee. Faculty/staff had selected Fall schedules to accommodate the Tuesday 2-3:30 pm PRAC meeting.

IV. Officers Reports

- a. **President:** Coulson reported that classified staff members had consulted her and informed her about the PRAC meeting that occurred without Faculty members (who unanimously did not attend the last-minute meeting).
 - i. Several PGS committees need more faculty to serve; all faculty encouraged to step up.
 - ii. PRAC has 2 faculty seats empty – Senators are encouraged to join. PRAC meets Mondays at 3 pm.
- b. **Vice President**
 - i. **DEC Recommendations:** No response yet from VP Emerson.
 - ii. **Academic Freedom:** In process of scheduling.
 - iii. **OER:** CCC systemwide LibreText platform launching for OER materials; [March newsletter](#) released.
 - iv. **Conferences & Learning Communities**
 1. [Curriculum Regional Meeting \(Area B\)](#), March 13th at Evergreen Valley College. [Survey](#) about topics to cover.
 2. [Artificial Intelligence and Academia 2026](#), March 19th-21st in Costa Mesa. Calls for proposal open until 1/30.
 3. [Spring Plenary](#), April 9th-11th in Santa Rosa. Scholarships available.
 4. [Asian Pacific Americans in Higher Education](#), April 12th-14th in Anaheim. Scholarships available.
 - v. **Webinars**
 1. Wednesday, March 11th, 12pm: [Into the Libreverse! Getting Started With LibreTexts](#)
 2. Thursday, March 12th, 12:00pm: [Nurturing the Seeds of Change: Supporting the Evaluation Process with IDEAA Tools](#)
 3. Monday, March 23rd, 2:00pm: [Equivalency Without Chaos: Effective Practices for Local Academic Senates in Multi-College Districts](#)
 4. Monday, March 23rd, 3:00pm: [Follow-Up Office Hours: Effective Equivalency Practices for Local Academic Senates in Multi-College Districts](#)
 5. Tuesday, March 24th, 1:00pm: [Leading Authentically: Navigating Imposter Syndrome, Identity, and Power](#)
 6. Wednesday, March 25th, 12:00pm: [Authentic Assessments and Academic Integrity in the Age of AI](#)

V. Committee Reports

- a. Program Review (Alex Jones): to test out the new template, Chairs currently serving on Senate have volunteered to complete their PRs first and give feedback to the coordinators.

VI. Monthly Exchange with District Leadership. Invited Guests: President Eldridge, Dana Emerson

- a. President Eldridge reported on several District updates, including federal compliance guidance, voter registration efforts, community responses to federal funding reductions, progress toward the College's endowment matching goal, Board planning activities, and long-range facilities planning. He noted that VP Emerson was unable to attend due to a conference and stated that both would attend next month's meeting.
- b. Senators asked about the DEC recommendations regarding committee structure that were sent to VP Emerson on February 12th. President Eldridge responded that the matter would go to College Council for further discussion and indicated that an ad hoc task force might also be formed to address the issue. He stated that he would follow up with VP Emerson, given that the Senate had not received a response since mid-February.
- c. Senators raised concerns regarding PRAC, including the implementation of new processes without faculty support, lack of timely response to requests for collegial consultation, and broader concerns about transparency, follow-through, and faculty inclusion in decision-making. Senators expressed frustration that repeated requests for communication have not received reliable response or resulted in visible action, and stated that this has contributed to demoralization and reduced confidence in participatory governance processes. Dr. Eldridge responded that there are differing perspectives and indicated that

further discussion would be needed. He stressed that the way to resolve the issues was for the co-chairs of PRAC to meet. The Senate suggested ensuring that all of PRAC be involved in the discussion, given that the communication gaps and lack of collegial consultation also impacted the full committee.

- d. Regarding Plan 2030 specifically, Senators noted that, although the College is well into the first academic year following the plan's approval by the Board, Senators had not been included in any of the working groups, and that an update from the Educational Planning Committee came as a surprise. Dr. Eldridge noted that the plan was not approved until September. Senators also raised concerns about other important processes that had needed to be rushed, including development of the Student Equity Plan. Dr. Eldridge indicated that the SEP had been within the responsibilities of a manager who had departed the college's employ.
- e. Additional concerns were raised regarding custodial staffing in some buildings, safety issues affecting counselors in the new building, and a broader sense that some College processes have become increasingly top-down while simultaneously applying an uneven standard of professionalism to different employee groups. Dr. Eldridge stated that the College is hiring in custodial areas and that he would revisit the concerns raised and follow up regarding communication and possible next steps.
- f. In closing words, Senators also expressed their heartfelt concern that continued lack of resolution is already discouraging employees from participating in internal leadership roles, and a fear that the current unease might result in valuable personnel leaving the College for good.

VII. **Status on Previous Agenda Items:** Deferred

- a. **DEC Recommendations:** Deferred
- b. **PRAC:** Deferred
- c. **PR:** Deferred
- d. **Academic Freedom:** Deferred
- e. **EQ Webpage:** Deferred

VIII. **Resolution:** Language was added to a resolution reviewed by Senators, specifying that past/current criteria and guidelines for PRAC presentations should be kept in place pending further review and recommendation by Academic Senate. The Resolution was approved by unanimous consent (Perrone/Beal).

IX. **Textbooks:** Deferred

X. **Individual Reports:** Deferred

XI. **Future Business:** Deferred

XII. **Adjourn:** 2:05.