COLLEGE OF MARIN ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

October 15, 2026
CALL TO ORDER: 12:45 PM
LOCATION: DH SS 241

Senators Present: Maria Coulson, Gina Cullen, Luna Finlayson, Cara Kreit, Kevin Muller, Caitlin Rolston, Rebecca Beal, Kristin Perrone, LyRyan Russell, Ian Sethre, Shawn Nelson, Dave Patterson, Alex Jones, Logan Wood
Invited Guests: None

I. **Agenda**: Approved (Perrone/Muller)
II. **Minutes from 10/8:** Edited and approved (Muller/Perrone).
III. **Public Requests:** Danae Martinez addressed the Senate about the Ethnic Studies sections that remain without an instructor after five weeks. She thanked the Senate for the memo of concern sent to the President last week and said she intends to keep seeking answers. She offered to support any statement the Senate may send to the Chancellor's Office or the Board of Trustees.
IV. Officers' Reports:
   a. **President** (Maria Coulson):
      i. President Coulson informed the Senate that Ethnic Studies has been agendized in order to discuss and give updates on the situation brought to light last week.
      ii. All Senators were blind copied on an email from General Counsel Robertshaw in reply to the memo to President Eldridge last week.
      iii. President Coulson responded to emails from students regarding their concerns about the Ethnic Studies situation. She blind copied the students in a single email sharing that the Academic Senate sent a memo of concern to President Eldridge and hoped for a speedy and student-centered solution. She asked the students to keep her updated on any developments. As of Wednesday, October 14, there was still no instructor, no additional communication, and no modules were opened since the original instructor took leave.
      iv. Had a collegial conversation with UPM President Tim Wat on another matter, and informed him of the Memo of Concern sent last week to President Eldridge. He was aware of the situation because of faculty's concerns addressed to the union.
      v. Has prepared a draft of a Complaint to Chancellor's Office [discussed later in meeting].
   b. **VP** (Gina Cullen): Some upcoming events:
      i. **AI Syllabus Statements: Building Transparency, Trust, and Shared Responsibility**
      October 29, 1-2:30 pm
      ii. **Beyond Compliance: Building Sustainable, Regular, and Substantive Interaction (RSI) Through Faculty Leadership and Professional Development**
      9, 2-3:30 pm
      iii. Curriculum Regional Conference at CCSF: Saturday, November 14
      iv. ASCCC Plenary: first week of November; Senate will be canceled Nov 5th.
V. **Ethnic Studies Instructor Need:** President Coulson gave an update. Though the Senate had hoped for a student-centered response, the only response to the Senate's memo was sent by General Council

Robertshaw to the Senate. There had been no response from President Eldridge as of October 15. In light of that, President Coulson investigated the process for a potential complaint to the Chancellor's Office. She spoke with several advisors with experience in administration of community colleges in California.

a. **Summary of communications:**
    i. The Senate received an email from General Counsel Robertshaw. Senators noted that it did not address the lack of instruction for 68 students or communication with those students. They also noted that the memo identified a faculty member who was not copied on the email as responsible for the situation.
    ii. Two weeks ago, students received an announcement from VP Dana Emerson saying they would have an instructor by the end of that week.
b. **New EQ process this year:** Senators recalled a discussion last year of the new EQ process, which also applies to emergency hires. At that time, the Director of HR cautioned managers that the process could cause problems for emergency hiring because of its timeline and inconsistent awareness and understanding of campus-wide of state minimum qualifications requirements.

VI. **Complaint to Chancellor's Office:**

a. President Coulson shared a draft which was revised during the meeting, in which she indicated that she was writing about a situation that parties had been unable to resolve on campus. She explained the situation as it pertained to students, including that only two communications had been sent to students and a substitute had not been found. She provided a summary of the memo to the President and response from General Council. The complaint expressed concern regarding meeting Title 5 requirements for substantive contact on an online course, and the potential harm to students' transfer plans, financial aid requests, and even immigration status. In terms of resolution, the complaint implored the Chancelor's Office to ensure a substitute instructor is installed and to ensure students are protected from financial and academic consequences.
b. Motion to forward the complaint to the Chancellor's Office (Patterson/Russell). Approved unanimously.

VII. **EQ Committee:** The committee will reconvene with all members on Tuesday, October 20th to evaluate appeals. At the Senate President's request, an outside expert (Carlos Guerrero, CCC State Council of Ethnic Studies member and chair of Ethnic Studies at Los Angeles CC) will participate in the evaluation of materials.

VIII. **APs/BPs:** Sara Malmquist-West will attend soon to explain Catalog Rights, potentially next week.

IX. **Adjourned**: 2:00 p.m.

Comments, concerns, or questions regarding Academic Senate Minutes
may be directed to the Academic Senate Secretary, Caitlin Rolston:
CRolston@marin.edu