



Academic Senate Meeting – Fall 2025

Thursday, August 28, 2025

Minutes

10:00 AM – 11:30 AM

Location: Dezember Leadership and Development Center, Room 409-411

Zoom Link: <https://csub.zoom.us/j/84669370314?pwd=gmLoywwMxQR4k7G0hUhv25vs0N8xr8.1>

Senate Members: Chair M. Danforth, Vice-Chair D. Solano, CSU Senator C. Lam (virtual), CSU Senator N. Michieka (virtual), AH Senator T. Tsantsoulas, AH Senator M. Naser (sabb. Fall 2025, Alt. TBD), BPA Senator D. Wu (virtual), BPA Senator S. Sarma, NSME Senator L. Kirstein, NSME Senator A. Stokes, SSE Senator Z. Zenko, SSE Senator S. Roberts, AV Senator K. Holloway (virtual), At-Large Senator H. He, At-Large Senator A. Grombly, At-Large Senator A. Hays, At-Large Senator A. Lauer, At-Large Senator T. Salisbury (virtual), At-Large Senator R. Dugan, Lecturer Electorate Senator D. Horn, Senator H. Gonzalez, Staff Representative, Senator A. Reyes, ASI President, VP AA & Provost D. Thein, Senator J. Dong, Dean Representative, and Senate Analyst K. Van Grinsven.

Guests: President Harper, C. Diniz, S. Marks, K. Warner, and R. Weller.

Virtual Guests: E. Adams, A. Alva, E. Barnes, S. Bozarth, D. Cantrell, K. Chavez, L. Clifton, E. Correa, D. Cours, K. Gallant, S. Gamboa, A. Gancarz, A. Gómez-Navarro, N. Hayes, L. Hernandez, E. Kopp, M. Kimberlin, K. Lattimore, Y. Lee, C. Livingston, K. Lopez, J. Mabry, M. Malhotra, S. Marks, V. Mayorga, B. Mendiola, Y. Morones, H. Neimeyer, J. Paschal, L. Paris, E. Poole Callahan, J. Rodríguez, A. Rodriguez, M. Ruiz, M. Rush, D. Saini, J. Self, C. Shiery, CJ Stevenson, D. Stowe, L. Vega, K. Watson, M. Whisler, and D. Wilson.

- I. Call to Order
 - a. Tejon Tribal Land Acknowledgement
 - b. Interruption Statement (RES 242528)
 - c. Chair Danforth called the meeting to order and read the Tejon Tribal Land Acknowledgement and Interruption Statement.
- II. Approval of Minutes
 - a. May 8, 2025 – Senate Minutes, Session One (handout) and Two (handout)
 - i. Senator Kirstein motioned to approve the minutes; seconded by Senator Dugan. Minutes approved.
- III. Announcements and Information
 - a. President's Report – V. Harper (**Time Certain: 10:10 AM**)
 - i. Report:
 1. President Harper welcomed all to the new academic year, highlighting the university's challenges and opportunities, particularly those as a sector of Higher Education.

President Harper introduced the new Provost, Dr. Thien, emphasizing her strong leadership and commitment.

2. President Harper recapped on the General Faculty meeting, budget, and strategy of being Kern County's university, which is for CSUB to be the first choice for every student.
3. President Harper discussed the Strategic Planning Process, which will be led by Dr. Shaylyn Marks and will engage faculty and the community over the next 7-8 months, aiming for completion in May 2026. A proposed Strategic Planning Steering Committee list will be presented by Dr. Marks to cabinet next Tuesday.
4. Dr. Kirsten Watson has been appointed as permanent Vice-President for Business and Administrative Services and Chief Financial Officer.
5. Upcoming Events: The Fall Budget Open Forum will be held in September, emphasizing the importance of early feedback. Tonight is the Rowdy Run on the soccer field.
6. President Harper reflected on past challenges, such as the Kit Fox controversy, and expressed hope for continued collaboration and improvement in sustainability efforts. With the support of the Kit Fox Society, on University Day, Kit, the Kit Fox stuffed animal was introduced and will be available at the CSUB bookstore. \$8 of each purchase will go directly to Kitfox Conservation, including funds to support educational signage and kit fox den protection efforts.

ii. Q&A and Discussion:

1. Senator Lauer commented on the recent email from the CSU Chancellor's Office regarding conservation efforts. Senator Lauer remarked on the visible waste of resources on the CSUB campus, such as multiple broken sprinklers, and the need to work closely with Facilities. President Harper thanked Senator Lauer for her feedback and suggestion to include Facilities on the Steering Committee. Senator Dong recognized and thanked Senator Lauer for her advocacy and efforts to make Bakersfield a Tree city.

b. FTLC Updates – R. Weller (**Time Certain: 10:25 AM**) (handout)

- i. FTLC Director, Dr. Rebecca Weller presented the FTLC Report from 2024-2025 (see attached handout) outlining the center's mission, core values, and vision.
- ii. Dr. Weller discussed the center's activities through four lenses: hub, incubator, temple, and sieve. Dr. Weller highlighted the center's role as a safe space for faculty, its professional development offerings, and its efforts to stay relevant with emerging technologies like AI. She also mentioned the success of the center's instructional designers, Alex Slabey and Mallory Gardner, and the need for a future faculty showcase event. Dr. Weller also discussed the updated and revitalized website as a resource and launch of a weekly series called the Small Teaching Series with information about technology and tools for faculty.

iii. Q&A and Discussion:

1. Senator Lauer voiced concerns about teaching writing skills in the age of AI and FTLC's plan for addressing this challenge. Dr. Weller mentioned that they have been working on a few things, some of which are on the website, and suggested transparency with students and emphasizing the process of writing over the final product.

c. Elections and Appointments – D. Solano (handout)

- i. Vice-Chair Solano provided an update on elections and appointments and the process. See attached document. Chair Danforth reminded senators and guests to notify the Senate Office of any retirements or separations that may be of note for positions on various university-wide committees.
 - ii. Q&A: None.
- d. Information:
 - i. Senate Orientation PPT (handout)
 - 1. Chair Danforth presented the Senate Orientation slide deck. See attached handout.
 - ii. Senate membership roster and meeting schedule for 2025-2026 (handout)
 - 1. Chair Danforth presented the meeting schedule for 2025-2026. See attached handout.
 - iii. UPRC Annual Report for 2024-2025 AY (handout)
 - 1. Submitted near the end of Spring 2025. See attached handout.
 - iv. Scholarship and Creative Activities Task Force Executive Summary and Recommendations (handout)
 - 1. Submitted near the end of Spring 2025. See attached handout.

IV. Approval of Agenda **(Time Certain: 10:05 AM)**

- a. Senator Zenko motioned to approve the agenda; seconded by Senator Grombly. Agenda improved, including the consent agenda item.

V. Reports

- a. Provost's Report – D. Thien
 - i. Provost Thien provided an introduction and outlined three early priorities: grounding work in shared governance, strengthening communication and transparency, and addressing challenges with creativity and integrity. Provost Thien also highlighted the need to consider AI's impact on academic integrity and student success and encouraged robust participation in the upcoming strategic planning process.
 - ii. As one of her goals as a leader at CSUB, Provost Thien intends to recognize and celebrate the student, faculty, and staff success regularly. Provost Thien recognized Dr. Janine Kraybill, Chair and Professor of Political Science, as the recipient of the Educational Partnership Award in this year's Quality and Excellence Awards from Kern Family Healthcare.
 - iii. Regarding the role of the Provost Office, Provost Thien met with the Academic Senate Executive Committee on Tuesday and discussed some inconsistencies coming out of Faculty Affairs.
 - 1. Dr. Boschini, AVP for Faculty Affairs:
 - a. The updated eligibility Sabbatical List and DIP/Leave list posted on the Faculty Affairs webpage have been corrected.
 - b. Post-Tenure Review (PTR) notifications went out this fall, which is much later, as they typically would have gone out in the spring. D. Boschini asked anyone who needs adjustments with the timeline to contact the Provost Office and chair.
 - c. Lecturer appointment letters went out very late. The office is aware and are prioritizing remaining letters. The introduction of the new budget model and instruction given to chairs resulted in a lot of delays. The intention is for the

full academic year schedule to be completed in the spring so that any corrections that need to be done or errors can be identified and corrected in the summer before faculty return in the fall.

- iv. Provost Thien concluded by thanking AVP Boschini for her work and announced plans to visit all departments.
- b. ASCSU Report – Senators Lam and Michieka (deferred)
- c. ASI Report – Senator Reyes
 - i. Senator Reyes introduced himself as an Arts and Humanities major studying music education.
 - ii. The first ASI board meeting will be held tomorrow, Friday, August 29. There will be two resolutions going through the board, one of which is regarding shared governance and the other for the development of an ASI Exploratory Committee. They are wanting to look internally to determine how they can better support students following Kern County's university mission.
 - iii. Some of the focuses for ASI this year include:
 - 1. Expansion of campus life with Runner Hours and partnerships with the different affinity centers to reach students where they are.
 - 2. Continued collaboration with campus dining to ensure housing students have access to different food, particularly during the off seasons.
 - iv. ASI, along with President Harper and Provost Thien, welcomed students moving in last week, which was an exciting start to the semester.
- d. Staff Report – Senator Gonzalez
 - i. Senator Horacio Gonzalez introduced himself to the Senate body. He is a Contract Specialist in Procurement and is also a Chapter Representative for the Employees Union (CSUEU).
 - ii. Senator Gonzalez provided an overview of upcoming staff changes, including the transition to a new salary step system in October and ongoing contract negotiations. Senator Gonzalez also highlighted the student assistant workers' unionization efforts and their new orientation agreement, which allows for paid time off for orientation sessions.
 - iii. Staff Forum Popsicle Social will be held on Tuesday, September 16 from 10:30 to 11:30 AM. Senator Gonzalez welcomed anyone interested in attending Staff Forum events as its mission is to promote fellowship among staff through social events, participate in campus community engagement, and raise money for the Staff Forum Scholarship Fund. More Staff Forum events to be announced at coming meetings.
- e. Committee Reports:
 - i. Executive Committee – Vice-Chair Solano (handout)
 - 1. See attached handout.
 - ii. Standing Committees: (deferred)
 - 1. Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) – Senator Tsantsoulas
 - 2. Academic Support and Student Services Committee (AS&SS) – Senator Kirstein
 - 3. Budget and Planning Committee (BPC) – Senator Grombly
 - 4. Faculty Affairs Committee (FAC) – Senator Zenko
- f. CFA Report – Senator Salisbury
 - i. Budget cutbacks and resulting workload issues are of major concern. The CFA will be working hard to increase membership.

- ii. Current membership includes the head of Faculty Affairs, Z. Zenko, A. Grombly as Secretary and D. Horn as Lecturer Representative. Unfortunately, CFA had to file a grievance regarding the appointment letters. CFA had their preliminary meeting with Provost Thien. Senator Salisbury is headed to Sacramento and will have more updates at the next meeting.

VI. Resolutions **(Time Certain: 10:45 AM)**

- a. Consent Agenda:
 - i. Standing Committee membership (handout). Approved with agenda.
- b. Old Business:
 - i. No items.
- c. New Business:
 - i. No items.

VII. Open Forum **(Time Certain: 11:15 AM)**

- a. President Harper:
 - i. Student enrollment has reached 11,109 students, which is up 15% from last year and over target. There were certainly challenges with being a growing institution with a reducing budget.
 - ii. CSUB ranks 16th in the West and 21st for Social Mobility.
- b. Provost Thien:
 - i. Acknowledged Labor Day, September 1st and thanked Dr. Dirk Horn and Dahana Stowe who brought attention to the contract issues.
 - ii. Senator Zenko asked questions about plans for courses and scheduling considering current waitlists and likely increase with enrollment trends.
 - 1. Provost Thien: Deans and chairs have been working hard to get more courses on the schedule in response to the waitlists. For spring, they will be working with the chairs for intentional consideration regarding scheduling and building in overage and working closely with partners in Enrollment Management.
- c. Chair Danforth reminded Senators to send their identified alternates for Senate to the Senate Analyst as soon as possible. All Senators need to have their alternates identified by the second Senate meeting of the semester.
- d. Senator Dong:
 - i. NSME is hosting a Pizza Party to celebrate the start of the semester. It will be today, Thursday, August 28.
 - ii. There will also be a Ribbon Cutting for DNP Program and Graduate Nursing Simulation Lab on Friday, August 29 from 9 to 10 AM. Senator He thanked the Senate for approving the curriculum two years ago to allow for this achievement.
- e. E. Correa asked for clarification of how faculty are to respond to phone calls requesting information based on the FOIA for public record information.
 - i. Senator Hayes confirmed that requests have recently been coming in for all syllabi and courses, faculty, dates, times and locations of classes taught in the spring. Senator Hayes has done some research and consultation and suspects that it is a scam, however, deferred to AVP Boschini for more direction.
 - ii. AVP Boschini asked that anyone who receives these calls or requests should contact James Burger to ensure we are following proper protocol and procedures to ensure we remain in compliance with state laws.

- iii. Chair Danforth suggested the generation of a memorandum to the faculty, staff, and MPP mailing lists to ensure everyone is aware of the procedures and processes.
- iv. VP for BAS, Dr. Watson, confirmed that her office would ensure communication is sent out.
- v. Senator Michieka shared that a few years ago, the Economics Department conducted a study and determined that enrollment patterns tend to follow trends in the economy. There are some best practices that have been adopted, and it would be best to find sustainable ways to keep the enrollment numbers up.
- vi. Senator Lam brought attention to the fact that there are many grants that have had substantial contributions to the increase in enrollment trends, however, quite a few of them are being taken away by the federal government. Senator Lam asked if an audit would be conducted regarding what grants and programs were being affected and strategies for moving forward. Chair Danforth confirmed that AVP for GRaSP, Dr. Isabel Sumaya, will be attending a future Senate meeting to provide updates on grants and the GRaSP office.
- vii. Senator Lauer commented on the growth of enrollment, and the limited to non-existent opportunities of Extended University students due to not be allowed to be added to stateside waitlists as they are not supposed to supplant stateside seats.

VIII. Adjournment

- a. Chair Danforth adjourned the meeting at 11:31 AM.