

## MINUTES

Regular Meeting of the CU Denver Downtown Campus Faculty Assembly's  
Budget Priorities Committee (BPC)

April 7, 2026

10:00 – 11:30 AM

Zoom

Times estimated

BPC Members: Joanne Addison, Vice Chair (CLAS), Kelly McCusker, Secretary (Auraria Library), Ann Komara (CAP), Julien Langou (CLAS), David Tracer (CLAS), Todd Ely (SPA), Travis Vermilye (CAM), Kristyn Masters (CEDC)

Guests: Jen St. Peter (Associate Vice Chancellor for Budget), Karen Marrongelle (Provost), Cheryl Ansaldi (FA and UCDALI Administrative Coordinator), Mike Wunder (Professor, Graduate Education), Jeffrey Jacot (Associate Professor, Graduate Education Fellow), Scott Bauer (Professor, Graduate Education Fellow), Gillian Silverman (Professor, Graduate Education Fellow), Beth Myers (Interim CIO), Heidi Utt (Staff Council Rep)

### **Committee updates (10:00am – 10:05am)**

- Approval of March minutes.
- Nominations for new 2026-27 officers (chair, vice chair, and secretary) to be voted on in May.

### **Karen Marrongelle, Provost (10:05am – 10:10am)**

- CFO search updates
  - Comments are with the Chancellor for review

### **Mike Wunder, Professor and Karen Marrongelle, Provost (10:10am – 10:45am)**

- Grad Education plans and costs
  - When we left graduate school, there were 6 positions; four spun off, and two positions remained vacant.
  - Some grad students are being paid below minimum wage.
  - Paying for tuition for graduate students, which is practiced at most research institutions.
  - Of those who go into contracts with assistantships, and are then eligible for tuition remission, 40% are receiving some form of tuition remission from a range of sources. Estimated cost based on typical enrollments is \$700,000 per year covering all the teaching appointments and not picking up any other sources used for tuition remission. Recommendation may be cost sharing, and it will take a while to develop because of the way it has been very decentralized.
  - Everything is capped at 0.5 for employment for graduate students (20 hours per week). Entry point will probably be 8-10 hours per week.

- Faculty are very concerned about the potential loss of tuition support for graduate students.
- The intent is to regularize and support the process.
- Graduate student employment issues need to be addressed first before tuition remission. (Inequities in pay, tuition remission differences between graduate student employees.)
- Insurance, RTD passes, and other incidentals for grad employees
  - Insurance
    - Preparing survey for graduate students about health insurance
    - We already have a mandated international plan.
    - Anschutz has mainly graduate students.
    - Boulder does an opt out version for all students, many undergrads don't use it.
  - RTD Passes:
    - No current answer about student access to ecopass.
    - This is a contract through AHEC for employees.

**Jen St. Peter, AVC for Budget and Ryan Davis, Interim EVC for Finance (10:45am – 10:50am)**

- The legislative Joint Budget Committee finished the long bill, as of right now, state funding would be a restoration of this year's mid-year cuts. Not a cut and not an increase.
- At the state, tuition was capped at 3.5% for residents, 5% for non-residents. Doesn't mean this is what CU will do.
- In order to fund changes, they had to reopen the agreement with classified staff – 0% increase, but people will get a bump in specific circumstances. Most classified staff will see some increase, valued at 1%.
- We shouldn't have to cut budget to balance budget.
- Relatively good news from the state.
- Everyone is expecting next year to be more difficult at the state for balancing purposes. Need to be prepared to face tough challenges from the state next year.

**Beth Myers, Interim CIO, and Karen Marrongelle, Provost (10:50am – 11:10am)**

- Discussion of software purchases as they intersect with curriculum and classroom education (OpenAI future and things like the evolution of Grammarly)
- Because of the empty CIO position, there was no one to communicate about potential software.
- Grammarly: no cost associated with this; faculty, staff, and students can pay to use it.
- Beth is now an Ex-Officio and is invited to go to LETTS and other meetings.
- Who is making decisions about when which switches are being turned on or off? For example, Canvas options. Turned on opt in options (not required for faculty to use) and turned off options that cost money. These options have been sent to LETTS.

- Expanding AI ecosystem, looking at other options. Concerned about security, want to make sure approved for highly confidential data. Don't want faculty to worry about "if I'm allowed or not allowed" if it's really part of their university work.
- Chancellor is creating an AI Advisory Committee.
- [List of approved / restricted for university use.](#)

**Karen Marrongelle, Provost (11:10am – 11:20am)**

- Open discussion
- APS 1046 discussion (Would we like a BPC letter to endorse the taskforce recommendation #7?)
  - Will revisit.
  - Karen will ask Mike Lightner, CU Vice President for Academic Affairs about this.
  - Discussion about programs being reviewed by the state for approval and potential consistent naming of similar courses (e.g. Eng 1010) across the state.

**Committee housekeeping (11:15am – 11:30am)**

- Reviewed BPC operating procedures and accepted edits and discussed comments. Will create a clean copy for a vote in May.