



**COUNCIL OF
UNIVERSITY
SYSTEM
STAFF**

Meeting of Council of University System Staff
Tentative Minutes for Tuesday, August 12, 2025

Salisbury University
In Person Meeting
1000 - 1300

0900 [Orientation for new CUSS Representatives](#)

Roy, Meredith, Kevin, and Kalia delivered the Orientation packed to Cathy Fu (UMBC), Ben Crull (TU), and April Parvzian (TU).

1000 Roll Call & Establishing Quorum (Secretary)

Kevin established a quorum with 11 of 12 universities represented by attendance. See the Roster (lower left-hand side) for attendance details.

1010 Call to Order (Chair)

a. Approval of Agenda

After review of the agenda, Roy sought a motion by consent to approve the tentative agenda.

First: Kelly Cowger Second: Kevin Bruce

Approved by unanimous consent

b. Approval/Correction of Meeting Minutes

Roy informed the body that no meeting minutes have been produced to date. Voting membership should expect minutes emailed in the near future and approval at a future meeting.

1015 Reports

a. Executive Board (Officers)

Roy discussed attending a meeting of the Chancellor's Council and a planning meeting for the Joint Council's Meeting. Roy confirmed that he would be attending a Board of Regents (BoR) celebration for regents leaving the Board September 8 with Kalia. Roy confirmed that the next BoR meeting would be September 19. Roy will prepare a report and deliver it to the Council to review.

Roy stated the expectation that Meredith (Vice Chair) would deliver reports on the use of Professional Development Funding, if allocated to CUSS.

Roy stated the expectation that Kevin (Secretary) would deliver reports on attendance, website changes, and any ideas related to recording the operations of the Council.

Kalia (UMCP) shared an update related to the [letter sent to Maryland State Governor Wes Moore](#). Vice Chancellor Susan Lawrence shared that Mike Thomas, Policy Director for the Wes Moore Administration, has unacknowledged the letter and will be working to set a time to meet with CUSS Leadership. Kalia thanks Susan for the continued support from the USM Office of Government Relations.

b. Standing Committees (Committee Chairs)

Roy requested that each committee chair share an overview of the committee and a short recap of committee goals from the last cycle.

Awards & Outreach (AO): Cathy Fu presented, in lieu of Brian Jara. Cathy discussed the BoR Staff Awards and CUSS Newsletters.

Staff Resources & Special Projects (SRSP): Dave Gutoskey presented. Dave discussed issues around duplicative fees, new staff onboarding, leave bank/pay, and budget advocacy. Roy requested that the SRSP Committee also address the implementation of ombudspersons on each USM campus as well as exploring compensation for staff participating in campus shared governance.

Legislative Affairs & Policy (LAP): Shannon discussed review of [BoR Policies](#), the Annual Advocacy Day, and review of CUSS Bylaws and Constitution.

c. Chancellor's Liaison (George)

Neena from George's office presented on the 2025 ["Fall into Success: Change & Resilience in the Workplace"](#) USM Professional Development Conference.

Lisa (SU) asked George about any pending changes to Employee Benefits related to Open Enrollment. George confirmed that no major changes are expected. Neena shared that the Open Enrollment period is set to be October 14 - November 7, this Fall.

Roy gave an overview of the [USM org chart](#).

d. Campus Updates (Each Campus)

Roy asked that each campus deliver a campus update for Council review.

BSU (Trish)

- Fall prep for students

- Oct 2nd - 14th annual Golf Classic
- Summer dining does present challenges to in-person staff. They have a food truck for breakfast and lunch.
- Federal/state budget impacts: One research grant have been terminated

CSU (Sheila)

- Celebrating 125 years with a gala October 18
- They have high school graduation (this Thursday) on campus.
- [Summer Concert Series](#) Free Admission to all (last concert is Aug 21)
- Dining on campus is not seen as an issue since opening of Mill dining hall in late (10% discount) April 24th 2025
- Federal/state budget impacts: Impacts felt

FSU (Sara)

- New presidential search as begun and staff are included in the process
- [Rubin Stevenson](#) has been appointed Interim Director of Athletics
- [New Provost and Senior VP of Academic and Student Affairs, Dr. Michael Mathias](#)
- New food contractor, [Aladdin](#)
- Summer dining normally shutdown at FSU, no real issue for in-person staff
- Federal/state budget impacts:
 - [Faculty retrenchment](#) late last year has impacted campus
 - Merging of divisions and reduction in number of Vice Presidents (down to 3)
 - At least 8 staff laid off, 7 bargaining, 1 non-bargaining, and a hiring freeze for the 8 newly-vacant positions.

SU (Kelly and Dave)

- September 2 is start of classes
- August 28th students move in. Movie night for the early students.
- [Centennial Celebration!](#)

- Social room makeover
- Gala
- Ongoing construction projects
- Work Day is causing significant issues related to productivity and contract generation.
- Summer dining represents no issue to in-person staff, other than Chick-Fil-A being closed during the summer.
- Federal/state budget impacts:
 - Hiring freeze
 - No layoffs or furloughs

TU (Ben)

- Summer dining options on campus have become a challenge for staff. Geography of campus may be factor – “distributed” campus
 - Could be construed to only have a Dunkin Donuts with limited food available
- Federal/state budget impacts:
 - Visa challenges
 - Small impact, not well understood
 - Portion of grant terminations where salaries are affected has not been reached
- New Staff Senate cohort

UBalt (Kara)

- [UBalt campus will begin to share campus with Baltimore City College](#) (preparatory high school and third oldest public high school in US)
- UBalt staff have been significantly impacted by state and federal budget cuts
- Summer dining: They actually don’t have dining
- Federal/state budget impacts: Has had budget implementation that has affected staff [did not specify how]

UMB (Anthony)

- **Staff senate on break for month of August, new UMB CUSS representatives will be participating starting in September**
- **New Doctoral program in Social Work**
- **UMB Orioles Night (Council members are invited)**
- **University is starting a branding survey**
- **Summer dining is not a challenge due to relationship with University of Maryland Medical System**
- **Federal/state budget impacts:**
 - **Different schools are handling budget impacts in different ways. E.g., medical/pharmacy school are relinquishing 3% of any salary over \$75,000**

UMBC (Roy)

- **Ongoing construction generates minor inconveniences for staff**
- **For the first time in memory non-bargained, non-exempt staff were not included in the salary increases/one-time payments bargained non-exempt staff were granted. Notably less than 80 non-bargained, non-exempt staff were impacted. These non-bargained, non-exempt staff are unsettled by the apparent inequity and don't understand the decision making of campus leadership.**
- **Summer dining options generates challenges for in-person staff**
- **Federal/state budget impacts:**
 - **LSAMP Grant terminated/defunded**
 - **Other impacts not well understood**

UMCES (Kevin)

- **A small restructuring of the University Administration, with the departure of Esela Lowe.**
- **UMCES President has relocated to new office in Annapolis**
- **Summer dining is not a thing (no dining on campus)**
- **Federal/state budget impacts: No known impact**

UMCP (Namrata)

- “Office of Diversity and Inclusion” was renamed to “Office of Belonging and Community” to align with understood expectations communicated in [recent US DoJ Memo](#). The plan to rename said office was addressed in one of a number of contingency plans generated months prior in response to rhetoric from the federal government, but the name change was enacted in direct response to DoJ Memo.
- Will be hosting Joint Councils Meeting in November
- There is a feeling that WorkDay is complex on purpose
- Summer dining is not an issue
- Federal/state budget impacts:
 - Various operational cost cuts across campus

UMES

- New Student Move-In Day was Aug. 17
- Returning Student Move-In Days are Aug. 23-24
- Classes begin Aug. 25
- UMES opted into the House v. NCAA settlement, which now allows UMES to directly compensate student-athletes.

UMGC

- New bachelors programs
- Working to understand implications of hypothetical Workforce Pell Grants for certificate programs
- Summer dining is not a thing (no dining on campus)
- Federal/state budget impacts: No known impact

Executive Summary to be shared with BoR and Chancellor’s Council:

The executive board notes that many campuses are unsettled by changes to staffing and salaries related to state budget and federal actions. Further, the migration to WorkDay is being reported as extremely disruptive to the productivity of staff, particularly those working to generate employment contracts. Finally, in-person staff across many campuses are frustrated with

the lack of on-campus dining options over the summer. The sudden shutdown of food services is seen as poorly communicated and disruptive to productive business hours. Staff are hoping for more clarity from campus catering and/or food services.

e. USM Working Group

i. Civic Education Data Strategy (Kalia)

Kalia gave some background on this working group. In summary: the BoR have asked for a study to be conducted related to the level to which USM students are benefitting from civic education in their normal curricula and whether or not changes might be made to enhance civic education for USM graduates. Notably: it's unclear how long this working group will continue to exist as the BoR charged the group with generating results in a few months starting late spring 2025.

ii. Diversity & Inclusion (open seat)

Meredith gave some background on the Diversity & Inclusion working group. The group meets twice a semester and broadly aims to address DEI ideas as they arise within the system. The previous CUSS representative is no longer able to attend this working group, so we are seeking another. Jennifer (TU) has volunteered; the executive board will reach out to confirm.

Roy shared that two other working groups exist: Education Policy & Student Life / Finance . Roy will report on these in a future CUSS meeting.

1110 Welcome to Salisbury University from Joe Benyish

- **Joe is in his 4th term of Staff Senate president—annually elected**
- **Blackwell Renovation Project (old library)**
 - **Slated to become Student Support building**
 - **Geothermal energy—they've just completed the drilling and implementation**
 - **The building will house the admissions, office of access and foundations, academic advising, financial aid scholarship, career services, counseling center, registrars, bursar and student accounts, and programs/orientation office.**
 - **Due to open in 2027**
- **Celebrating the 100th Anniversary ("Salisbury Forver")**

- revitalizing the Social Room
- Gala
- “Funfest in the Nest” Program Sept 7th community day
- Continental speaker series
- 100th Anniversary Photo
- **Staff Senate**
 - They had their Annual July Staff Retreat
 - Staff Senate Outreach across campus
 - Staff Recognition with Employee of the Month
 - Working on Employee Leave Bank

1130 Business (Items Requiring Council Action)

a. Building Executive Board

i. Election of Members-at-Large

Roy described the goal and role of the Member-at-Large (MAL) positions on the executive board. MALs serve to round-out perspectives on the Executive Board by providing insight from campuses not otherwise present on the three-person executive board. Time commitment over normal CUSS participation responsibilities consist of a 1-2 hour executive board meeting occurring virtually once per month as well as potential involvement in working groups or special projects as interested/as they arise.

Roy asked for nominations from the floor. Kelly (SU), Anthony (TU), Trish (BSU), Kathleen (UMGC) were nominated and accepted.

A secret ballot vote was held. Roy & Meredith collected paper ballots from those attending in-person and hosted an anonymous poll for those attending virtually.

Winners were Kelly and Trish. They’ll be included in all future executive board communications and meetings.

ii. Committee-selection of Committee Chairs

Roy reminded committees to select (in some manner) the committee leadership during the committee break-out session toward the end of the meeting.

iii. Campus-selection of Point of Contact

Roy discussed the role of the campus Point of Contact. Namely, that this individual is responsible for liaising between the Council and the campus on items related to Council issues/actions, Council meetings, and requests for information in either direction.

Roy asked each campus to confer for a few moments and report on their selected campus point of contact. These will be updated and available on future versions of the Council agenda and roster.

BSU: LaVel

CSU: Shiela

FSU: Amy

SU: Lisa

TU: Ben

UBalt: Karen

UMB: Anthony

UMBC: Mike

UMCES: Kevin

UMCP: Namrata

UMES: (Unconfirmed, likely Chenita)

UMGC: Kathleen

b. Joint Councils Meeting

Roy discussed briefly the planning of the Joint Councils Meeting. This year it will be held at UMCP. Usually held on a Wednesday in mid-November, the Chancellor is not able to attend either candidate days for Nov 12 or Nov 19. The Council informally resolved that it is important to have the Chancellor in attendance. Roy will work with the USM Office to find available times and report back.

c. [Professional Development Funding Draft](#)

Roy discussed the use of Professional Funding if granted by the USMO. In large part, this funding is available to the Council as a group or to any of the executive board elected members (Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, MAL). The total request is for \$11,000.

Roy sought a motion to approve the letter as written.

First: April; Second: LaVel

Approved by unanimous consent.

Roy will have the document signed and sent to Ellen Herbst, Sr Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance within the USMO.

d. Identifying Diversity & Inclusion Working Group Liaison

This was addressed above by Meredith. Jennifer (TU) will review the dates/times of the planned working group meeting and confirm availability with Zakiya. Meredith is handling those logistics.

e. Meeting Recordings/AI

Roy discussed the utility of recording the proceedings of the Council via Zoom and with AI transcript.

Kevin made some silly remark about AI rewarding those voting in approval, should AI become our overlords.

Lisa (SU) reminds the Council that it is in our best interest to certify transcribed minutes by the secretary and delete the recording as soon as possible, to limit any liability on part of the Council to be beholden to what was recorded verbally.

1150 Committee Break-Outs & Lunch

Before ending the break-out, email the name of the committee chair, committee membership, and 2025-2026 Goals to cussusm@gmail.com

Notes:

Awards & Outreach (AO):

Cochairs: Brian Jara (TU) and Catherine Fu (UMBC)

Members: Sheila Chase (CSU), Anthony Weldon, Jr (UMB), Kara Kauffman (UBalt), Rosetta Price (BSU), Megan Raymond (SU) and Sister Maureen Shrimpe (UMCP)

Awards:

- Consider using a wider scale for each category to better differentiate between candidates.
- Can we not grade the checklist? This is really for the person submitting the application, not for the grader.
- Do we still want to grade the job description?
- Any other elements to omit, either in the application or during grading?
- Consider switching to an online form for submission to cut down on formatting issues and to reduce bias for the way the application may look?

Outreach:

- Newsletter published three (or two?) times/year.
- We're using Microsoft Sway for publishing.
- First newsletter came out last month and looked good. Time to work on the next one!

Legislative Affairs & Policy (LAP)

Confirmed that Lisa and I would continue as co-chairs and we spoke about how to better plan for Advocacy Day. We also gave an overview of what the committee does throughout the year to the new folks in the group.

Staff Resources & Special Projects (SRSP):

Members: Dave Gutoskey (SU), Kevin Bruce (UMCES), Sara L Wilhelm(FU), Amy Nightengale (FU), Trish E. Johnson (BSU), Karen Karmioli (UBalt), Jennifer Walsh (TU), Michael T. Walsh (UMBC)

Topics:

- Institutional Surveys:
Send out a quick survey to Institutions' PoC, asking what goals do they wish to prioritize. With Google Forms, we'll have a spreadsheet of answers to present by October's meeting.
- Workday Woes:
Kevin suggested that we may want to take on the issues with Workday. Dave countered that, because not every USM institution adopted WorkDay, maybe it should be a separate committee, made up of members of participating members.

1245 Announcements

Zoom Link from above: <https://umd.zoom.us/j/99644814967>

Shannon asks for everyone to vote for her and her husband!

1250 Confirming Next Meeting & Good of the Order

The next meeting was confirmed to be held virtually at TU September 9, 2025. Meredith will reach out to the TU PoC (Ben).

1300 Adjourn & Group Picture

Group picture next in-person meeting.

Motion to Adjourn

First: LaVel; Second: Kevin

Action Items

- Send 8/12/2025 meeting minutes to Council for review/correction by 8/19/2025
 - Solicit UMES Report from Chenita
- Send 8/12/2025 meeting agenda to Neena for posting on CUSS Website
- We're still working to digest various next steps and action items from the conversations had last week.

Links mentioned above:

- Orientation to CUSS Packet: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1T_heX5gC_vssPVIvp8h2Dj-sMcYGJ3Qg/view?usp=sharing
- Letter to Governor Moore: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VnU28xuYfqu4ByKmQqY1Z0ZRsMJ23PTf/view?usp=sharing>
- Board of Regents Policies: <https://www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/>
- 2025 USM Professional Development Conference; "Fall into Success": <https://www.usmd.edu/learning-and-talent/PDWeek2025>
- USMO Organizational Chart: https://usmd.edu/usm/organizational_chart
- Memo for all Federal Agencies from DoJ, SUBJ "Guidance for recipients of federal funding regarding unlawful discrimination": <https://www.justice.gov/ag/media/1409486/dl?inline>
- Coppin Summer Concert Series: <https://www.coppin.edu/summer-concert-series>

- Frostburg appointment of CUSS Representative Rubin Steenson as Interim Athletics Director: <https://frostburgsports.com/staff-directory/rubin-stevenson/30>
- Frostburg appointment of new Provost: <https://www.frostburg.edu/news/2025/07/mike-mathias-provost.php>
- Frostburg moving to Aladdin for food service/catering: <https://www.frostburg.edu/news/2025/06/fsu-aladdin-campus-dining.php>
- Frostburg faculty retrenchment late 2024: <https://www.frostburg.edu/news/2024/12/fsu-retrenchment-decision-summary-announcement.php>
- Salisbury Centennial Celebration: <https://www.salisbury.edu/centennial/>
- UBalt Sharing Campus with City College: <https://www.ubalt.edu/about/ubalt-initiatives/city-college-high-school-at-ubalt.cfm>
- UMB Orioles Night: <https://www.gofevo.com/event/UMB25>
- Approved Professional Development Funding Draft (updated to finalized version for minutes; see version history if curious about changes): https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BMZWL077M3lhxfGTd8BW9cQkiys1xWwk/view?usp=drive_link