

**College of the Marshall Islands**  
**Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2025: 11:10 AM – 12:00 PM**  
**Faculty Senate: Minutes of Discussion**

**Chair:** Viviana Uriona – FS President

**Deputy Chair:** David Sinkey – FS Vice President

**Minute Taker:** Alexander Velasquez – FS Secretary and Treasurer

**Quorum:** 27 required, 32 in attendance.

1. Quorum was reached, and the meeting was made official at 11:23 AM.
  - i. CMI's Mission Statement was then read by the Faculty Senate Secretary.
    1. It was then announced that the meeting was being recorded for minute-taking purposes.
2. Review of the Minutes from March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2025.
  - i. The minutes were approved and seconded with two abstentions.
3. Update on the Weekly Meetings with Dr. David Newnham
  - i. Two things came out of this meeting:
    1. There is an awareness and concern of how the grievance process is being administered—or in some cases not being administered correctly—at the College, and the Board has impressed this issue upon Dr. David Newnham.
      - a. Thus, there will be a survey sent out to everyone regarding the grievance process and how it is being administered.
        - i. Please give your responses when the survey is administered.
    2. President Newnham was also wondering how faculty felt about the retreat. Since the College Retreat is a retreat and not considered a “work” day or work session, it should be more of a coming together, with both faculty and staff sharing things together, in an environment that everyone can enjoy as opposed to important individuals giving a talk that may be irrelevant for most in attendance.
      - a. In other words, there may be a need to change the nature of the retreat so that all could enjoy the retreat.
        - i. For example, Kevin Bontenbal's three-hour advanced ISER training may have left most of the staff feeling as if the retreat was irrelevant for them because it may have been too academic in nature.
4. Update on HR Handbook (i.e. Duties and Responsibilities)
  - i. Rosalinda sent out the document on Faculty Duties and Responsibilities via email again on April 9<sup>th</sup>.
    1. Faculty Senate President Viviana hopes that most faculty have been able to read the document because the next Human Resources Committee (HRC) meeting will take place on Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>.
      - a. Therefore, faculty comments are due on Monday, April 14<sup>th</sup>.
      - b. Motion: To give Mylast Bilimon and Rosalinda Sumaoang the authority to make the final draft for the paper and to present this final draft to HRC.
        - i. The motion was seconded and approved with no abstentions.
5. Update on the FS Minutes on the CMI Website
  - i. All the minutes for all the Faculty Senate meetings up to 2024 have been uploaded to the CMI website.
    1. The only minutes that need to be uploaded now are the 2024-2025 set of minutes that require the signature of both President Viviana and Secretary Alexander.
6. Update on Faculty Senate Budget
  - i. Faculty Senate President Viviana spoke to Valyn of Financial Affairs and Business Services regarding the Faculty Senate budget.
    1. Valyn informed President Viviana that FS does not have a fixed budget; rather, it depends on whether CMI has the money or not. Valyn then let President Viviana

know that she will talk to Stevenson and inform Viviana as to whether they have the money or not.

- a. The FS officers had previously been under the assumption that there was a budget of \$8,000 (because the initial budget of \$10,000 had been cut by 20%) on standby for FS to use.
  - i. Former FS President Alvin Page informed the Faculty Senate that he, too, was under the assumption that FS gets the same budget amount every year.
    1. He informed FS that if the Faculty Senate spends the amount they are being allocated, then they will continue to receive that amount. But if FS spends less than the allotted budget, then FS will receive less money the next year.
- b. One faculty member who attended the budget meeting informed faculty that there is a tight cash flow, so there are some things that will be put on hold due to other items that need to be prioritized.

#### 7. Update on Work Visas

- i. HR has a list of faculty members whose contracts are ending and whose contracts are expiring.
- ii. Faculty who get visa renewals have to spend time getting a police and hospital clearance.
  1. HR Director Kayo will try to improve this process.
    - a. Kayo also informed President Viviana that faculty can speak to Nering to get all of their paperwork (that faculty must fill out beforehand) to the immigration office since the immigration office has moved to Long Island.

#### 8. Decision Making from Simple Majority to Simple Minority

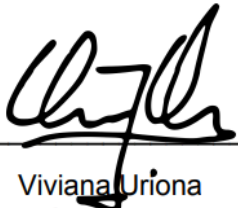
- i. As of now, Faculty Senate quorum consists of a simple majority, meaning more than half of all faculty members must be present at the Faculty Senate for there to be a quorum. (In other words, half of the faculty members must be present plus one additional faculty member.)
  1. However, because there is sometimes the case where the Faculty Senate does not get quorum, the Faculty Senate officers wanted to know how faculty felt about switching the decision making from a simple majority to a simple minority.
    - a. This would mean that, instead of half of all faculty plus one additional faculty member, quorum would consist of half of all faculty minus one faculty member, or minus two faculty members, or whatever number the Faculty Senate decides on.
      - i. This would mean that quorum would be reached faster and that, even if more than half of the faculty are not present, the faculty members who are present would still have decision-making power assuming the requirements for quorum have been met.
      - ii. This change would also entail a change to the RSA (Role, Scope, and Authority) document for the Faculty Senate, which includes the bylaws.
        1. The Faculty Senate must submit their RSA every year to EC (the Executive Council) around the months of October or November.
          - a. Therefore, this amendment would have to be made for the next academic term: FY 2025-2026.
  - ii. The advantage to a simple majority is that more faculty are involved in the decision-making process.
    1. The disadvantage is that sometimes only half or less than half of all faculty are present when important decisions need to be made, and nothing can be done.
  - iii. The advantage to a simple minority is that the Faculty Senate are more likely to have quorum and make decisions.

1. The disadvantage is that faculty will have fewer members making decisions on behalf of the minority.
  - iv. Motion: To change the meetings from a simple majority to a simple minority with a definition of what a simple minority means in terms of the number of faculty required to make quorum.
    1. This motion was approved and seconded with no abstentions.
9. Faculty Senate Meetings During Summer
- i. EC continues to meet during the summer, and policies are passed.
    1. So, there was a suggestion made by a faculty member to create a faculty body to meet during summer so that if faculty need to pass something through EC or vote on any pressing matters, then this could still happen over the summer.
      - a. Another suggestion was made to have online voting, though a certain number of votes are usually needed, and it may be hard to get faculty to vote for policies online during the summer break.
        - i. An effort was made to have a motion for summer meetings, but this has been tabled for the next Faculty Senate meeting on April 25<sup>th</sup> given that thought needs to be put in as to how the meetings will take place and which faculty members will be available and considered to form a quorum or to be a part of this body.
10. Discrimination
- i. One faculty member spoke out about experiencing discrimination from the day they stepped foot in the Marshall Islands.
    1. Two years later, this faculty member is still experiencing discrimination.
      - a. Article II, Subsection 12 of the Constitution of the Marshall Islands prohibits discrimination, and this faculty member has experienced most of the categories and types of discrimination, including physical assault with offensive statements that appear to be jokes but are really diplomatic statements.
        - i. Hence, this faculty member is requesting that this information on discrimination be inserted in the HR Manual to protect faculty against faculty who are discriminatory or students who are discriminatory, especially information that pertains to discrimination such as disrespectful and undermining comments or responses.
        - ii. One idea brought forth was a sensitization session for faculty to make others aware of how impactful or ignorant discrimination is and how negatively it impacts others.
        - iii. Another idea was for the Faculty Senate to have legal consultants as part of the Faculty Senate budget expenditure as suggested by former Faculty President Nik Wilson.
          1. A continued discussion of this issue of discrimination has been tabled for the next Faculty Senate meeting.

11. Reports/Actionable Items

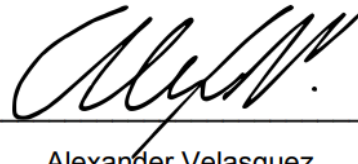
    - i. Enrollment Management Committee
      1. Representative Mellessia sent out an email on April 7<sup>th</sup> regarding current EMC updates.
        - a. Visit the links, and feel free to leave your comments on the document, if you have any, because EMC would like to hear from faculty and read your comments.
    - ii. Information Technology Committee
      1. ITC has approved the CCTV policy of the College.
        - a. Please refer to the CCTV policy for more information.
      2. There is a new CMI website being developed that is currently in its beta stage.
        - a. It will be spearheaded by the information officer, Jeremy, and he is currently accepting members for the website committee.

- i. Generally, members will come from ITC.
- iii. Human Resources Committee
  - 1. The next once-a-month meeting will be on Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup>.
- 12. Announcements
  - i. The Former Dean of Academic Affairs Va Savu was given a gift of a photo that was taken with her and all faculty.
- 13. Meeting Adjourned at 12:05 PM.



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Viviana Uriona  
Faculty Senate President



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Alexander Velasquez  
Faculty Senate Secretary