MINUTES
GOVERNANCE COUNCIL – February 4, 2026

Members Present: Kailie Drumm, Dana Cummings, Kristen Finnel, Michal Ann Ure, Dan Ruiz, Nolan Wheeler, Amber Lemiere, Trey Batey, Wendy Hall, Shiree Bent, Alex Brehm, Ashleigh Kruckenberg, and Tracy Powell.

Guests Present:
Kiersten Wolfe and Julianna Crisman Cooper

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 3:04 p.m.

Approval of Minutes
The council requested the addition of "CCSE monitoring data" under the Telework Policy and Procedures section on page two of the December 3, 2025, minutes. The Institutional Research team will prepare a focused CCSSE report on that benchmark area for the March 4, 2026, meeting.

The minutes of the December 3, 2025, meeting were approved as amended.

MOTION:	By Amber Lemiere, seconded by Ashleigh Kruckenberg, The minutes of December 3, 2025, be approved with noted changes.
MOTION CARRIED	**unanimously**

Leadership Transition on Campus
The council discussed the ongoing leadership transition. No new information has been provided by the Board of Trustees, and Kristen's contract remains in effect through April 6, 2026. She is planning for continuity, including conversations about a potential interim Vice President of Instruction, and will share updates as information becomes available. She is meeting with donors, and the foundation board is engaging external stakeholders as well. Additional information from the Board is anticipated.

Members expressed support for a national presidential search, noting the process may take approximately one year or longer. The council emphasized the importance of refocusing on the institution's mission, vision, and students during this period.

Questions were raised about the Board consultation and communication processes. Historically, the Board has worked closely with Human Resources, and the president is its sole employee. Concerns about communication gaps were acknowledged, and members were advised to avoid speculation while information is limited.

It was clarified that leadership authority and established designee language remain in place to ensure continuity in the event of grievances or other matters that may occur during Kristen's interim appointment.

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) - Instruction
The council discussed the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) for Instruction. The plan was originally developed to address a national disaster scenario that would halt college operations. The Director of Instructional Operations is designated as level one in the succession plan. During a prior emergency, this role transitioned courses online and managed budget functions. Deans retain responsibility for their own areas, and department chairs serve as level one backups for each Dean of Instruction. It was clarified that "successors" named in the documents are only intended to serve as points of contact during emergencies such as natural disasters, since COOPS are not plans for general succession; faculty were asked to please share this clarification with their peers, and admin agreed to consider revisions to the COOP documents that would make the purpose clear as well.

It was noted that all departments maintain COOP plans. The President's plan includes more specific language regarding the designation of an incident commander during emergencies, as only three individuals on campus are trained for that role. Activation of the COOP requires a declared state of emergency. The plans address communication protocols and document access, and are part of the broader Emergency Operations Plan.

The emergency team updated the COOP template this summer, and the current plans reflect those revisions, though not all departments submitted updates. Instruction will incorporate new programs into its plan. Leadership will work to ensure consistent campus-wide communication about COOP processes, including sharing information through council channels and annual communications. Consideration will be given to adding language directing employees to the college website's Emergency Operations Plan and to revising template language for clarity.

Student Grievances and Make-a-Report
The council received an update on student grievances and the Make-a-Report process. Initial conversations began in the Instructional Council. It was noted that the previous process, which routed reports through Student Services, experienced a technical error and was temporarily redirected to another administrator. Discussion focused on what occurs after a complaint is received and the need for greater clarity and consistency in the process.

The formal complaint procedure is highly prescriptive. There is interest in convening a small group to review the current process and make recommendations regarding where complaints should be directed and who should be involved to best support students. The proposed group may include representation from faculty, a dean not associated with the student, and appropriate administrative support. There is also consideration of aligning this work with the Behavioral Response Team structure to strengthen coordination and clarity of roles.

Volunteers Michal Ann Ure and Amber Lemiere expressed interest in participating in the review process, and additional outreach will occur. Title IX reporting on the website will remain unchanged, with any procedural updates handled internally.

DEI Committee

The council discussed the current status of the DEI Committee. The chair and co-chair have stepped down, and several faculty members are completing their terms. The committee name will remain the same. Members expressed interest in reviewing committee membership, clarifying roles, and recruiting new leadership to strengthen and revive the committee's work.

Discussion centered on reporting structure, shared governance, and the connection between the committee and the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Questions were raised about how the committee's charge, direction, and responsibilities are defined, noting some confusion in position descriptions and reporting lines. Materials will be gathered for further review, and continued discussion is planned to clarify structure and function.

There is a desire to establish a more focused agenda, increase engagement, and support faculty, including reviewing criteria for the diversity course list. Additional information is expected from the state level.

Parking and Building Interruptions

The council discussed parking and building interruptions related to the capital project. It was noted that impacts were initially expected to affect only Lot G; however, adjustments have occurred due to a water line issue. Recent water problems in the library and student center were unrelated to the project and were caused by corroded pipes and other unforeseen conditions.

Members requested clearer, campus-wide communication outlining the anticipated two-year project timeline, including which buildings will be unavailable and projected milestones. It was suggested that updates be shared with all staff, including clarification that planned power outages are tied to moving utilities underground and will not affect every building. While timelines such as six months, one year, and eighteen months were discussed, it was acknowledged that details may shift as completion dates are refined to support timely transitions.

The current plan reflects approximately 600 days to substantial completion of the new building, followed by relocation from existing facilities, hazardous material abatement, and demolition of the Physical Science, Vocational, Science, and Steam buildings. Construction of a new parking lot will follow demolition. It was noted that the capital project website is not currently up to date, and follow-up will be provided to assist with improving communications.

Budget Update

The council received a budget update. A handout previously presented at the budget forums was shared, and it was noted that significant tuition revenue is required to meaningfully impact the overall budget. Running Start funds are returned to the operating budget.

Primary funding sources were reviewed, including state allocation, tuition, and local revenue. The importance of transparency in communicating budget information was emphasized.

Budget Forum Next Steps

The council reviewed the next steps following the recent budget forums. Three in-person sessions have been held, with one virtual session scheduled, and more than 60 employees have participated. A wide range of ideas was generated. The Institutional Research team is compiling the input and developing a tracking tool to be shared with employees, including notes on ideas that may not be feasible and the reasons why. Emphasis was placed on transparency, education, and the complexity of the work. There is an intent to hold budget forums annually moving forward.

Leadership expressed commitment to carefully considering and implementing viable ideas. Participants described the forums as energizing and collaborative, and reflective of shared governance in action.

Policies and Procedures
Policy 272
New Policy 272

The council reviewed a new draft of Policy 272, developed in response to recommendations from the college's AAG to make the policy more comprehensive and aligned with peer institutions. Because of the extent of the revisions, a fully redrafted version was provided. The draft was adapted to reflect institutional language and practices.

Discussion centered on clarifying the distinction between a complaint and a grievance, adding definitions, and specifying where complaints should be directed, including Human Resources, supervisors, or the president. Members also recommended clarifying standards related to administrative discretion, acknowledgment of receipt, and follow-up timelines.

Concerns were raised about alignment with Policy 221 on Respectful Work Environment and whether both policies should be reviewed together. Emphasis was placed on transparency, shared governance, and fostering a campus culture in which individuals feel heard. Revisions will be incorporated for continued review.

Other
With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.