

President’s Cabinet Minutes

February 29, 2024

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

# Approval of Minutes

1. **President’s Update (11:00 AM-11:10 AM) –** Janine Davidson, Ph.D., President
   * Three new Board of Trustees members:
     + Ryan Frazier, with over 25 years of private sector experience, serves as managing partner and CEO of Frazier Global, specializing in management consulting and sustainable finance.
     + Laura Pinnie, a director at ZOMA Capital, focuses on strengthening the connection between education and employers to enhance career pathways.
     + Rachel Kaygi, managing director of a political consulting network, brings expertise in research and donor advisement, having previously contributed to pandemic-related K-12 school reentry guidelines.
   * Kristin Hultquist assumes the role of Board of Trustees Chair and Trustee Glick as Vice Chair.
   * Undergraduate enrollment increased by over 4%.
   * Fall to spring retention improved by 4.5% compared to the previous year.
   * Significant advancements in fundraising:
     + The University Foundation's endowment distributed over $1 million for the first time.
     + $57.4 million has been raised towards the fundraising campaign goal.
     + Nearly 9,000 alumni have been engaged, marking a historic high for the University.
     + An announcement about the largest gift in university history is scheduled for Monday.
   * Successful appeals to the legislature have resulted in recommended funding for three capital projects:
     + C2 Hub
     + Health Institute Tower
     + Student Information System (SIS)
   * Governor Jared Polis and bipartisan state lawmakers unveiled legislation on February 12 to address the state's shortage of healthcare workers.
     + The legislation aims to train thousands of new healthcare professionals across four institutions of higher education.
     + Approximately $50 million of the bill's $247 million funding will support MSU Denver's Health Institute Tower, a 70,000-square-foot facility serving 10 health-related academic departments.
   * Safety of students and community is top priority, collaborating with Auraria Campus Police
     + Emphasis on fostering civil discourse and respectful dialogue.
     + Reminders sent out regarding MSU Denver’s Freedom of Expression policy and Auraria Campus Police Department’s First Amendment Assemblies policy.
     + Continue to monitor and direct response to reported issues.
     + Committed to investigating and adjudicating complaints through MSU Denver’s CARE team and Office of Equal Opportunity while maintaining confidentiality.
   * **Employee engagement survey**
     + Overall workplace satisfaction is at 59%, down 4% from January 2022.
     + More than 80% find their job meaningful and believe their manager cares about their concerns.
     + Appreciation for flexibility and alignment with the University's strong values.
     + Areas of opportunity include concerns about compensation, inefficient processes, and a disconnect with senior managers.
     + Next steps: Deans and VPs will collaborate with HR to address specific employee concerns, continue to update throughout spring semester, and the Early Bird will report on key areas of progress throughout the year.
   * Compensation survey is currently underway, with initial findings expected by the end of the semester.
     + Project is in the discovery phase, with market analysis to begin shortly.
   * The Campus Climate Survey is conducted every three years, allowing students, faculty, and staff to provide confidential feedback on institutional culture.
     + Unlike the employee engagement survey, the campus climate survey focuses specifically on diversity, equity, and inclusion.
     + Encouragement to participate in the survey, which takes 15-20 minutes.
     + Full results will be shared in the fall.
     + Previous survey results in 2021 led to the creation of faculty and staff affinity groups, increased support for the Roadrunner Faculty Academy, and contributions to the Leadership Academy.
   * The fifth annual Roadrunners Who Soar Awards ceremony is scheduled for April 4th.
     + It recognizes outstanding teams and individuals dedicated to supporting student and University success.
     + Limited seating is available, but the event will be livestreamed for broader participation.
   * On March 13th, the University will announce its largest gift in history, with details to be shared via official channels.
   * The Presidential Speaker Series in late April will feature former Secretary of Defense and four-star Marine Corps General Jim Mattis in an exclusive conversation.
   * Spring Commencement is set for May 10th at the Denver Coliseum.
     + Keynote speaker: Congresswoman Brittany Pettersen.
2. **Roadrunner Shoutout Awards (11:10 AM-11:20 AM)** –Janine Davidson, Ph.D., President
   * **Faculty winner Dr. Jennifer Gagliardi-Seeley**Dr. Jennifer Gagliardi-Seeley, interim chair and professor of Biology at MSU Denver, has been lauded by student-employee Victoria Mitchell for her exceptional dedication and passion for teaching. Mitchell's glowing remarks commend Dr. Gagliardi-Seeley's hands-on approach to learning, stating, "Never in my life have I met a professor who was so passionate about their subject!" Mitchell emphasizes the profound impact of Dr. Gagliardi-Seeley's teaching, expressing regret for not taking Biology 1 and 2 at MSU Denver due to the enriching experience offered by her courses. She further notes the transformative nature of Dr. Gagliardi-Seeley's field trips, describing them as "once in a lifetime experiences" that foster deep learning. Dr. Gagliardi-Seeley's personalized interactions with students have left a lasting impression, as Mitchell attests, "I believe she is one of the best professors at MSU Denver not only for her knowledge and passion but also how she interacts with and gets to know each and every one of her students." This heartfelt recognition underscores Dr. Gagliardi-Seeley's invaluable contributions to the university's academic community.
   * **Staff winner Leah Butler**  
     Leah Butler, Academic Advisor II and Lab Coordinator for Math & Statistics and Physics, has been recognized as this month's staff winner. Nominated by fellow advisor Denise Daphne, Leah is described as a "powerhouse" who gracefully balances her advising, volunteer, and leadership commitments. Denise applauds Leah's meticulous approach to advising, noting her methodical preparation for each appointment and her thoroughness in addressing student needs. Leah's dedication to learning and understanding various roles within advising is highlighted, along with her kindness, approachability, and impeccable follow-through. Denise expresses gratitude for the opportunity to work closely with Leah, emphasizing that "working with Leah is one of my absolute favorite things about advising." Leah's invaluable contributions to the academic community are celebrated, and she is commended for her exceptional service.
   * **Student winners Juan Vargas**

Juan, the front desk receptionist at the Music Department since fall 2021, has been recognized for his outstanding contributions by Elaine Stanley, the Music Department program manager. Elaine commends Juan's proactive approach in familiarizing himself with department procedures to better serve students, faculty, and staff. As a Theatre Major, Juan has seamlessly integrated into the team, offering valuable assistance to faculty members and contributing to process improvements. His meticulous communication ensures clarity in tasks, leading to high-quality outcomes. Juan's positive attitude, attention to detail, and dedication make him an invaluable student assistant.

1. **Action Item: University Policy Advisory Council Policy Recommendations Vote**
   * Tuition Assistance Military 60% Return Policy - Joseph Foster, Veteran and Military Services
   * Vote passed
2. **AHEC Master Plan Update**
   * The design process for campus engagement unfolds across three phases and spans from April 2023 to February 2024:
     + Phase 1: Discovery & Analysis (April to July 2023) involves discussions with campus and institution leaders, community surveys, and focus groups with internal and external stakeholders.
     + Phase 2: Concept Alternatives (August to November 2023) includes refining design alternatives based on feedback gathered, with community open house sessions for additional input.
     + Phase 3: Master Plan Development (December 2023 to February 2024) focuses on developing the preferred alternative, revising it as needed, and presenting the final design. Engagement activities during this phase involve additional institutional focus groups and town hall meetings to ensure comprehensive input and alignment with stakeholder needs and preferences.
   * Master Plan is designed to support educational objectives by developing a framework to transform Auraria Campus into a complete community.
   * Will utilize existing and future campus opportunities to establish a sustainable financial model.
   * A goal to strengthen connections to downtown Denver, surrounding communities, and new neighborhood development projects.
   * Design a cohesive campus with a distinctive character that complements individual institutional identities.
   * Develop a plan that reflects and promotes DEI throughout the planning process, honors and celebrates campus history, and aligns with the AHEC Strategic Plan.
3. **FASFA/CASFA Update (Chief Enrollment Officer/Financial Aid Exec Dir)** 
   * The US Department of Education and CDHE are in the process of updating applications to reflect inflation adjustments.
   * Contributors (new term to replace “parents”) without a SSN can still submit incomplete FASFA but are encouraged to wait until the first half of March once the USDED resolves any errors.
   * The current activities related to FAFSA simplification include:
     + An internal FAFSA Simplification Committee has been formed to oversee the process.
     + The committee is reviewing changes and updating a dedicated webpage titled "FAFSA Changes" to keep stakeholders informed.
     + A communication strategy is being developed and executed to ensure effective dissemination of information.
     + Tutorial videos are being created and added to aid in understanding the changes.
     + Training sessions and workshops on FAFSA, CASFA, and scholarships are being provided.
     + Networking efforts are underway, including collaboration with other Colorado directors and financial aid offices.
     + The rollout of Ellucian/Banner, a software solution, is being implemented in four phases from January to April 2024, with the current progress being in Phase 2.
     + The target deadline for completion of this phase is set between March 1 and May 3.
   * **"What I Need Now" communications strategy:**
     + Utilizing emails and text messages to directly reach students with relevant updates.
     + Collaborating with the Student Affairs Communication Team to provide weekly student communication updates via The Runner and Social Media platforms.
     + Publishing articles in the Early Bird and RED newsletters through the University Communications and Marketing (UCM) department.
     + Ensuring parents and families are kept informed through dedicated communications.
     + Addressing challenges related to effective dissemination of information and ensuring that communication efforts remain aligned with the needs of our audience.
   * Workshop Dates and Times:
     + 1/24/24 [Wednesday] - 1:30pm - 4:30pm
     + 1/30/24 [Tuesday] - 1:30pm - 4:30pm
     + 2/7/24 [Wednesday] - 9:30am - 12:30pm
     + 2/13/24 [Tuesday] - 10:30am - 1:30pm
     + 2/20/24 [Tuesday] - 3:00pm - 6:00pm
     + 2/28/24 [Wednesday] - 10:30am - 1:30pm
     + Workshop attendees are incentivized with the opportunity to be eligible for a $500 scholarship by presenting their MSU Denver ID.
     + Additionally, scholarship cafes are available to aid attendees in preparing their scholarship essays, enhancing their chances of securing financial aid.
   * An in-person FAFSA/CASFA filing clinic is scheduled for February 29th, organized in collaboration with the Outreach and Community Engagement team from the Colorado Department of Higher Education.
     + The clinic aims to address questions and provide assistance in understanding any delays or updates related to Federal FAFSA Simplification that may affect award timelines.
     + Promotion of the event includes dissemination via the Events Calendar, Text Message alerts, JSSB Digital Boards, and the weekly student communication newsletter, The Runner
4. **Energage Survey Themes/Action Plan (Chief of Staff/Stacy Dversgdal)**
   * Feedback from the Staff Senate highlights several key points:
     + Staff appreciate the university's commitment to transparency but believe it's not enough for full engagement. They desire active participation in shaping decisions.
     + There's a call for interactive forums or committees where staff voices can have a tangible impact, demonstrating respect for input and dedication to incorporating perspectives into strategic direction.
     + Clear feedback loops are sought after, allowing staff to see how their contributions influence decisions, reinforcing their role as valued partners.
     + Developing leaders' and managers' communication skills, especially active listening, is seen as beneficial to ensuring every voice is valued, understood, and appreciated.
   * **Feedback from the Faculty Senate emphasizes two main areas of concern:**
     + Communication: There's a call to vet ideas and process improvements through frontline staff and to solicit input on strategic decisions from faculty and department chairs. Transparency in decision-making processes is also highlighted as crucial.
     + Professional Development: It's suggested that department chairs could benefit from more training in people management. While the framework is appreciated, there's a need for clarity on how it translates into actionable steps.
   * **General feedback from various stakeholders includes:**
     + Staff desire a demonstration of change and assurance that action is being taken based on the identified themes.
     + There's a request for transparency regarding the operationalization of the University's strategic plan, including visibility into all Objectives and Key Results (OKRs).
     + Stakeholders suggest that senior leadership team (SLT) members should attend events, gatherings, and stop by offices, advocating for a proactive approach where stakeholders reach out to SLT rather than vice versa.
     + Recognition for staff should extend beyond awards and include acknowledging and deferring to their expertise. Understanding how staff want to be recognized in meaningful ways is crucial.
     + Feeling valued is strongly correlated with being asked to provide input on an area of work or expertise. Involving staff in decision-making processes enhances their sense of value and contribution.
     + There's a preference for strategic, data-driven decision-making rather than jumping to tactics and justifying decisions after the fact with data. This approach ensures that decisions are well-informed and aligned with organizational goals.
5. **Artificial Intelligence (Office of Faculty Affairs)**
   * **(Pros) Impacts of AI on Higher Education**
     + Personalized Learning
     + Curriculum Development
     + Automating Administrative Tasks
     + Enhancing Research
     + Virtual Learning Environments
   * **(Cons) Impacts of AI on Higher Education**
     + Ethical & Philosophical Considerations
     + Academic Integrity
     + Workforce Implications**How is MSU Denver leveraging AI?**
   * AI Workshop Series for All Workshop No.1 Friday, March 29 from 1-2:45 Further details coming in early March.

* Rowdy’s Roadmap for Advisors
* NCAA Compliance Resource
* Dept. of English’s Writing with Generative AI

**How can MSU Denver leverage AI better?**

* Establishing Guidance on Data Usage
* Developing Clearer Guidance for Faculty & Students
* Strategy for AI within Learning Objectives
* Leveraging AI to “Clean Up” Our Data
* Further Elevate DEI Efforts
* Fostering an Environment of “Playing & Sharing”

1. **Shared Governance Updates**
   * **TSAC**
     + Working on governing documents, resolution will require a GPA requirement and 6-hour credit limit.
   * **Staff Senate**
     + Election cycle for staff senate, graduate tuition befits for staff senate
     + Want a better understanding with the 10% MSU Takes from graduate tuition programs
     + Seeking collaboration from graduate departments
   * **Council of Chairs**
     + Communication with transparency
     + Working with Laura, Marie, and Kat to develop goals and hopes and dreams for professional development.
   * **Faculty Senate**
     + Addressing workload issue
     + Focusing on staff advisory board

# Key Updates (12:05 PM -12:30 PM)

# Larry Sampler

# Workday trainings required by government.

# Information security trainings/workplace environment trainings

# 30% of employees completed all trainings.

# Student evaluation group