



University of Massachusetts Lowell
Office of the Faculty Senate
Alumni Hall, Room 101, 84 University Avenue
Lowell, Massachusetts 01854
Faculty Senate Assoc Director: Kerry Patenaude
Telephone: 978-934-3413
E-mail: Kerry_Patenaude@uml.edu

Faculty Senate President: Kevin Petersen
Telephone: 978-934-4095
E-mail: Kevin_Petersen@uml.edu

MINUTES

Faculty Senate 2025-2026 Meeting #2

<https://uml.curriculog.com/agenda:184/form>

Monday September 8, 2025 at 3:30-5:00 PM • Coburn 255

1. Welcome (*Kevin Petersen*)

2. Updates

- 2.1. **Chancellor Update** (*Julie Chen*) The Chancellor first mentioned how our campus response to the event last week was enhanced by our technologies, and we learned a few lessons, including that campus-wide communications can be tailored to the student audience with further separate instructions for faculty and staff. There has been a strong focus on counseling and wellness of our students, and the Chancellor encouraged the importance of counseling and wellness for faculty and staff as well. Further updates from the Chancellor included: The Convocation and Engagement Fair successfully showcased opportunities for student involvement, while the budget retreat confirmed that finances are tight but stable. Although new hiring will be limited, enrollment and retention remain central priorities, supported by initiatives such as LINC. Salary adjustments under the MSP CBA have been approved and will appear in the August paychecks, with retroactive pay included in September. Strategic planning continues with an emphasis on defining UML's unique differentiators to strengthen recruitment and retention efforts. New committees are being formed to address campus-wide needs: one to manage external events involving the public, and another to streamline time-intensive administrative processes for faculty. Communications will also expand, including monthly faculty/staff briefs and updated resources to share with students. Finally, the research budget remains dependent on federal and industry funding. While UML is less impacted by recent NIH cuts than some peers, ongoing federal decisions will shape future resources. Indirect costs covered by the University continue to be a key budget factor.

2.2. **Provost Update** (*Joseph Hartman*) The Provost expressed thanks for the campus response last week. A debrief is scheduled for Wednesday morning; please share feedback with your dean. The Provost provided an Academic Affairs Initiatives slide. Key highlights included:

- **Enrollment** – Graduate online enrollments have increased, and we are meeting our budget.
- **Revisiting Core Curriculum** – We are asking the Core Curriculum Committee and others to explore ways we might update the general education program based on best practices and a rising trend of 90-credit bachelor degrees
- **Developing AI Opportunities** – Looking across the university for how we might continue to use AI in curricula, university processes (including recruitment, advising, etc.), & research, and career preparation for our students.
- **Transfer Student Strategic Plan** - Led by Julie Nash to continue the work on welcoming, advising, and supporting our transfer students and their success
- **International Summer Program** - Work with Grad School and all colleges next summer to determine possibilities for sending students to work on faculty projects.
- **National Institute of Student Success Initiative** - Run out of Georgia State – an opportunity to collaborate with other institutions to find data on student success and define best practices
- **Implement NSSE and SGA Survey-Led Recommendations** - Last spring feedback led to some recommendations from students
- **Next Gen Scheduling and Degree Planning Pilot** - Kerry Donohue is using AI to help students plan ahead for their classes and their careers
- **MOSAIC Expansion** - Continues to build on the system which externalizes and tracks student engagement across the campus
- **Research** - We lost about 10 million in grants; we got about 20% back.

2.3. **Mutual Academic Defense Compact (MADC) Update** (*Kevin Petersen*) Faculty Senate President Kevin Petersen provided a brief overview of the UMass campus themes emerging from the coalition to protect higher education, which Faculty Senate resolved to join last spring. Folks are encouraged to join [Stand Together for Higher Ed](#). UMass Amherst has the [MADCs Tracker](#) on their website, organized by state. To get involved in a group on our campus look for the upcoming meeting to explore what has been done and how faculty, staff, and students can promote higher education.

3. The 2025-2026 Academic Year

3.1. **Senate Processes** (*Kevin Petersen*) Faculty Senate President Kevin Petersen described how each level of faculty governance operates in the broader context of the university. We use Curriculog to manage Senate processes to ensure a transparent proposal review process and preserve a stable archive of approvals and implementation. Kevin reminded

everyone that we depend on reading the proposals carefully and to come to meetings with questions so that our programs, courses and policies have the best chance of success.

- 3.2. **Curriculog 2025-2026** (*Kerry Patenaude*) Given time constraints and wanting the university-level proposals to have enough time for discussion, Kerry offered to postpone discussion of the updates.

4. **Minutes from Meeting #1 on May 5, 2025** (*Kevin Petersen*)

<https://uml.curriculog.com/proposal:2686/form> Vote to approve the Minutes of May 5, 2025: Yes 84, No 1, Abstain 10. **Approved 88%**

5. **University-Level Policy Proposals**

- 5.1. **UML: Allow transfer credit from approved international universities through established partnership agreements** (*Sukesh Aghara*) **Change University-Level Policy** <https://uml.curriculog.com/proposal:2685/form> Partha Chowdhury presented both university-level policy proposals. This first request proposes an amendment to the existing transfer credit policy to allow graduate students to transfer credits from targeted international universities that are vetted and approved through established partnership agreements. Transfer credits from these institutions would require institutional and departmental approval to ensure alignment with program objectives and academic standards. Main questions or concerns from the senators included how the process would be implemented, as there were unanswered questions in the proposal. Dr. Chowdhury stated that the process would start with MOU and there is nothing that says the agreement would have to be reciprocal. A question was raised about WES evaluations and the Registrar confirmed that all courses would require a WES evaluation. Vote to launch the request into the 2-month review cycle: Yes 75, No 7, Abstain 7. **Approved 84%**

- 5.2. **UML - Change UMass Lowell Graduate Non-Degree Policy** (*Partha Chowdhury*) **Change University-Level Policy** <https://uml.curriculog.com/proposal:2678/form> This proposal seeks to change the existing UMass Lowell policy on non-degree graduate student enrollment to expand access to graduate-level coursework. Specifically, it recommends: Allowing undergraduate students in the latter stages of their academic programs (junior/senior year) to enroll in graduate-level classes with approval. Permitting international students to enroll in non-degree graduate courses. These changes aim to support UMass Lowell's global engagement strategy and enhance graduate recruitment by offering greater flexibility and academic opportunities to both domestic and international students. Main questions and concerns from the senators focused on what level of graduate courses might be considered. Vice-Provost Julie Nash noted that undergraduate students can do this, but for some reason graduate students

cannot (yet). Vote to launch the request into the 2-month review cycle: Yes 76, No 2, Abstain 10. [Approved 86%](#)

6. Committees Elect Chairs (*Kevin Petersen*)

- 6.1. Nominations for committee chairs were open from August 15 – 31, 2025. Nominations received during that timeframe are noted below. Committees gathered and voted for their Chair via paper ballot collected by Associate Director of Faculty Senate Operations Kerry Patenaude.
- 6.2. **UPC** – [Undergraduate Policy Committee](#) **Nominations:** Michael Geiger. Michael Geiger was re-elected as Chair.
- 6.3. **GPAC** – [Graduate Policy & Affairs Committee](#) **Nominations:** Noah Van Dam. Noah Van Dam was re-elected as Chair.
- 6.4. **CORE** – [Core Curriculum Committee](#) **Nominations:** Ryan McPherson. Ryan McPherson was re-elected as Chair.
- 6.5. **RPPC** – [Research Production & Performance Committee](#) **Nominations:** Arie Perliger. Arie Perliger is the newly elected Chair.
- 6.6. **LAC** – [Library Advisory Committee](#) **Nominations:** Dionysios Christodouleas. Dionysios Christodouleas was re-elected as Chair.

7. Executive Session (if time allows)

Next: Faculty Senate Meeting #3 on Monday October 6, 2025 at 3:30-5:00 pm in University Crossing 260