

**UNIVERSITY STUDENT UNION
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

March 23, 2026 – Grand Salon

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the USU Board of Directors was called to order at 12:34 p.m. by Vice Chair Granillo.

II. Roll Call

Present	Absent	Staff	Guests
Alexia Aguilar	Cameron Gonzalez	Alejandra Aparicio	
Alejandro Perez	Cesar Rosales	April Montes	
Cecilia Ortiz	Nawshin Sabah	Audrey Martinez	
Dr. Edith Winterhalter*		Christine Aroutounians	
Dr. Freddie Sanchez		Janessa Reyes	
Heet Patel		Jenny Aw	
Honey Modi*		Jeremy Hamlett	
Joaquin Macias		Joseph Illuminate	
Karim Kouatly		Lara Shaghoian	
Dr. Marlesha Bell*		Magdalena Sanchez	
Rudy Granillo		Natalie Johnson	
Scarlett Khadka (A.S. Liaison)		Raine Hernandez	
Steven Wang		Ryan Hairapetian	
Vyom Pathak		Samantha Liu	
		Sharon S. Kinard	
		Shelley Sakoda	
		Steven Wein	
		Dr. Tari Hunter	
		Tim Rasmussen	
		Vincent King	

**TEAMS video participant*

III. Approval of Agenda

M/S/P (K. Kouatly / A. Perez) Motion to approve the agenda for March 23, 2026.

Motion passed 10-0-0.

J. Macias and V. Pathak joined at 12:37 p.m.

IV. Approval of Minutes 02/16/2026

M/S/P (A. Aguilar / K. Kouatly) Motion to approve the minutes for February 16, 2026.

Motion passed 12-0-0.

V. Open Forum

There were no participants for Open Forum.

VI. Chair's Report

Due to Chair Sabah's absence, Vice Chair Granillo instructed anyone to email her with any questions.

VII. Vice Chair's Report

Vice Chair Granillo began his report by thanking the USU and his travel cohort for a memorable experience at the 2026 Association of College Unions International (ACUI) Annual Conference. He gave a special shout out to Chair Sabah and expressed optimism toward using his newfound confidence and knowledge toward his career.

The Internal Review Committee has started reviewing the USU Scholarship Policy by researching and comparing the policy to adjacent institutions with similar student leadership positions. The next meeting is on March 27 at 9:00 a.m.

The Retirement Committee is scheduling their next meeting date for the end of March. Vice Chair Granillo concluded his report by thanking everyone for their ongoing support.

VIII. Executive Director's Report

Director Ortiz welcomed everyone back from spring break. She shared highlights from her report in the areas of Professional Activities, Programs, Projects/Services, University-Wide Service, and Other. A total of 12 staff, student employees, and BOD members attended the 2026 ACUI Annual Conference. Associate Executive Director, Equity, Programs, & Leadership Dr. Tari Hunter, Manager, Operations Tim Rasmussen, Associate Director, Operations & Services Samantha Liu, and she facilitated various conference sessions. Additionally, Assistant Director, Audrey Martinez and Assistant Director, Recreational Programs Jeremy Hamlett are now serving on the ACUI Region I Leadership Team. The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Department and the DREAM Center hosted A Dialogue with Dr. Felecia S. Russell, former Deferred Action for Childhood Actions (DACA) recipient and researcher on the intersectionality of the Undocu-Black community, later that day. The Oasis Wellness Center collaborated with the Klotz Student Health Center to host a resource fair to promote wellness during spring break on March 4. The USU, along with President Erika D. Beck, Assemblymember Pilar Schiao, donors Milt and Debbie Valera, and other university leaders, celebrated the official ribbon cutting of The Valera NEST on February 27. A day prior, many USU staff members also celebrated CSUN's new Black-Serving Institution (BSI) designation at the event, "Elevating Black Excellence: Launching Our BSI Era." Director Ortiz concluded her report by recognizing Collaborations & Special Projects Supervisor Raine Hernandez's contribution toward their newly published collaborative research paper. Board members and attendees provided a round of applause.

IX. A.S. Report

Associated Students (A.S.) Senator Khadka started her report, hoping everyone had a restful spring break. Over the past month, Outdoor Adventures brought students camping at San Simeon and the Black Canyon, where they canoed along the Colorado River. In April, they will go on a historic hike through the Secret Stairs of Hollywood and explore Yosemite National Park. Productions and Sustainability hosted their recurring Farmers Market and Thursday Thrift, as well as organized C.R.A.M.P.S. and Save the Bees. Upcoming events include A.S. Big Comedy featuring Trevor Wallace and, in collaboration with Outdoor Adventures, a beach cleanup. The CSUN Sports Clubs Council held bi-weekly meetings and raised over \$1.1 million during CSUN Giving Day. Student Leadership made several approvals involving new appointments, updated policies, and allocation of funds. Several student leaders attended the California Higher Education Student Summit in Sacramento, where they lobbied for maintaining the CSU budget and promoting student success. Additionally, they hosted various events, including DPR and

Donuts, The Cultural Unity Showcase, and A.S. Elections Orientation, and plan to host A.S. Elections Debate and a, “Deaf President Now,” watch party. A.S. Senator Khadka concluded her report with an inspirational message about remaining committed to their advocacy amidst the current social and political climate.

X. Committee Reports

A. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

Due to Director Rosales’ and Director Gonzalez’s absences, Vice Chair Granillo referred everyone to the meeting packet for their report.

B. Facilities & Operations

Director Patel reported on key highlights from the last committee meeting. Members assessed the technology and facility of the Computer Lab to determine alignment with student needs and plan to make a recommendation by June 2026. Additionally, the committee addressed operational concerns regarding The Valera NEST facility locker procedures and explored a proposal from The University Corporation and Chartwells to install a 24/7-access pizza vending machine. Lastly, committee members continued their evaluation of how the decommissioned Plaza Pool area can be repurposed. Their next meeting is on April 3.

A.S. Senator Khadka left at 12:52 p.m. and returned at 12:57 p.m.

C. Finance

Director Modi began her report by sharing an update to the committee’s goals. The committee worked on updating and recommended approval for the Fixed Asset and Leasehold Improvement Policy, which had not been updated since 2012. Additionally, they welcomed a new member, Laura Pacas, to the committee.

D. Personnel

Director Kouatly hoped everyone’s spring semester was going well and reported on their last meeting. The committee reviewed and proposed classification and wage schedules for Student Assistant Employees and Non-Student/Casual Employees to maintain alignment with the city of Los Angeles’ anticipated minimum wage increase on July 1. Additionally, members continued their review of the Extended Family and Medical Leave Benefits policy.

E. Internal Review

Vice Chair Granillo provided committee updates during the Vice Chair Report.

F. Visibility and Engagement

On behalf of Chair Sabah, Associate Director, Administration & Communications and Executive Secretary Sharon Kinard provided updates on the committee’s work. Despite not meeting quorum, the committee met that morning and agreed to push the date for administering their assessment to September 21, 2026. S. Kinard outlined the process the assessment will need to go through before its official launch, which includes various points of university approvals. Meanwhile, the committee is identifying companies with highly visible branding. Their next meeting is on April 13 at 9:00 a.m.; anyone is welcome to join.

XI. Action Items

A. Fixed Asset & Leasehold Improvement Policy

Motion out of the Finance Committee to approve the Fixed Asset & Leasehold Improvement Policy.

Director Pathak presented the proposed revisions to the policy, which had not been updated since 2012. The reason for revising this policy was to increase the minimum fixed asset purchase

amount from \$5,000 to \$10,000 to match the maximum AMEX corporate credit card single transaction amount to prevent fixed assets from being charged on the credit card. Director Pathak outlined the purpose and importance of this policy, as well as new, different, and unchanged aspects. The revision of this policy marks progress toward the Finance Committee's 2025-2026 goals.

Motion passed 12-0-0.

XII. Discussion Items

A. 2025-2026 Mid-Year Progress Report on USU Goals and Outcomes

Director Ortiz provided an overview of the USU goals and invited Associate Director, Administration & Communications Sharon Kinard, Associate Executive Director, Equity, Programs, & Leadership Dr. Tari Hunter, Manager, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion Natalie Johnson, and Associate Director, Operations & Services Samantha Liu to present their area's progress.

Strategic Goal #1: The USU will provide learning-based student work experiences that support student readiness for post-college employment.

- Status: In progress. USU Student Assistant Employees (SAEs) received the National Association of Colleges & Employers (NACE) Competency Assessment Tool on January 5, as an introduction to career readiness skillsets. Following, SAEs completed the new USU Student Employee Career Readiness Survey, which combined NACE competencies with the NASPA survey, during SUMMIT on January 16. Results and key trends will be shared during the July BOD meeting.

In response to Director Sanchez's inquiry, Associate Director, Administration & Communications Sharon Kinard will confirm whether the assessment will have national trends and data to compare with the USU.

Strategic Goal #2: The USU will enhance the knowledge, skills, and application of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) principles among staff, SAEs, and Board members by implementing culturally inclusive training, programs, and assessment tools.

- Status: In progress. BOD members and SAEs engaged with various JEDI training workshops on SMARTIE goal setting and the Neurodiversity Paradigm during SUMMIT, BOD Retreat, and a monthly training session between July 2025 and March 2026. USU staff will participate in one JEDI training session in March. Additionally, the USU administered the second installment of the USU JEDI assessment to BOD members, staff, and SAEs in the spring.

Strategic Goal #3: The USU will continually improve and enhance facilities to provide the CSUN community and guests with quality facilities, equipment, and technology in support of student success efforts and to increase revenue-generating and service-providing opportunities.

- Status: In progress. From July to December 2025, over 32 meetings with campus stakeholders and students were held to inform the Gateway project feasibility study. Special recognition of Director Rosales was highlighted for his contribution to the Advisory Committee. LPA architects used this input to develop a plan aligned with student needs within the referendum and graduated student fee, with a cost model expected in March 2026 and final study completion anticipated in April 2026 before moving to criteria development. Meanwhile, Strategic Marketing and Communications is preparing a plan to inform students about the first installment of the graduated student fee.

In response to Director Patel's inquiry, Associate Director, Operations & Services Samantha Liu explained why LPA was the chosen firm for this project, noting their history with CSUN and other college campuses, as well as their areas of expertise.

Strategic Goal #4: The USU will continually improve and enhance facilities to provide the CSUN community and guests with quality facilities, equipment, and technology in support of student success efforts and to increase revenue-generating and service-providing opportunities.

- Status: In progress. The Valera NEST completed construction in December 2025, received its certificate of occupancy, and finalized operational procedures, including a comprehensive Operating Playbook to guide services, collaboration, and student experience. The playbook establishes service standards, roles, and coordinated workflows across departments to support equitable access to basic needs resources. Moving forward, the Advisory Committee will meet monthly and track metrics to guide data-driven decisions and measure impact.

Director Ortiz added that the demographic of the LPA team is more representative of CSUN demographics and includes a CSU alum.

At the conclusion of this progress report, Directors applauded the team for their work.

Director Wang left at 1:17 p.m. and returned at 1:19 p.m.

B. Year-End Celebration Awards

Learning and Development Coordinator Christine Aroutounians introduced herself and provided details about the upcoming Year End Celebration (YEC). The BOD will determine the winners of the Board of Directors Committee Member of the Year Award and Aida C. Salazar Award. C. Aroutounians explained each award and the nomination and selection process. Award winners will be announced at YEC on May 1.

XIII. Announcements

There were no announcements.

XIV. Adjournment

Vice Chair Granillo adjourned the meeting at 1:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,

Cecilia Ortiz,
Executive Director