

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

June 9, 2025 – Grand Salon

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the USU Board of Directors was called to order at 12:40 p.m. by Chair Lopez.

II. Roll Call

Present	Absent	Staff	Guests
Alvaro Geminiano Aragon (A.S. Liaison)*	Dr. Freddie Sanchez	Abigayle Brown	Alejandro Perez
Cecilia Ortiz	Steven Wang	Adrien Goodman	Alexia Aguilar
Cesar Rosales	Dr. Edith Winterhalter	Alaini Cerdero	Cameron Gonzalez
Daniel Lopez		Alejandra Aparicio	Ethan Molina
Devaansh Mann		Amanda Christianson	Honey Modi
Dr. Mirna Sawyer*		Amelia Zapata	
Heet Patel		Ana Dattoo	
Joaquin Macias		Audrey Martinez	
Marilyn Orantes		Cesar Jimenez	
Nawshin Sabah		Denisse Gonzalez	
Nidharsh Kempegowda		Dr. Tari Hunter	
Rudy Granillo		Jaiden Randolph	
Vyom Pathak		Janessa Reyes	
		Jennifer Kim	
		Jeremy Hamlett	
		Jordan Brown	
		Joseph Illuminate	
		Joshua Fleisher	
		Karim Kouatly	
		Kristen Pichler	
		Malahat Zhobin	
		Melonie King	
		Natalie Johnson	
		Nicholas Colt	
		Ruth Vasquez	
		Ryan Ballera	
		Ryan Hairapetian	
		Samantha Calderon	

		Samantha Liu	
		Sarina Loeb	
		Shelley Sakoda	
		Steven Wein	
		Tim Rasmussen	

**TEAMS video participant*

III. **Approval of Agenda**

M/S/P (D. Mann / R. Granillo) Motion to approve the agenda for June 9, 2025.

Motion passed 11-0-0.

IV. **Open Forum**

Assistant Director, Resource Centers Sarina Loeb thanked the Board members and staff who reviewed scholarship applications. S. Loeb introduced a few scholarship recipients to the podium:

- Ethan Molina, Recipient of the Pride Center Scholarship
- Melonie King, Recipient of the Tanni Block Memorial LGBTQIA+ Scholarship
- Samantha Calderon, Recipient of the Debra L. Hammond Servant Leadership Scholarship

E. Molina, M. King, and S. Calderon approached the podium individually to speak on their academic journeys and passions, as well as how their scholarship funds will support their goals. They were all appreciative of the Board for the opportunities these scholarships will provide. Chair Lopez thanked each of the recipients for sharing their experiences.

Director Kempegowda spoke about his journey as a BOD committee member that would eventually change his career trajectory. He thanked Audrey, Daniel, and Marilyn for giving him a seat at the table. The F&O committee has helped him make an impact on others. Director Kempegowda thanked everyone there and closed his message with an inspiring quote about changing direction.

V. **Chair and Vice Chair's Report**

Chair Lopez and Vice Chair Orantes took turns presenting on the BOD Year End Report.

Chair Lopez started their report by expressing how bittersweet the day was. He talked about his journey starting as a D&I committee member to running for BOD Elections to filling different BOD roles over the past few years. Chair Lopez thanked everyone, especially current Directors, incoming Directors, Marketing, student assistant employees, and professional staff for the impact they have had on him. He made good friendships and met amazing mentors.

Chair Lopez reported on the 2024-2025 BOD members, including resignations and mid-year appointments. The Board had 14 meetings; the Chair and Vice Chair had several bi-weekly meetings for BOD strategy and marketing, as well as one-on-one support meetings, as needed. The Chair also participated in Executive Director Search committee meetings.

Chair Lopez provided an update on BOD Goals 1 and 2:

Goal 1: The USU BOD will provide leadership opportunities to deepen students' understanding of leadership pathways in the USU.

- This goal was successfully achieved through six leadership trainings conducted during the 2024-2025 academic year. Committee members were invited to participate, helping them

explore BOD leadership pathways. Tracking election candidates and attendance showed that five committee members ran for the BOD, with four successfully elected. These members came from the Diversity & Inclusion, Facilities & Operations, and Personnel Committees.

Goal 2: The USU BOD will enhance student awareness and engagement.

- The BOD effectively increased student engagement through social media campaigns and event tabling. These efforts led to a measurable rise in followers, likes, shares, and interaction with students. Outreach efforts helped broaden awareness of BOD activities across campus.
- Chair Lopez also mentioned highlights from the social media report that was prepared by Marketing Coordinator Malahat Zhubin. In the 2024–2025 fiscal year, the USU Board of Directors (BOD) made strong progress in increasing its visibility and engagement with CSUN's diverse student population. Through a combination of strategic Instagram storytelling and consistent in-person outreach, the BOD became more relatable and accessible to students. Their Instagram following grew by 79% to 443 followers, with a diverse audience primarily made up of women and students aged 18–34. This digital presence was further supported by active participation in key campus events, deepening their connection with the student community.

Chair Lopez thanked the Marketing team for helping them achieve Goals 1 and 2.

Vice Chair Orantes provided an update on BOD Goal 3:

Goal 3: The USU BOD will enhance its internal governance framework and guiding documents.

- This goal was successfully started and is currently still in progress, on track to be completed by the next academic year. The BOD created an Internal Review Ad Hoc Committee (IRC), chaired by Vice Chair Orantes to review the Board's internal governance framework and documents. The IRC Committee met a total of nine times throughout the academic year, with accomplishments such as updating the Expectations & Responsibilities Form for both Student & Non-Student Directors and creating a new version of the form specifically for committee members. The IRC also began the formal review of various articles within the USU BOD Bylaws

Vice Chair Orantes highlighted the BOD's accomplishments, which included approving various policies, budget requests and reallocations, new expansion projects, and operational policies. The Chair and Vice Chair achieved their own accomplishments, such as serving on The Valera NEST Advisory Committee, spearheading social media campaigns and outreach programs, and conducting monthly Director check-ins.

Chair Lopez wrapped up with several future recommendations for Board leadership and his learning outcomes as the Chair. Vice Chair Orantes provided her learning outcomes as the Vice Chair. They both expressed how grateful they were for the opportunities the USU provided. Chair Lopez closed their report by encouraging incoming leaders to lead with intention and thanking Vice Chair Orantes for her support.

Director Macias left at 12:52 p.m. and returned at 12:59 p.m.

VI. Executive Director's Report

Director Ortiz thanked the Chair and Vice Chair, as well as all the Directors. She reported on part one of BOD Orientation with part two approaching on Thursday and BOD Summer Retreat underway. University Administration held meetings regarding immigration enforcement activity and are monitoring the situation, providing communications to community members. Director Sawyer thanked Director Ortiz for this update and asked her to continue sharing University

Administration's plans and activities. Director Ortiz said that University Administration will share information and resources about knowing our rights, which she will share with the Board.

Director Sawyer left at 1:28 p.m. and returned at 1:34 p.m.

Director Pathak left at 1:36 p.m. and returned at 1:38 p.m.

Director Granillo left at 1:38 p.m. and returned at 1:44 p.m.

VII. A.S. Report

Associated Students (A.S.) Vice President Geminiano Aragon started his report by thanking Chair Lopez and Vice Chair Orantes for their service on the Board. A.S. Vice President Geminiano Aragon shared that A.S. was reviewing their first round of applicants. Additionally, he would be continuing the More You Know initiative passed down from his predecessor, in which he hopes to receive BOD support. A.S. Vice President Geminiano Aragon recommended that the D&I Committee continue to meet with A.S. and thanked the DREAM Center for the fellowship proposal.

A.S. Vice President Geminiano Aragon left at 1:44 p.m. and returned at 1:46 p.m.

Vice Chair Orantes left at 1:45 p.m. and returned at 1:48 p.m.

VIII. Committee Reports

A. Diversity & Inclusion

Director Granillo reported on the 2024-2025 D&I committee members, including resignations and mid-year appointments. The committee had a total of 12 meetings.

Goal:

Identify at least two best practices to support undocumented student success, focusing on increasing visibility of "Know Your Rights" resources and exploring fund allocation for fellowship, with the DREAM Center and other campus entities.

- This goal was successfully achieved through two recommendations brought to the Board in the previous BOD meeting on June 2:
 - The Board approved the committee's recommendation of a 5-year financial model to support the establishment of a fellowship program for undocumented students.
 - The committee proposed a marketing campaign focused on immigrant and allyship empowerment and information resourcing.

Director Granillo and Director Rosales recommended that the next Chair and Co-Chair take responsibility for maintaining connections with committee members and holding them accountable for their attendance. Additionally, they recommended that the committee meeting time be established prior to committee member interviews.

They each shared their learning outcomes and expressed their appreciation for everyone they worked with during their time as D&I Chair and Co-Chair. They closed their report with suggestions related to committee bonding, meetings with the Executive Secretaries, and the meeting schedule.

B. Facilities & Operations

Director Mann reported on the 2024-2025 F&O committee members, including resignations and mid-year appointments. The committee had a total of 9 meetings.

Director Mann shared updates to the committee goals:

Goal 1: By June 2025, the Facilities and Operations Committee will collaborate with the Marketing and Operations departments to enhance wayfinding within the University Student Union, utilizing student feedback to guide the design and placement of new signage.

- Goal 1 was initially achieved through a collaborative meeting with the Marketing Department and a productive brainstorming session. However, it has been deferred to the next term to give the incoming committee an opportunity to expand upon these ideas, especially in light of the recent additions and expansions within the USU and its facilities.

Goal 2: By May 2025, the Facilities and Operations Committee will conduct at least two collaborative meetings with the USU Maintenance team and Operations team to gain a full understanding of the facility and identify possible upgrades for the student union.

- The committee successfully reached goal 2 by conducting two meetings with the Assistant Director of Facilities & Maintenance. Members toured the Maintenance Office and Workshop to gain firsthand insight into the day-to-day operations that keep the USU functioning efficiently. Additionally, the committee conducted a tour of the East Conference Center (ECC) Roof to assess the water damage and understand the scope of necessary repairs.

Director Kempegowda shared the committee's many accomplishments, from their engagement with USU departments to policies and initiatives approved by the Board, and recommendations. Director Mann and Kempegowda shared their learning outcomes as Chair and Co-Chair and expressed heartfelt reflection on the past year. They presented some photos of the committee at bonding events and site visits. They closed their report by suggesting a consistent meeting schedule and a "Fix It Fridays" outreach initiative.

C. Finance

Director Pathak reported on the 2024-2025 Finance committee members and meeting schedule, which included 7 total meetings.

Director Pathak provided updates to their goals:

Goal 1: Update and finalize the Long-Term Financial Plan for the Gateway Project to present to the USU Board of Directors and Campus Administration.

- In Progress – the Financial Plan has been continuously updated to reflect the latest information available and was discussed at one Finance Committee meeting.

Goal 2: Revise the Procurement Policy to incorporate justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) to provide underrepresented small businesses with the opportunity to compete for business opportunities with the USU.

- Not Completed due to time constraints. This goal will be carried over to the 25-26 fiscal year.

Director Pathak reviewed the committee accomplishments, including meeting quorum at all meetings and the Board approval of various budget and allocation proposals.

Director Patel shared their recommendations for future plans and areas of concern. Their learning outcomes as Chair and Co-Chair involved gaining practical experiences, stronger public speaking skills, and improved understanding of financial forecasting and student fee structures.

Director Pathak closed their report by extending his gratitude to the committee, Director Patel, Executive Secretary Joe Illuminate, and the USU staff for their guidance and support. He reminded everyone that their voice matters in their work toward advancing equity, access, and student success through financial stewardship.

D. Personnel

Director Sabah reported on the 2024-2025 Personnel committee members and meeting schedule, which included 6 total meetings, all held virtually. She clarified one of the meeting times in the report should read: "Wednesday, November 20, 2024, 3:45 PM – 5:00 PM."

Director Sabah provided updates to the committee goals:

Goal 1:

Consider recommending approval of a new staff position, Wellness Supervisor.

- Completed with BOD approval on 12/2/24.

Goal 2:

Consider recommending approval of a Supervisor, Collaborations & Co-Sponsorships.

- Completed with BOD approval on 2/17/25.

Goal 3:

Consider recommending updates to the Student Assistant Classification & Wage Schedule.

- Completed with BOD approval on 3/10/25.

Goal 4:

Consider recommending updates to the Lifeguard, Head Lifeguard, Red Cross Instructor, Wage Schedule.

- Reviewed - Staff has recommended that Wage Schedule remain unchanged from FY 2024-25.

Goal 5:

Consider recommending a new policy for extended medical benefits for long-term employees.

- Extensively reviewed - Policy for continuing development and finalizing in 2025-2026.

Goal 6:

Consider recommending approval of an updated relocation policy

- Reviewed - Goal recommended for continuing review and finalization in 2025-2026.

Goal 7:

Consider BOD recommended changes to the draft of a new policy regarding employees' use of personal pronouns.

- Reviewed - Not recommended for further consideration.

Goal 8:

Consider recommending the new position of Intramural and Day Camp Supervisor.

- Postponed - Position not included in 2025-26 staffing plan.

Director Sabah reviewed the committee accomplishments, including graduating members and returning members, and future plans and areas of concern. Additionally, Director Sabah reflected on her learning outcomes as Chair. She closed her report by suggesting Chair and Executive Secretary one-on-one meetings, bonding events, and committee member availability for meetings.

E. Retirement

Vice Chair Orantes began her report by thanking Executive Secretary Joe Illuminate for being a role model and mentor to her and her daughter.

Notable member transitions included Cecilia Ortiz assuming the role of Executive Director in March 2025, following Debra Hammond's service until February. The committee met four times, virtually, and completed one of two of their goals.

Goal 1:

Fully fund the Retirement Health Benefits Plan (RHBP) based on the latest financial data from the Actuarial Valuation Report dated June 30, 2024.

- Completed December 2024- RHBP was fully funded with an additional \$600,00 payment to the VEBA in in November 2024.

Goal 2:

Provide a training opportunity to educate interested employees about the benefits of the 401A Employer-Paid Supplemental Savings Plan and 403(b) plans and familiarize them with The Standard's website. 37 a. Not Completed- No training opportunities were provided.

- This goal is recommended to be carried over to 2025-2026.

Vice Chair Orantes discussed future plans, including meetings between the Chair and Executive Secretary, continuing working on unmet goals, and committee meetings should occur on an as-needed basis. Additionally, she shared her learning outcomes as Chair and provided suggestions for the next Chair's consideration. Vice Chair Orantes closed her report with sentimental remarks about the committee, financial advisors, and CSUN and USU leadership.

F. Internal Review

Vice Chair Orantes reported on the 2024-2025 Internal Review Ad Hoc committee members and meeting schedule, which included 10 total meetings, all held virtually. She provided updates regarding the committee's goal.

Goal:

Uphold the USU Board of Directors Goal #2: "The USU BOD will enhance its internal governance framework and guiding documents." Through this goal, the committee reviews, edits, and provides feedback to internal documents, such as Expectations & Responsibilities for both Student & Non-Student Directors and USU BOD By Laws.

Committee accomplishments included successfully revising the Student and Non-Student Expectations & Responsibilities forms and gaining Board approval on both documents.

Additionally, the committee created a Committee Member Expectations & Responsibilities form, which the Board also approved.

Vice Chair Orantes reported on future plans and areas of concern, stating that the committee should finish revising the bylaws and begin reviewing the Scholarship Policy next fiscal year. Her learning outcomes included acquiring the skills to lead discussions with different ideas and viewpoints, as well as deepening her understanding of organizational operations and decision-making structures. She suggested that the committee continue bi-weekly meetings throughout the summer, divide the work amongst members, and ensure that the Chair and Executive Secretaries meet prior to the committee meeting for preparation.

She closed her report by sharing her appreciation of the Board of Directors and fellow Matadors for entrusting her to lead this committee.

Director Kempegowda left at 1:58 p.m. and returned at 2:02 p.m.

Director Macias left at 2:00 p.m.

IX. Action Items

A. Student Representative Appointment – Nawshin Sabah

M/S/P (M. Orantes / R. Granillo) Motion to approve Student Representative Appointment – Nawshin Sabah.

There is a vacancy on the USU Board of Directors. Motion to approve the appointment for Nawshin Sabah as a BOD student representative effective June 9, 2025 until June 2026.

Director Sabah shared that she recently graduated with her Bachelor's degree in Psychology. She started her journey on the Board of Directors as Co-Chair of the D&I Committee, then became Chair of the D&I Committee, and most recently, served as Chair of the Personnel Committee. Director Sabah explained her motivation to continue serving on the Board as an incoming graduate student.

Motion passed 10-0-0.

B. Student Representative Appointment – Rudy Granillo

M/S/P (D. Mann / N. Sabah) Motion to approve the Student Representative Appointment – Rudy Granillo.

There is a vacancy on the USU Board of Directors. Motion to approve the appointment for Rudy Granillo as a BOD student representative effective June 9, 2025 until June 2026.

Director Granillo shared that the Board of Directors has taught him how to be a student leadership through servant leadership. He thanked the Board for the opportunities provided to him as a student leader and father.

Motion passed 9-0-1.

C. Staff Representative Appointment – Steven Wang

M/S/P (M. Orantes / H. Patel) Motion to approve the Staff Representative Appointment – Steven Wang.

Director Wang was absent for the meeting and could not provide a candidate statement.

Motion passed 10-0-0.

X. Announcements

Chair Lopez thanked the outgoing Directors for their work and wished them the best.

XI. Adjournment

Chair Lopez adjourned the meeting at 2:17 p.m.

XII. Transition Ceremony / Seating of New Board

Chair Lopez welcomed everyone to the 2025 Transition Ceremony.

The Board retained 11 members from 2024-2025. He called the following Directors to the stage:

- Nawshin Sabah

- Rudy Granillo
- Vyom Pathak
- Heet Patel
- Cesar Rosales
- Cecilia Ortiz
- Joaquin Macias
- Dr. Mirna Sawyer

He then introduced and welcomed the new Board members:

- Alejandro Perez
- Alexia Aguilar
- Cameron Gonzalez
- Honey Modi
- Karim Kouatly

Directors Sanchez, Wang, and Winterhalter were absent from the meeting but were recognized as returning Directors. Chair Lopez led the 2025-2026 Directors through a pledge to uphold the USU Mission. This ceremony was followed by a ten-minute break, where Directors, staff, and guests enjoyed cake.

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the USU Board of Directors was called to order at 2:43 p.m. by Chair Lopez.

II. Roll Call

Present	Absent	Staff	Guests
Alejandro Perez	Dr. Freddie Sanchez	Abigayle Brown	
Alexia Aguilar	Steven Wang	Alaini Cerdero	
Alvaro Geminiano Aragon (A.S. Liaison)*	Dr. Edith Winterhalter	Alejandra Aparicio	
Cameron Gonzalez		Amanda Christianson	
Cecilia Ortiz		Ana Dattoo	
Cesar Rosales		Audrey Martinez	
Dr. Mirna Sawyer*		Cesar Jimenez	
Heet Patel		Denisse Gonzalez	
Honey Modi		Dr. Tari Hunter	
Joaquin Macias		Jaiden Randolph	
Karim Kouatly		Janessa Reyes	
Nawshin Sabah		Jennifer Kim	
Rudy Granillo		Jeremy Hamlett	
Vyom Pathak		Jordan Brown	
		Joseph Illuminate	
		Joshua Fleisher	
		Karim Kouatly	

		Kristen Pichler	
		Malahat Zhobin	
		Melonie King	
		Natalie Johnson	
		Nicholas Colt	
		Ruth Vasquez	
		Ryan Hairapetian	
		Samantha Liu	
		Sarina Loeb	
		Shelley Sakoda	
		Steven Wein	
		Tim Rasmussen	

**TEAMS video participant*

III. Action Items

A. Election of Chair

Chair Lopez asked for nominations for the Chair positions.

(A. Perez / C. Gonzalez) Motion to nominate Alejandro Perez. Nomination was accepted.
 (N. Sabah / R. Granillo) Motion to nominate Nashin Sabah. Nomination was accepted.
 (M. Sawyer / A. Aguilar) Motion to nominate Cesar Rosales. Nomination was declined.
 (V. Pathak / H. Patel) Motion to nominate Vyom Pathak. Nomination was accepted.
 (R. Granillo / C. Rosales) Motion to nominate Rudy Granillo. Nomination was accepted.
 (K. Kouatly / N. Sabah) Motion to nominate Karim Kouatly. Nomination was accepted.

Director Sawyer left at 2:48 p.m. and returned at 2:58 p.m.

The five candidates stepped out of the room at 2:50 p.m. to prepare a statement. Each candidate was called back into the room, individually, to present their statement and field questions from the Board. After the candidate statements were complete, the candidates returned to the room at 4:23 p.m. Following their return, voting commenced.

Director Modi joined the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

A.S. Vice President Geminiano Aragon left at 3:45 p.m. and returned at 4:00 p.m.

Assistant Director, Programs & Leadership Audrey Martinez collected secret ballots from the Board. The ballots were counted and Chair Lopez announced that Nawshin Sabah was elected Chair for the 2025-2026 Board of Directors. Chair Lopez congratulated Director Sabah and transitioned out of his seat.

Director Macias left the meeting at 4:25 p.m.

B. Election of Vice Chair

Chair Sabah asked for nominations for the Vice Chair positions.

(C. Rosales / K. Kouatly) Motion to nominate Rudy Granillo. Nomination was accepted.
 (R. Granillo / K. Kouatly) Motion to nominate Cesar Rosales. Nomination was accepted.
 (A. Perez / C. Gonzalez) Motion to nominate Alejandro Perez. Nomination was accepted.

(H. Patel / R. Granillo) Motion to nominate Vyom Pathak. Nomination was accepted.
(K. Kouatly / C. Rosales) Motion to nominate Karim Kouatly. Nomination was accepted.

The five candidates stepped out of the room at 4:30 p.m. to prepare a statement. Each candidate was called back into the room, individually, to present their statement and field questions from the Board. After the candidate statements were complete, the candidates returned to the room at 5:18 p.m. Following their return, voting commenced.

Director Macias joined the meeting virtually at 4:35 p.m.

Assistant Director, Programs & Leadership Audrey Martinez collected secret ballots from the Board. The ballots were counted and Chair Sabah announced that Rudy Granillo was elected Vice Chair for the 2025-2026 Board of Directors. Chair Sabah congratulated Director Granillo and welcomed him to take his new seat. Vice Chair Granillo expressed his appreciation and commitment to serving the Board honorably.

C. USU BOD Meeting Schedule for 2025-2026

M/S/P (C. Rosales / K. Kouatly) Motion to approve the USU BOD Meeting Schedule for 2025-2026.

Motion passed 11-0-0.

XIII. Adjournment

Chair Sabah adjourned the meeting at 5:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by,



Cecilia Ortiz,
Executive Director