

Student Senate Town Hall

February 2026

We want to extend our gratitude to everyone who attended our Student Senate Town Hall this semester. We know that many students across our campus had questions about the partnership that Claremont Graduate University has been pursuing with Pomona College. For those who were unable to attend, we wanted to provide a general overview of the information that was shared.

You can visit the [Partnership Initiative](#) page to get detailed information about the partnership process and timeline.

What a Partnership with Pomona Could Mean

The partnership envisions a parent-subsidiary model, in which Pomona College oversees and supports CGU as a separately operating entity within a unified structure. Pomona College is an undergraduate-only liberal arts institution; CGU is a graduate-only institution serving a largely working-professional student population. The two are highly complementary. The shared history dates to 1925, when Pomona helped establish the graduate institution that became CGU, and cross-registration between the institutions has existed ever since.

Key Points to Note:

- **CGU is not closing.** We remain committed to our students and community.
- **CGU will retain its name** and remain an independently accredited, graduate-only institution with its own WASC accreditation and federal identification.
- **Diplomas will still be issued by Claremont Graduate University.** No changes to diplomas or commencement are foreseen.
- **Student commitments are protected.** All currently enrolled students will be able to finish their programs. No program will be eliminated without a clear teach-out plan, as required by the Department of Education.
- **Degrees will retain their value.** Our accreditors require and ensure this, and we remain committed to protecting academic integrity.
- **Our mission continues.** CGU's identity as a global leader in transformative graduate education will be preserved and strengthened, not diluted.

Timeline and Next Steps

CGU and Pomona are currently in a discovery and due diligence phase. The key milestone goals we hope to achieve this year are as follows:

- **By end of June 2026:** Reach a definitive agreement to be approved by both boards that is legally binding.
- **After June 2026:** Submission of a proposal to WASC for accreditation review, ideally reviewed at WASC's November 2026 meetings.

- **No sooner than 2027:** Official change of control, contingent on regulatory approvals from the Department of Education and the Attorney General’s office.
- **2027–2030:** Begin work on academic innovation, new programs, and expanded collaboration.

Governance and Leadership

The current plan anticipates two separate boards. The CGU board will retain oversight of all graduate-level academic matters, including faculty appointments and promotions, diplomas, and degree programs. The Pomona board would hold fiduciary oversight responsibilities, including investments and budgeting. The Pomona College president would serve on the CGU board as an ex-officio member. Final governance structures will be determined through the definitive agreement and accreditation processes.

Regarding the CGU presidency: The search for a permanent president was paused pending the outcome of the partnership discussions. CGU is working with Pomona to clarify expectations for the role before appointing a permanent president.

Academic Programs and Faculty

A comprehensive and inclusive examination of CGU’s academic portfolio is underway, led by a newly formed Academic Stewardship Committee of faculty and faculty leaders, as well as a deans and directors group. The focus is not simply on what might be cut or consolidated, but on what the university can do to best serve the world through graduate education in an era of AI and rapid change.

Faculty workload, mentoring models, online versus on-ground delivery, and instructional design are all part of this conversation. No specific decisions have been made, and none will be finalized until after the definitive agreement. The provost has emphasized that no program will be eliminated without a clear teach-out plan ensuring that no currently enrolled student is displaced from their academic program.

Research Collaborations and Opportunities

Existing collaborative models — such as the Kravis Leadership Institute, joint math faculty mentoring, the Hive, and recent hackathons — demonstrate strong momentum for cross-institutional work. Once the definitive agreement is in place, it may be possible that CGU and Pomona expand research partnerships, giving students access to broader faculty expertise, labs, and applied research opportunities.

President Bligh emphasized that CGU should be “loud and proud” about what it offers: a graduate-only institution with a scholarship-mentorship model and a unique ecosystem of faculty, graduate students, and undergraduates working together on real-world problems.

Student Experience and Access

CGU has already expanded student access to Pomona and CMC gyms and to Pomona dining halls at reduced staff and faculty rates — approximately seven to nine dollars cheaper than guest pricing. Efforts to expand access to additional facilities across the Consortium are ongoing.

For international students, CGU continues to set aside paid on-campus positions, particularly in the Student Leadership and Diversity office, and has streamlined international student services through new digital workflows. These efforts will remain a priority regardless of how the partnership shapes out.

Culture, Values, and Social Responsibility

Stakeholder focus groups and surveys conducted over the past year made clear that the CGU community deeply values its culture of equity, social justice, and free expression. Both CGU and Pomona are committed to preserving these values. Pomona has expressed admiration for CGU's mission and culture and has stated clearly that they have no interest in altering what makes CGU distinctive.

Pomona's Committee on Social Responsibility remains their college's venue for raising concerns about ethical investment, sustainability, and institutional practices. The committee is composed of faculty, staff, and students and makes recommendations to the administration. Neither institution typically publish detailed endowment investment information, as some funds are proprietary.

(If you would like to learn more about Pomona's endowment and commitments, [click here](#).)

Financial Sustainability

Beyond enrollment, CGU is pursuing diversified revenue strategies including philanthropy, endowment strengthening, grants and foundation support for faculty research, and operational cost reductions. The partnership with Pomona may provide access to a stronger credit rating to reduce the cost of existing debt, as well as potential investment in CGU programs, facilities, and deferred maintenance. The Consortium is also exploring whether it can expand its operational services beyond the Claremont Colleges to generate additional revenue and reduce member institutions' share of consortial costs.

Transparency and How to Stay Involved

The administration is committed to keeping the community informed through regular Vantage Point newsletters, updated FAQs, semester town halls, and smaller group conversations. Students, faculty, staff, and alumni are encouraged to:

- Visit cgu.edu/partnership-initiative for updates, FAQs, and links to Pomona's website.
- Use the [feedback form](#) on the website to submit questions or comments.
- Reach out directly to any member of the [leadership team](#).

We remain committed to transparency and collaboration as this process unfolds. We are confident that through the right partnership, CGU will not only preserve its legacy but also enhance its impact in a rapidly changing world.