

FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES

February 15, 2024

4:00-5:30pm

Approved

Attending: Kelly Goonan, Abigail Larson, Scott Knowles, Daniel Eves, Gary Wallace, John Benedict, Christian Bohnenstengel, Cody Bremner, Chris Graves, David Hatch, Steven Hawkins, Maren Hirschi, Jon Karpel, Bryan Koenig, Michael Kroff, Elise Leahy, Andrew Misseldine, Michelle Orihel, Rachel Parker, Amanda Roundy, Grant Shimer, Ryan Siemers, Kyle Thompson, Joel Vallett, Chris Younkin, Qian Zhang

Not Attending: Scott Hansen

Proxies: Jun He for Joshua Price

Guests: Miny Benson, Jon Anderson, James Sage, Brandon Street, Jake Johnson, John Lisonbee, Matt McKenzie, Mike Humes, Alexis Mccliff, Mackenzie Jenkins, Katya Konkle, Donna Handley, Talia Miller, Lucia Malloy, Becki Bronson

1. Call to order (4:05)
2. Recognition of Presenters and Guests (4:05)
 - a. Brandon Street, Career and Professional Development
 - b. Kenzie Jenkins, Career and Professional Development
 - c. Mike Humes, Enterprise Risk Management
 - d. Lucia Malloy, Legal Affairs
 - e. John Lisonbee, Staff Association President
 - f. Alexis Mccliff, SUUSA VP of Academics
 - g. Camille Thomas, Asst. Provost of Faculty Engagement
 - h. Jake Johnson, Asst. Provost of Leadership Development and Compliance
 - i. James Sage, Associate Provost
 - j. Jon Anderson, Provost
 - k. Mindy Benson, President
 - l. Donna Handley, Graduate Council
 - m. Becki Bronson, Asst. Vice President of Community & Government Relations
3. Proxy Representation:
 - a. Roderick He, Economics
4. Approval of Meeting Minutes: (4:06)
 - a. [January 18, 2024 minutes](#) - Approved
5. Events and Announcements (4:07)
 - a. Benefits Fair February 23rd, 11am-2pm Hunter Alumni Center

- b. Participants needed for Honors Capstone research re. microplastics and human health
 - i. [Informational flyer](#)
 - ii. [QR code to access survey](#)
6. Information Items:
- a. [Draft feedback questions for online courses](#) (Matt and Camille)
There are two different draft question sets – this will take questions that are already in place and merge them into an online modality. The second set is used by other institutions that are specific to online. We are looking for feedback on these.
 - b. Benefits Committee update (Cody Bremner)
 - i. [Denials by volume](#)
 - ii. Having any issues, claims assistance, etc. please contact our broker, Patty Nichols: 801-715-7052; pnichols@moreton.com and/or our benefits manager Shelly Merrill 435-586-7819; shellymerrill@suu.edu
 - iii. Please remember that "pre-authorizations" and/or "medical necessity" are often required prior to non-emergent procedures, etc.

Cody: We are trying to get a better understanding on what is getting denied/not covered. See Denials link above (i). A lot of the denials have to do with the physician not putting in the medical necessities as to why the procedure/etc. is needed and the other is pre-approval. If you have claim issues, reach out to Patty Nichols or Shelly Merrill (contact info above) – they are our resources and they will help and most often these denials are overturned. Encourage your physician to document all medical necessities and preapproval for non-emergent requests.

Ryan: In the future if I have blood labs denied should I appeal and can I appeal the old one?

Cody: Absolutely. Contact Shelly Merrill

Kelly: We would like to hold a Town Hall meeting to help inform faculty about how we are proceeding and what we would like to accomplish.

7. Action Items: (4:23)
- a. None
8. Discussion Items: (4:23)
- a. Policy 6.3 – Internships (Brandon, Kenzie, Mike, Lucia)
 - i. [Draft policy language](#)
 - ii. [Summary of feedback](#)

Brandon: I'm the director of the Career Center, and we've been involved in remaking/renewing this policy for about a year now. We've worked with a lot of

other institutions in the state in regards to their policies. We have also considered the standards of the National Association of Colleges and Employers, and worked with a group of faculty, risk management, and the Provost's Office to ensure that we brought a policy together that included what we had before but also with the goals to bring the policy up to date, and to organize some of the information so it flows better. We also sought to standardize some of our terminology, clarify items and policy, streamline processes on campus and finally, to make sure that we're minimizing any of the risks that we may have on campus for doing internships. So this is the reason we're bringing this forward to you at this point. The last time we came to the Faculty Senate we did have an open time for feedback on the policy, and we worked with Dr. Goonan and with others to ensure that we could address all the feedback. We've also updated some of our forms to also align with current Utah State law. So we're reintroducing those ideas. My colleague Mackenzie Jenkins is going to talk about the updates according to the feedback we received, and then Mike Humes will talk about the forms and how we updated them to conform with Utah State law.

Mackenzie: I'd like to go over some of the concerns that people had, and then how we fixed or addressed those concerns. One of them was that there was a lack of graduate level specifics in the policy, and so we added the course number 6890 to section C. 5, and then we also changed section C. 4, to say no more than 12 credit hours may be earned through internships instead of no more than 12 credit hours may be earned towards a bachelors degree through internships. With that being said, we wanted to leave the policy open and didn't want to put any guard rails on what a master's program's needs are beyond those that are written in policy. Another concern we had was that the forms were oriented more towards large companies and didn't encompass the needs of small businesses. But departments and employers are able to work with risk management and legal to have the forms customized to meet their needs, and I'm sure that Mike will talk a little bit about that in just a second. Another concern was that the changes didn't allow students to work with family members or friends. And so we amended section C. 9, to say, students may not obtain internship credit if a student is working under the supervision of a family member, another student, or a friend. On rare occasions a department may waive this restriction with approval from the department chair, and upon consultation with risk management. And then one of the last concerns was that when we first proposed the policy, we required all credits to be completed within one semester immediately following the internship, and we have now changed that to say, in section C. 6 and C. 7, that an internship must be approved by the academic internship coordinator, including completed, required paperwork and learning objectives prior to the start. Prior to the student beginning the internship experience, academic credit will not be awarded retroactively. Students completing an internship must register for the internship course, either during the current semester or within the following semester in which the

internship occurred. If a student's academic course load does not enable them to register for all required credits in a single semester. Students may register for the course for a maximum of 3 semesters following their internship. So, those were the main points of feedback that we got, and those were the changes that we made after that feedback.

Mike: There have been some changes to the state statutes as it relates to internships and coverages for workers compensation and liability insurance. As it turns out, under the current legislative session, they are going to review that again. So, what we've done in our master internship agreement form for the employers is describe some of the roles and responsibilities that both parties have, and to help resolve the concern that was brought up in the Faculty Senate about this document not encompassing the needs of small businesses. We would like to just let everybody know that this is a template, the master internship agreement does have some legal language that can't be changed, but there are some conditions that we can negotiate with the employers and the departments to make sure that all needs are met. Excluding the state statutes that require compliance with certain areas. That's all I have for this one. If there's anything else I missed, please let me know.

Joel: I noticed there are no retroactive internships – that's problematic with our Criminal Justice Department because we've had officers who have gone through post, and we have counted their posts towards their internship because it didn't make sense for them to go through an additional internship on top of what they were already doing within their positions. Is there a way to work around that?

Brandon: That is a good question, Joel, and even in our current policy, to be honest with you, if you kind of read the verbiage, it's not really clear. And that's one of the problems with our current policy. But even before that there are things that should have been in place before they did an internship for credit. For example, the department was supposed to go over the expectations and things with a student before allowing them to do the internship, which means you would have presumed that hopefully the documents of things are in place while you have those discussions right? And so this might take a little bit of planning on your part and students' part to educate them, that if you have an internship for credit coming up that you make sure you're talking with us. Quite honestly, an internship is supposed to be in collaboration with the class they're taking, so that both the academic experience and the internship are working hand in hand at the same time. And so it shouldn't honestly be happening in our current policy if you read that closely, and we've clarified that in our current proposed policy.

b. End of semester course feedback questions (Kelly)

Kelly: It has been determined that the current course feedback questions that students are asked at the end of the semester don't fit the online asynchronous

environment very well. In the Executive Committee's discussion about the questions for online, it kind of opened up a second thread of conversation about the course feedback questions more generally. So, we wanted to throw it out to the Senate for a discussion and something that you could potentially bring back to your departments. Is there a desire among faculty to visit the end of semester course feedback for those of you who might be newer or new to the Senate? This has been through multiple iterations. When I first started, it was a 10 question satisfaction survey. Some colleges on campus were using IDEA. Eventually all of campus started using the IDEA course evaluations. And then, a few years ago, we adopted the EvaluationKit software, which essentially allows us to make up our own questions. There was a pretty big effort to develop the current set of questions. But again, are we happy with those questions, and do we want to revisit them?

John Benedict: Perhaps provide some samples or guidelines

Cody: Are they productive over all? Especially if it's 2-3 in the whole class that respond. We need to look at ways to improve the responses.

John: Responses are indeed very low. AIMS put a huge emphasis on responses so how do we answer that if we don't get them.

Maren: A colleague has expressed concerns about this and has described many concerns about the use of student evaluations as they're currently used generally, and how this is showing up in the data. A specific thing that she talks about is the ways in which men and women are consistently rated differently by sex, not on teaching, quality or skill, or anything else.

Chris: A part of the challenge is knowing what to do with the data and how to use it – how it represents our teaching or misrepresents it. I've made the mistake about quantifying it but it didn't really work. I think we need to be careful about this, esp. with the new strategic plan. I'm not convinced that the current setup is going to do the job.

Scott: I've never felt these were useful. I've been concerned about how these were being used for tenure nominations. But the questions we came up with then, as Chris points out, are not quantifiable, we can't really get any good information out of them. And they're also not necessarily taking a lot of the different questions we could be using student feedback to answer. There's always the problem of bias and student evaluations, as Maren pointed out, like, there's racial bias, every kind of bias, you imagine gets dumped into course evaluations. And there's also a good amount of evidence that shows that you can get better course evaluations by simply inflating your grades. And if you do that your course evaluations will go up, which is also not particularly useful or wonderful. But if

we want to use them, then I would be interested in reconstructing questions, that get at different pieces of information – is this course valuable to students seeking a career in XY, and Z, so we can use it for curricular development, for example, not just to look at features, but to look at the curriculum within a department as well as other factors like, what is the content of the class? And how does that operate? I'd be interested in looking at what these questions do and how we create them. Keeping in mind that they are a biased instrument. I don't know if we need to do training about how to utilize them more appropriately.

Andrew: When deciding what set of questions to ask, the important question to ask first is whether student responses are student evaluations or student feedback. The different perception is important when considering what we do with this data, whether teacher improvement or tenure evaluation.

Kelly: Biology feels a sense of fatigue with the current questions and therefore they are not useful. Please bring this issue back to your faculty for reflection and feedback. This will take some time and we will likely not implement it until Fall 2024 so we will continue with the current until we have something that works. If you are interested in serving on a committee to evaluate these questions we are willing to support this.

c. Faculty Senate Scholarship (Dan Eves)

This is a yearly scholarship which is granted based on the amount we have to non-traditional students. We discussed certain pieces of this as an executive committee and the advancement folks so we can eventually get this endowed. We need to raise \$25,000 to make this happen so we are setting up a 5-year program trying to raise \$5k a year. We would like to award a scholarship this year and move forward with fundraising to meet this benchmark.

Kelly: We currently have \$3000 – how much do we want to award this year?

John: We have staff that would be interested in donating so leverage staff and students. <https://my.suu.edu/scholarships/public/14>

Chris: The final number needs to be 25,000. If we fund raise above 5,000, then that can go towards scholarships that year. If we're trying to endow, that could be 5 years where we don't award scholarships just so we can hang onto the money endowment.

Alexis: The Center of Hope has run out of their grant money and SUUSA passed a resolution to encourage administration to move more funding toward non-traditional students.

John Benedict: Award one big \$1000, 2 small \$500. FAFSA is having some trouble and may not award funds in time to help students with tuition.

Andrew: I say we save the \$5000 a year that Daniel suggested to build the endowment, then any extra can go toward scholarships for this year.

Maren: In support of saving some for future goals but also helping students now.

Elise: In agreement to build toward students in need.

Chris: If we have \$5,000, and raise \$5,000 and say, we're gonna give up a \$1,000 scholarship and then save the rest that would extend the amount of time it actually takes to get to the endowment.

Kelly: Especially since the Giving Wings to T-bird Dreams campaign we would like to do something this year. It sounds like we have the proposal to do three awards (per Andrews suggestion). There was consensus with this.

d. New faculty awards (David Hatch)

Our committee, in response to senate discussion, was tasked with looking at the awards. We wanted to avoid the temptation of having everybody get a trophy. However, we felt like the adjunct staff faculty at our institution, do carry a heavy load and are often unrecognized. We felt like a GE teaching award was distinct enough. Because GE are often big classes, and we felt like those were a distinct enough group that it might warrant an award. And then the graduate teaching award we thought was warranted as well. Do we create new criteria for each of these three, or do we create subcategories for the distinguished educator awards for each one of these, and that would mean that we would just adapt the current criteria, which seems like an elegant solution to me. But we're going to try to put together a plan, some criteria, and a name for each award. If you have input, please let us know. The members of the committee are listed there, and we will try to bring back some concrete things for the senate to consider in a future meeting, and then see what the Executive Council wants to do with it from there.

Adjunct Award

GE Teaching Award

Graduate Teaching Award

Options:

1. Create new criteria for these three

2. Create sub-categories for the Distinguished Educator awards for each

David Hatch, Elise Leahy, Michelle Orihel, Christian Bohnenstengel

- e. Legislative Session Update and Q&A (Becki Bronson) – joining @5:00pm
List three RFAs and what she said about it.

Becki: SUU has a positive image with the state legislature and sees us as a wise investment. They support and trust President Benson's leadership. They hear us and I'm of the opinion that what we have to say matters to them and that our opinions are trusted. We have brought forward three RFAs and we're not sure what's going to happen. All the presidents of the Utah system for education have clearly told legislatures they would rather keep existing funding as opposed to cutting budgets and then funding new programs. Performance funding is the priority request. The Higher Education Appropriation Subcommittee earlier this week recommended a 1.5% cut across the board and a first priority RFA funded request for appropriation. So that was the recommendation. But we all know that executive appropriations have a mind of their own. It is under discussion. happen. The process is this, once the decision is made by executive appropriations it goes back out to the House and Senate for a vote of approval. But when that vote of approval happens, nothing ever changes. So we're just waiting for executive appropriations to decide what they do about the funding.

Bill 226, called the School of General Education Act, is a message bill to show institutions, specifically the University of Utah, that legislators are worried about the impact of politically charged classes and curriculum, and it's likely not going to pass. Legislatures cut out the provisions that affect all universities so it currently just addresses the U of U. There is concern however about the precedent this could set about legislators trying to legislate curriculum and what this might mean for academic freedom and the Utah System for Higher Education. USHE is working with legislators to explain the danger of the precedent this could set.

I know you likely have many questions about many of the bills, there's actually over 600. If you have a question, I likely won't know the answer, but I'll find it. I want you to think of our team as a resource. I've had such fantastic feedback that has helped us, and as we work at the Legislature on how certain bills will impact our university, and what it will cost and impact it will have, the legislators need that education to help inform their opinion. So send me your feedback, your thoughts, your ideas, your questions. It's extremely helpful. I've worked for the last decade supporting Senator Evan Vickers with his communications. He is the Senate majority leader and very influential in the Senate. He's wonderful. His leadership's wonderful. What you send to him and our legislators is seen and read and considered. You might not think that, they've got thousands upon

thousands of constituencies. No, it actually very much educates their opinion and changes things for good. It really does. And so when you talk about how you can get involved, messaging your legislator is a great place to start with specific thoughts and suggestions for improvement.

Grant: <https://le.utah.gov/DynaBill/BillList?session=2024GS>

Kelly: Bill tracking spreadsheet:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1QmY_znbBVpxhcKu6lqPjKuNQetC9eeNnL4sZ3zcg_4E/edit?usp=gmail

Chris: I just wanted to know where this fits in with the policies and the distinctions between any kind of political stuff we get involved with that has to be completely separate from our university jobs. If we're just communicating on back channels and not speaking publicly, are there things we shouldn't do? I guess I don't really know how to articulate this, but I think people probably understand – what should we not be doing?

Becki: Your freedom of speech is 100% protected and you have a right to be heard and participate. You cannot speak on behalf of the university but only for yourself.

Jon: We've had a significant number of conversations about this – the deans have been given access to a series of links that outline what the state law says about using state property to engage in political activity. If someone chooses to engage, they need to make sure they're not using any SUU property, any SUU laptops, computers, email addresses, those kinds of things.

There's also a separate conversation about institutions of higher education being politically neutral. We are encouraged to watch this. This becomes really challenging when anyone serves in an administrative capacity, such as department chair, etc. and watching that line about political neutrality in their professional life and engaging in meaningful ways in their personal life. The president can't really say anything about legislation or politics.

So internally, if you have a question, how is this legislation going to influence SUU? There's no problem emailing Becki with your SUU email address. Those are all internal communications. But if you then start to email people from your work laptop, using your SUU email saying, I can't believe they're doing this and I'm gonna start to get this group together! That crosses the line to political engagement or political activity as opposed to internal inquiry. It's when we go out and publicly say, I'm using my position to make this statement, that's when it becomes a problem.

Kelly: Because I represent the faculty, I'm not beholden to the same neutralities as paid administrators are. You can send your concerns to me and I've been sending them on to Becki because I am your representative.

Abigail: I need some more information in the form of guidelines. I have a feeling that they only have an issue with criticism – and there are all these guidelines around this. If I had complements they would likely not mind if I used my SUU email.

Jon Anderson:

https://ushe.edu/wp-content/uploads/pdf/agendas/2023/20231130-121/Resolution_Establishing_Expectations_for_Implementing_Principles_of_Free_Expression_on_Campus.pdf

There are two resolutions and they're both linked in that document. I was there when the government did the press release and the USHE Board passed it. What they're trying to say is that the institution itself as a part of the state government, which we are, doesn't have a political opinion. It is politically neutral and the president and employees acting as the president and employees can't, in their official capacity, make political statements at or about legislation. I think the intent was in part because presidents were getting pounded to make statements on Ukraine, or statements on Israel, etc., and this is really an effort of the Board to say, we don't want our presidents or administrators of the institution having to take sides on political issues. We want them to be politically neutral. Now some of the language includes all employees, those kinds of things, but that is the real intent. That's the statement being used and to your specific question, Abi, it would be great to have very clear definitions. The best definitions we have and the examples are in those two documents I just shared. But again, outside of that role, anybody in their own personal life using their own resources and equipment or technology can engage in anything they want.

John Lisonbee:

SUU Policy 5.20 Political Activity <https://www.suu.edu/policies/05/20.html>

USHE R250 Legislative Communications.

<https://public.powerdms.com/Uta7295/tree/documents/1826163>

Jon Anderson: Yeah, if you're emailing to say, thank you. If you email and say, Hey, thanks for coming to talk to the student group. All that kind of stuff is just fine. If you're emailing to say I work at SUU, and you're crazy for doing this and that, the other thing, and it doesn't make any sense that kind of stuff. They don't want us to use our podiums, which we all have, as State employees to influence the political process.

Abi: But we have to use our position to voice our concern. I mean, I'm not saying that we use those resources, but we have to say, listen, I'm an employee of SUU. I'm a professor. I've been teaching here for almost 12 years. This bill that you're trying to pass or are passing is going to influence my students in this way, this way, in this way. So I think we do have to contextualize what we do in some way to be able to really speak to it. And just because you want to make a comment on legislation that's being passed doesn't mean that you want to actually run for office. And I think that's okay. I don't think that you should have to run for office to be engaged in the political process.

Jon: I don't disagree with what you've outlined. The first place people should start is either with their Senator, which are the people here working through Kelly as a Senate President or their department chair. The legal office really advises institutional officers.

Ryan: I share Abi's concerns. It seems like it's an impediment to the Legislature and some of the decision makers receiving information from experts to limit our speech in that way. But I'm actually more concerned about the limitations on our administration. You know, as Provost Anderson mentioned, the President basically can't say anything. So I was thinking about this hypothetical – could President Benson say something like: It would be beneficial to the region and the State to have a higher percentage of our population earn bachelor's degrees than do currently. Could she say something like that, or would that be considered political speech?

Jon: It's a great question, Ryan. I'll jump in with my view, Mindy. Certainly welcome to correct me or jump in. But the nuance they have in all of the resolutions give the President the freedom to speak within the mission of the institution. and they don't really define it beyond that.

Ryan: A lot of this focus is on DEI language.

Jon: She can say, at SUU we value these kinds of things, but then President Benson can't say: we side with this, or we feel this way about..., etc. That's kind of where the line is for her. That was pretty clearly explained in the press conference. And so there is a space for her to share. Everything like you just said, would be perfectly reasonable within the mission and role of the institution on being an advocate for the region. But you can't then say, we side with this group, or we side with that group or use that podium to push legislation one way or the other.

Ryan: I imagine she would feel some ambivalence, maybe some trepidation. It seems like there is some tension between trying to advocate for the institution

that she's leading and it being directly related to the goal and pedagogical objectives and so forth as this resolution states, but at the same time wading into an unsettled issue that is political. There's an overlap, is what I'm saying, between the institutional goals and the political domain legislatively, as we've seen in this session.

Mindy: There is definitely an overlap. and it's something we are all trying to work our way through. This is all fairly new, and we're trying to get clarity to your original question. I would feel very comfortable about answering that or talking about that publicly, because it is within our role and mission. And I'm still talking with legislators every day and every time I'm up there advocating for different things for the University. While that may be walking a fine line, I believe it is different than putting out a statement about a political issue and I think that's what they were trying to curtail, not political activity. I think that's the difference, and I will get clarification, and I'm sure I will be told if I'm wrong. But I am up there meeting with senators and representatives every day, and they're asking me specific questions: How do you feel about this bill, and I don't feel like I've been silenced as an advocate.

Ryan: Thanks, President Benson. One last question related to this. I kind of heard through the grapevine that we're expecting that this resolution will be tested in court, that someone will sue over this. Is that the case?

Mindy: I am sure that somebody will try, and I don't know what the outcome will be, but I would expect that, and I think the board, and the commissioner is probably expecting that. We'll see where it all lands.

Chris: We know that we're not supposed to use our position as faculty or as SUU employees, but when it directly affects us as faculty or affects the work that we're doing, that our colleagues are doing then, for example, if I write my senator and I say, this bill is a mistake and as a professor, this would affect my life. How do we walk that line if we're using our position, like Abi said, to contextualize our reasons behind thinking a certain way but we're doing that as a private citizen. I mean, it just seems like it's very confusing. It'd be really hard to know where to draw those lines.

Becki: My thought is that Kelly is your advocate right? And so if you have something that is connected in the way that you described, reach out to Kelly because she understands the issues and can advocate on your behalf and explore options and see what's possible.

Jon: I think the question could be phrased, as a group of faculty, who feel strongly about some piece of legislation: How can you have the biggest impact? And I think in reality the biggest impact is when the President or Becki is sitting

across the desk with a legislative person, asking them questions about where we are, and the likelihood of that passing. Those strong opinions are likely best held within the institution, sent up through Kelly meeting with Becki and then Becki working with Mindy. That's how the greatest impact can be had because it's a direct exchange to the person who's gonna vote or going to make a decision, and a lot of information could be channeled through that may shed some light just like we've heard today with your updates.

John Benedict: But as a private citizen who happens to work at a university, we raise concern over a bill, how do we justify involving our Senate?

Kelly: I don't have a law degree, but I think there's a difference between contextualizing our concerns or our political opinions when we're communicating with our elected representatives and trying to use our position to influence something. I think that's a very fine line, and I certainly don't want to say that people have to funnel all of their political questions through me. But if I hear enough of them, I can say kind of as the representative of the faculty, this is a large concern for the faculty. That's where Becki can take it and say these are the concerns that we have about the impacts here. Individually, as private citizens in our own private life, we can address those concerns to our legislators, but we have to make it clear that it is my concern and not the concern of my department or the faculty at large. There may be a little bit of nuance there, I agree with Abi and others that from what I've heard from those who are more politically literate that the story matters more, and the personalization of the issue matters more than the data. So we do need to share those things about ourselves if we want to have a greater impact as a private citizen.

Roderick He: I have a question about the boundary of academic freedom. There are certain subject matters, for instance, political science and economics, where we need to touch upon certain political topics. I don't know if it is politically neutral to discuss various viewpoints in our classroom.

Jon Anderson: This is an area that has been defended in the legislature – academic freedom of speech is protected in the classroom and in scholarly activities as long as it is within the context of the discipline and the learning outcomes and all the things we typically do.

Scott: I'm sure President Benson has been asked about her thoughts on the education bill – can the president tell us what she thinks about the bill in this meeting? And then a follow up question for Becki Bronson is, what is the message? What are they trying to tell us? I don't know if I'm getting the message.

Jon: I think Mindy has signed off. To answer your question, Mindy cannot say what she is advocating for or against. She's really not supposed to take any

political positions like that. In the many conversations I've had about this bill is the understanding of many that it is an exact template from other bills that are being introduced across the country to say that there are groups in the world and in the country that want to control the message of academic freedom. That's what this bill is about. It's about saying general education is not general enough, or actually, it's too general. And we only want this certain kind of general education. I think that's the message they're sending. It's very specific as it says, only these kinds of faculty can teach in GE and GE needs to be 43 credits. It needs to be in a college outside of academic affairs, reporting directly to the President and it's just a template that's being circulated to legislatures across the country.

Scott: If that's the message, what do they expect us to do with that, because I think most faculty would vehemently disagree with that entire premise.

Jon: If we invite legislators to sit in our GE classes they would hear something vastly different than what is being said across the country. Our approach is just to say, if we have a problem, come, watch and help us understand what it is. I feel like that would help them understand. I think it's very reasonable what we do, and very much aligned with the intention of a general education. I don't know that we have the issues they're trying to address.

Becki: And just to reiterate, the legislature cut out any provisions that impact all of the USHE institutions, and now it only addresses the UofU, and it's likely not going to pass.

Michelle: Would op eds count as scholarly work – or be considered as political activity.

Jon: Depends on content and context.

Becki: Reach out to Kelly and loop me in.

Grant: Legislators seem to have a disconnect. It doesn't seem like they know any faculty or any one who goes to a university. What can we do to talk to these folks and better inform our representatives. What are some tangible solutions?

Jon: The legislative session is so short – so there is plenty of time to invite them to campus. We are lucky to have the One Utah Summit held here which brings a significant group of incredibly powerful people here and we need to invite them into our classrooms, etc. to see for themselves what we do and how we do it.

Becki: One of the things I do is tell our story in a robust and connected way to city councils, county commissions, etc. and make sure that they come to campus and see for themselves. This is one of my priorities.

Scott: Interestingly enough the senator that put forward SB 00226 is a faculty member at Utah State University.

John: Higher education as a whole has been demonized by previous administrations and this generated a disinformation avalanche.

9. Standing Committee Updates: (5:44)

- a. Faculty Review Board (Daniel Eves)
- b. Parking Ticket Arbitration Committee (Daniel Eves)
- c. Staff Association (John Lisonbee)

The Staff Association scholarship is open for faculty to recommend students if there is still a need. This is for any undergraduate student. Also, we are wondering about getting our committees together to find ways we can support all of the needs we have to fund students' needs. Perhaps the two scholarship committees can work together. For basketball fans, men's basketball is tonight at 6:30 pm playing against Seattle and there is also a men's faculty and staff intramural basketball team going to the playoffs to defend our championship from last year. They're headed by Coach Josh Price. So if any of you are basketball players and want to get involved, reach out to Josh. He's one of our senators.
- d. General Education Committee (Ryan Siemers)

Voted. We will be shifting to the new ELOs.
- e. Graduate Council (Donna Handley)

I have a student meeting and have to jump off, no update for Graduate Council.
- f. University Curriculum Committee (Rachel Parker)
- g. Student Association (Alexis McIlff)

Attended Day on the Hill and represented SUU. Will be handing out mid-term wellness kits. We also passed a resolution to have more funding for the Center of Hope who has recently run out of funds and we want to prevent that from happening again. We will be meeting next week in the cedar breaks room. Tuesday, February 20, at 5 pm. If anybody would like to attend, legislation that is being presented will be funding for NASA Showcase, Women in Business Club funding, funding for DRC, calling for extended library hours on Fridays in April, and then elections are coming up for the Student Association Executive Council and all Senator positions. Be advised that some of those running might ask if they can come to classes and give a short promotional speech, which can be very helpful to the candidates. Voting will be in the middle and end of March.
- h. Benefits Committee (Cody Bremner)
- i. Faculty Awards Committees:

A meeting is scheduled for next week for initial reviews of the nominations.

- i. Distinguished Faculty Lecturer and Grace A. Tanner Committee (Christopher Graves)
- ii. Employee Commitment for Access & Belonging Award Committee (Kelly Goonan)
- iii. Outstanding and Distinguished Educator Award Committee (Bryan Koenig) Meeting to review nominations.
- iv. Distinguished Scholar/Creative Award Committee (Christian Bohnenstengel)
- v. Distinguished Faculty Service Award Committee (Andrew Misseldine)
- j. Treasurer's Report (Daniel Eves)
- k. Past President's Report (Abigail Larson) - Academic Affairs Committee; University Faculty Leaves Committee
- l. President Elect's Report (Scott Knowles) – UCFSL; Workload and Faculty Salary Equity Committee (WaFSEC)
UCFSL is working to advocate for higher education bills – going through Julie Hartley. WaFSEC is close to having a proposal to share. SUUSA held a listening session and they brought up a lot of concerns – they do not feel like they are supported by faculty or upper administration. Specifically, they felt that upper administration was very unresponsive and that faculty were simply non-entities. This is something to think about and let me know if you'd like to talk to me about the issues that were raised.
- m. President's Report (Kelly Goonan) - Policy/Procedure Arbitration Committee; President's Council; Dean's Council
The President's Leadership Council will meet next week. I have been going through the faculty feedback survey – we received 100 responses and will share a summary report for the senate and provost's office and president.

10. Call for Executive Session (5:52) a motion was made for an Executive Session.

11. Adjourn