

FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES

Charles Hunter Room, R. Haze Hunter Alumni Center

October 2nd, 2025

4:00-5:30 pm

Approved

Attending: Chris Monson, Scott Knowles, Brandon Wiggins, Grant Shimer, Jacob Dean, Ryan Siemers, John Benedict, Xun Sun, Masoud Malekzadeh, David Hatch, Rick Brown, Chelsea Gambles, Kevan LaFrance, Michael Kroff, Elise Leahy, Jon Lee, John Meisner, Elijah Neilson, R. Alexander Nichols, Crystal Koenig, Rachel Parker, Shane Yardley, Nate Slaughter, Jean Subjack, Lee Wood, Chris Younkin, Jon Karpel, Chris Graves, Qian Zhang

Not Attending: Hayden Coombs

Proxies:

Guests: Shauna Mendini, James Sage, Camille Thomas, Jake Johnson, Ashley Zimmerman, Matt McKenzie, Tom Herb, Bill Heyborne

1. Call to order (4:00)
2. Recognition of Presenters and Guests (4:01)
 - a. President Mindy Benson
 - b. Interim Provost Shauna Mendini
 - c. Associate Provost James Sage
 - d. Assistant Provost Camille Thomas
 - e. Assistant Provost Jake Johnson
 - f. Executive Director, Belonging and Engagement and Staff Association
President Ashleigh Zimmerman
 - g. Graduate Council Chair Thomas Herb
 - h. SUUSA Vice President for Academics, Brandon Walton
 - i. Dean of the College of STEM, William Heyborne

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes: (4:02)

- a. Sept 18 Minutes

Minutes were unanimously approved. 20/23 - 3 abstained.

4. Events and Announcements:(4:04)

- a. The admissions office has asked to remind faculty that, if they see students on tours, be friendly, say “hi” and welcome them to SUU. Tours are a vital recruiting tool and when faculty are friendly students get a good impression of SUU.

- b. First Six Weeks events – SUUSA is sponsoring events for the first six weeks of class (Big Six flyer)
 - c. QPR trainings the first Tuesday of every month in Escalante room (144 E, in student center), 1-2:30
- 5. Information Items (4:05)
 - a. Policy 0.0 - hopefully will be able to share next meeting or soon thereafter
- 6. Action Items (4:06)
 - a. For Faculty Senate confirmation: Rheana Gardner (PVA) replacing Rachel Parker – Vote was 22/26 - 1 abstained, 3 non-voting
 - b. Nicole Wangsgard (CoEHD) replacing John Meisner (needed to be a Professor) on University P&T committee – Vote was was 22/27 - 1 abstained, 4 non-voting
 - c. For Faculty Senate confirmation: Sam Davis (PVA) replacing Lisa Quoresimo on Faculty Leaves Committee as Lisa is applying for a sabbatical – Vote was was 23/27 - 4 non-voting
- 7. Discussion Items (4:13)
 - a. Program discontinuance: [Construction Management BA](#), [Engineering Technology AAS](#) (CAD and Electronic emphases) and [Software Development Mobile App Certificate](#), here is a link to a [folder](#) with all the documents (Bill Heyborne)

Chris Monson: All of these have been evaluated by the departments and by the Academic Affairs Office. They see no problem with that. All have low enrollments or they are impossible because they require 3,000 level classes and they are associates, and you can't do that, so they violate Utah law. They all have problems that make them Non-viable at this point.

Bill Heyborne: Vetted by campus and there was an opportunity to weigh in and identify any problems. All of these received no comment.

Crystal: There were programs held back for budget cuts. Are these programs a part of this will we be able to get credit if more cuts are required?

Camille: I am happy to clarify – they were not included in HB265. However Construction Mgmt is outside of compliance with HB265 in the sense that it needs to be less than 120, and that department felt there was not a need to modify it to be in compliance. They felt that it was best just to delete it.

The two engineering and technology associate degrees are also out of compliance with Policy R401, and they need to remove all their upper division courses. They have decided that that's not feasible for them and so they will then just delete the programs, The low enrollment doesn't serve us anything on the budget side. It won't save us any budget, there's no reason to wait. And then the final one, the certificate, they don't offer the classes anymore. It's a certificate that sits out there that no student can actually get because they don't offer classes to meet that certificate, so it's dead weight. It, again, also has no budgetary impact. So, waiting on these won't give us any benefit budget if we have to go through another HB265 in 3 years.

b. Google drive size is an issue for some faculty (Kevan LaFrance)

Kevan: We used to have large sized Google drives and then Google changed policy and then we have OneDrive but that is also capped at 25G. My colleagues need a lot more space for research. If data can't be stored in a proper way we are out of compliance. How many other people are running into this and how expensive is this and what are our options?

Graves:CPVA, between video, art, design, projects, we fill them up in a blink. It's going to boil down to cost, and whether we can get Google to give us more space. This is a good question, we should ask the administration. Maybe there are some funds that we can request for that. My guess is it'll be for a one-year deal with Google.

Mckenzie: There may be reasons why. Faculty aren't using Kaltura. Kaltura is just a video hosting site, and we have unlimited storage with them. The only requirement is that within 5 years, someone has to click play on the video. Once the video has been played, it resets the timer for another 5 years. So, from a video standpoint, I can't speak to Google Drive, but from a video standpoint, if it's video, CTI can work with them to figure out how to get those videos into Kaltura and get a link that they can then share out that way. But again, there may be reasons why the video can't be in Kaltura, and that would be a case-by-case basis.

Chris: That doesnt address the NIH stuff.

Matt: The one thought I did have on that is maybe talking to Matt Zufelt about server space. I know CTI has gotten some server space as a result of some of the projects we work on.

Grant: Does anybody know if our Google Drives are getting scraped for AI? Because it seems like a big deal if you're putting NIH stuff on there. If they weren't doing university drives, I know they were scraping your private stuff.

Kevan: I know Josh Brown, who's working on the grant. Because it's an NIH study, the data, once it's de-identified, has to be publicly accessible. So that people can search it. I am... curious about scraping our Google Drives for AI. I'm uninformed and I'd like to know more, but that can be another conversation another time.

Elise: Can we just ask for people to have more space if they need it? I mean, is that a solution?

James: Yeah, this might speak to Elise's question. I recall, and maybe I learned this through Rachel Parker, that there were some faculty who maybe had some department funds to allow them to upgrade their storage limits. I think you were speaking about PVA, and this was a couple years ago, so it may not be the case anymore, but it may be upgradable on a case-by-case basis, for a fee. I don't know where that fee would be paid from, or anything like that. I don't know much, but I thought I heard that once.

Rachel: I don't remember.

James Sage: I'll take a note here and see if we can pass it by IT and just learn about the lay of the land. To the other point of what Grant was mentioning about scraping things, I was under the impression it was the exact opposite. That Google has an agreement with us as an educational partner that they would not do that. Maybe I need to make a note and get clarification on this. In the four times I've used AI, I used Google Gemini, because again, I was under the impression that the kinds of information we put in as an educational partner would not be used to train its large language model, but we would get the benefit of what the model knows. I was using it as a way to analyze the curriculum between a degree-granting institution in USHE and the technical colleges. Those are all public lists of courses, they're in our catalog, but I wanted to find out if the curriculum lined up with the Tech College curriculum. What gave me the assurance was the impression that Google Gemini was not going to use our queries to feed the larger monster, but instead use the benefits of what that larger monster could do. I think it's a great general question we should all be clear on, because I don't want to be uploading things in my work for SUU that we wouldn't want to get out there, let alone what Kevin and his colleagues were talking about, which is information, even though it's intended to be public, who knows how it might be used, even if it's de-individualized data. Let me ask about those two things. Storage limits, and whether there are individual requests for more, and what is our status as an educational partner for Google, to find out what our

relationship is with their monstrosity. Thanks. No real answers, just more questions for me.

Rick Brown: My IT guy said that we can't upgrade Google Drive. But OneDrive, he said, wasn't a problem. So I have a 1TB OneDrive access, and I don't know who pays for it.

Chris Monson: So, statistically significant with a sample size of one.

Brandon Wiggins: For your SUU account, Gemini has a notice on their page that educational accounts aren't used to train models. I speculate FERPA is the pressure there.

https://edu.google.com/intl/ALL_us/our-values/privacy-security/frequently-asked-questions/#:~:text=Yes.,move%20between%20Google's%20data%20centers.

From John Meisner:

I know that there are people in COE that have a "full" Google Drive. This has caused confusion because we now have files in both G Drive and OneDrive

c. Any new business brought by senators

Jacob Dean: The first is kind of the annual discussion of parking. Some of my faculty on the southeast end of campus are still running into issues finding a parking place. I think part of the issue in our department is we have finite lab spaces, and so we have lab classes that go into the evening, 7, 8 o'clock, and so those faculty, understandably don't want to show up at 8 o'clock to get a parking space, and then stay that long day in and day out. Just wondering if this our problem on our side of campus, and should I just tell my faculty to move north, or are other people experiencing similar parking issues?

Crystal Riley Koenig: It's all good over by Bristlecone, unless you're worried about getting hit by a car trying to cross the street.

Shauna: By Bristlecone to make sure those walkway areas aren't worn down, Tiger is working with the UDOT to make sure that those are redefined, because you're right, going from the Bristlecomb, building into that west parking lot is a danger right now, unless you go further north in that crosswalk. The other thing is when we built the music building, there was a space of parking just to the east of that. Now, I know that doesn't help southeast but just to the east of that is a very large parking lot. In fact, the net gain that we received in that parking lot is larger than what we lost in the music building. When the music building actually gets all of their construction down, which we hope will happen in April, there will be more parking.

Jacob Dean: Has SUU ever done a meet-and-greet event for faculty/staff singles? There have been challenges meeting other working professionals in Cedar City. Would other faculty have interest in this kind of event? I don't know what organization would put that on exactly, if there are any ideas, I'd be happy to hear and relay.

Chelsea: I'm a single woman, and I would say I'm equal parts interested and horrified at that idea, so I'll just put that out there for you. I have a faculty member that gave me two items to bring up. The first one is a concern related to the progress report updating from faculty for athletics. This faculty member is not necessarily a fan of athletics having Canvas access, or spending lots of time completing progress reports for athletes. I have enough to do to support my students. There has got to be a better way.

For me, related to the amount of labor that's required for updating reports, 15% of my students have accommodations for mental health illnesses. And so, between this amount of support needed for students, I think it just seems a little bizarre. The more I thought about it last night after I read their email, in a way, we're policing adults' academic progress. Why can't students update their own athletics advisors on how they're doing? I don't know if there's anything that can be done, but that was their comment.

Chris: Having talked to Scott Monroe a bit, 95% of the athletes are not the problem, it's the 5% that are the problem. It brings up all sorts of interesting questions about why we are penalizing everybody for the 5% of athletes?

Chelsea: Is it the faculty members obligation or is it someone else's?

Rachel Parker: We did talk last year about the possibility of athletics having access in Canvas, and, correct me if I'm wrong, Scott, but I believe that was not approved, so I don't think that's an issue.

Chris Monson: Yeah, it did not pass.

Kevan: Why don't athletics have the athletes come in with their advisors, sit down, and show them? Rather than asking the faculty to do this? That seems like a responsibility issue, mentoring and scaffolding responsibility, for the individual athletes, this is how you report to your supervisors. The psych department seemed to have a consensus that athletics should be working with the students directly, rather than asking faculty to do it.

Chelsea Gambles: Maybe there could be a discussion about other ways to manage that without putting that labor on faculty members? I have one more item from one of my

faculty members: I'm not sure what the Faculty Senate can do about this, but I'm not sure where else to take it. I was at Forever Red, while the Beach Boys cover band was talented, and I thought they were fun performers overall, I was wildly unimpressed with their objectification of women prior to performing California Girls, which in and of itself is objectifying to women. My favorite, and please hear the sarcasm, was when they gave a shout-out to the Pacific Islander women by calling them Polynesian princesses. I'm pretty angry about it. Can we please ensure that we are inviting respectful and inclusive folks to campus?

Chris: I will find out who chooses the band.

Grant: Unsafe driving around campus. Who can we get on campus to send emails to students about safe driving practices? Electric scooters and one-wheels are going pretty fast around campus as well.

Scott Knowles: Just to add on to that briefly, when I drove to school last week. A car moved into the turning lane, and this apparently upset a bunch of students in a truck in front of me, and they proceeded to pelt the other car with empty water bottles and trash from their vehicle. The student driving is getting a bit wild out there, and I'm not exactly sure what could be done about it.

Chris: I will look into these matters

Shauna: Reach out to Chief Medina and Risk Management as well as Tiger Funk to see if there needs to be increased presence. There is an added tension with all our construction, particularly with the roundabout, which will be completed by the end of October. A heightened presence of police would be helpful.

Ryan: Wondering whether I should reach out to Gretchen Ellefson regarding an adjustment with WAFSec for inflation.

Shauna: It may take some time as we've already made submitted amounts for rank advancement. So it will be moved to next year.

Chris: We can take a formal vote on this – what would you like to do?

Ryan: I'll reach out to Gretchen first.

8. Standing Committee Updates (4:51)
 - a. Faculty Review Board (Michael Kroff)

b. Parking Ticket Arbitration Committee (Victoria Zhang)

There is now a full-time assistant to help handle parking this fall so there will not be any meetings. In the past there have been 1 faculty and 1 student to go through all the parking appeals. I will not be reviewing this semester as there will be no meetings.

Chris: Policy 5.25 says the committee exists, but I can't see where it says who needs to be on the arbitration committee.

Scott: Is this the direction they are moving in? Let's find out more information.

c. Staff Association Liaison (Ashley Zimmerman)

Starting our funding drive. Discussions over concern about staff being asked to use personal cell phones for business/work purposes, like DUOlingo and access to buildings and how that is slowly but surely expanding..

d. General Education Committee (David Hatch)

e. Honors Council (David Hatch)

David Hatch: The GE Committee has not met since our last Faculty Senate meeting, but I'll remind the Senators that I was tasked with bringing up the idea of a GE Teaching Award. This has been floated before. The committee expressed interest in following up. Those of you who teach GE, it's an important and difficult thing. They wanted to see if the senate was interested in following up on that award. That's what I have from them.

Shauna Mendini: If I can follow up on that, David. When we received the proposal, there were four awards that were not graded, one above the other. One was online, general education, graduate education, and adjunct. There were multiple ones, and that would have been really difficult to get all four of those added. So if this is the priority of faculty senate, that is general education, let's really push that one and see where this goes. Because, I really see our graduate faculty teaching undergraduate too. I mean, we're teaching across a broad perspective, and it's really important that we don't get so many awards from our outstanding educator, our distinguished educators that are two, now a general education outstanding educator would be great. I think adding 3 more to that would be almost counterproductive. Thoughts?

David: I was on the committee that designed those awards, and I have a dog in several of those fights, since we have adjuncts that we rely on, and I teach online, and that's a different animal, and I also teach graduate courses. I think maybe the senate needs to have a discussion about which one of those is the priority. There are ways of maintaining the high consequence of the Distinguished Lecture, or the Distinguished Faculty Award, as far as money awards and that remaining distinguished at the same time that some of these others maybe could be lesser, but still a recognition. So that

might be something that we could talk about at some point as well. Thank you, I'm glad that this is on the table.

Shauna Mendini: I really would like to have prioritization, if that is the top one, if it is general ed, or if it comes up that online is one that we ought to push forward before that one. Just let us know. If there is one that has surfaced, because our original request was for all four without any indication of one above the other.

David: Regarding Honors, I'll just encourage you to look for opportunities to help students who are pursuing honors contracts. I got an email from Katie today about helping with some of those courses. She's looking for people who are interested to teach a one or two course element in some of the classes that they do. I've done that a couple of times, partnered with other faculty to teach some of those elements, and I found it thoroughly enjoyable. The students are eager to learn and to do some interdisciplinary stuff. It's a way for some of our better students to increase their knowledge and their exposure. So, if that's something you're interested in. I think her Spring 2026 course is going to be on the idea of play. I think there might be some fun ways that we could contribute from different disciplines to that course. Please look for that email, she would love your support if that might be something of interest to you. Thanks.

- f. Graduate Council (Thomas Herb)
- g. University Curriculum Committee (Rachel Parker)
- h. Student Association Liaison (Brandon)
- i. Benefits Committee (Cody Bremner)
- j. Faculty Awards Committees
 - i. Distinguished Faculty Lecturer (Christopher Graves)

We will be meeting next week to review.

- ii. Outstanding and Distinguished Educator Award Committee (Crystal Koenig)
- iii. Distinguished Scholar/Creative Award Committee (Kevan LaFrance)
- iv. Distinguished Faculty Service Award Committee (Jon Lee)

9. Reports

- a. Treasurer's Report (Jacob Dean)
- b. Past President's Report (Scott Knowles) – Academic Affairs Committee, University Faculty Leaves Committee

The Faculty Affairs Committee is working diligently. We're hoping that there's going to be three policies that will occur on our next agenda as discussion items. Those will likely be 6.36 course syllabus, 6.0 Definition of Faculty, and a new policy on prior learning

assessment. So hopefully those will come through before our next Faculty Senate meeting. The Faculty Leads Committee is also gearing up to start evaluating all of the sabbatical applications, so we're working on that as well.

- c. President Elect's Report (Brandon Wiggins) – UCFSL, Workload and Faculty Salary Equity Committee (WaFSEC), Ad Hoc committee on policy outside of 6.0
- d.
- e. President's Report (Chris Monson) – Policy/Procedure Arbitration Committee, President's Council, Dean's Council

From the Board of Trustees – Aviation sold an old aircraft and will be buying a second hanger. Shakespeare Festival had an increased 10% increase in ticket sales from last year. Enrollment at SUU was up about 2% down but down in international enrollments. Up in transfers and online. Retention dropped a little bit to 71% from around 75%.

Campus safety is a renewed concern. President Benson said they are investing in the police force. The upper quad buildings will be locked during events in that area.

I am on the Compensation council and we were told that the state budget is pretty flat so there won't likely be a big raise, just a small COLA raise next year.

10. Executive Session? (5:07) Motion was made and seconded.

11. Adjourn: