

## **FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES**

Charles Hunter Room, R. Haze Hunter Alumni Center

October 16th, 2025

4:00-5:30 pm

*Approved*

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

**Not Attending:** Hayden Coombs, Brandon Wiggins, Ryan Siemers, Masoud Malekzadeh, Jean Subjack

**Proxies:** Scott Knowles for Rachel Parker

**Guests:** Mindy Benson, Shauna Mendini, James Sage, Ashley Zimmerman, Matt Mckenzie, Tom Herb, Brandon Walton, William Heyborne

1. Call to order (4:02)
2. Recognition of Presenters and Guests (4:03)
  - 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: (4:04)

- a. [Oct 2 Minutes](#)

Motions were given to approve the minutes. The minutes for 10.2.25 were approved 19/22. Motion was passed.

4. Events and Announcements:(4:06)

- 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. QPR trainings the first Tuesday of every month in Escalante room (144 E, in student center), 1-2:30, Madison McBride

#### 5. Information Items (4:06)

- a. [Policy 0.0](#) (This is a draft - we are still working on it, but I wanted to share the current version.) [Feedback form](#).

Chris: This is a draft, not final. I would like us all to look at this to identify any issues. This is a policy where we technically have no right to say anything at all. Our president would like feedback from us. The law requires this but we are trying to make it better in a way that we can change.

Crystal Riley Koenig: How would you like us to collect feedback from the departments? Via that feedback form? Should it be shared with our faculty?

Chris: I have no problem with you sharing it with some people, but the point here is to make clear that we are developing this policy now, so if there is anyone in your departments who has an interest/eye for policy development show them now. There will be a separate feedback form once the policy is more developed.

Mindy: Yes, we're just going down the path on this. We're trying to mirror what other schools are doing, based on what the faculty senate leadership has asked for. We're pretty limited on what we can do but we are looking for transparency and we are looking for feedback but not sending it across campus, as there is not much we can do per the law.

Jacob: Can we get a link to the state law to see the parameters we are looking under.

Chris/Scott: It is in the document: Utah Code 53B-2-106, duties and responsibilities of the President. If you want to read the law that it is being based on, it is that.

Mindy: I will always come to the faculty for input.

Shauna: This also includes other entities on campus, including Deans council.

#### 6. Action Items (4:14)

- 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

We discussed this last week – any further comments or questions?

Motions were made separately for each program and voted on.

Construction Management: 20/24

Engineering Technology: 20/23

Software Development Mobile App Certificate: 20/23

All of these passed through faculty senate voting.

#### 7. Discussion Items (4:18)

##### a. [Policy 6.0 Definition of Faculty](#), [Feedback form](#)

Scott: Language changes around clinical faculty members that prevented them from earning tenure.

Kevan: In the Psych department we created this definition in the first place. I discussed that today and there is a concern, being a program that would be impacted by this, that we weren't contacted initially in the process. I know that we do have someone in the department on the committee. From our perspective adding tenure-track does sound good and will be marketable and increase application. We do value our P+T process and this policy allows us to do this in a way that really works. We plan to look at our DEC's to make sure all is defined clearly. We hire people who are not yet licensed but will be in the next year. We can't compete with other institutions but with this we can look at emerging professionals out there.

Scott: If your department has clinical faculty – please look at this closely.

Shauna: What Nursing has done is hire someone without their licensure as non-tenure and then have in the contract that once they earn it they can switch to TT.

Scott: Yes, please think through that and look closely at these details in the policy. We may need to work on the language some more to reflect the NTT→TT possibility.

Kevan: How are we able to get funding for an NTT and make sure we get the funding to switch to TT salaries.

Shane: If a person is hired into a NTT are we able to guarantee movement into the TT or do they have to go through the hiring process again.

Shauna: It depends on how the position was advertised. If you were hired as NTT and you want to switch to TT, you would have to go through the hiring process again and engage in a national search.

Other programs with clinical faculty

Social Work

Perhaps Business (MBA)

Education

Nursing

Psych

FLHD (MFT Program)

b. [Policy 6.36 Course Syllabus, Feedback form](#)

Scott: Updates made by Camille. Streamlining a policy that hasn't been updated in a long time to include what is now on our syllabi. I want to be very clear that this does not dictate what is going on with the syllabus database. So, when you're going through this policy and you see all the required elements there, all those required elements are not included in the syllabus database. We have our system that works currently, and it builds your syllabus to include all this information. The syllabus database only pulls the things that are actually required and puts them into the database. These items are for syllabi that we're handing directly to students, and that we're archiving ourselves within our department. The syllabus database is a different thing that is pulling from this information, but it is separate, so keep that in mind. Really, it's about streamlining, trying to make it a little easier to understand, and make sure that everything is in there in the appropriate fashion and order. For example, we're saying you really need to say something about AI in your syllabus. You need to have a policy for your classroom on AI, and there are examples that the Provost's office can provide for that, but it's not going to be in the required section of the syllabus. So give it a read and see what you think about what is happening in that policy.

c. New Policy - [Credit for Prior Learning, Feedback form](#)

Scott: We have had a variety of methods to do this in the past to assess capacity. There are various methods of assessment. The new addition is the portfolio section where students put it together and then submit/present it and faculty assesses and determines credit. Take a close look at that because it involves you.

James: <https://www.suu.edu/credits/>

This page outlines all of the options for credit for prior learning. The new policy focuses on a specific type of mechanism by which to receive credit -- as Scott said, it is called a "Portfolio Review".

Chris: This policy has the potential to impact your day-to-day life as faculty, so share with everybody and have them leave comments in the feedback form.

- d. Ranking of requested new awards - Online Teaching Award, Adjunct Teaching Award, Graduate Education Teaching Award, and General Education Teaching Award - do we want to consider an alternative format? (Faculty Senate award night?)

Chris: We have discussed with Shauna and Mindy about these new award proposals. They want to be careful about not diluting the other existing awards. A proposal was made to hold a Faculty Senate awards night.

Crystal: This time of year is already very busy. I'm not sure having our own would resolve the dissolution issue. These awards would also require another committee(s) to award them so I have concern about the service load.

Chris: Hold this off the usual awards time – Jan/Feb

David: I was tasked by the GE Committee to bring this up. There are some substantial differences in teaching online – our adjuncts do an incredible job with not a lot of the same resources that the rest of us enjoy. So I think there are some subtleties here that probably should be recognized. I agree with Crystal about the manner of recognition. I'll just point out that these are somewhat unrecognized areas – we don't really give everyone a trophy, but I think it might be worth considering.

Scott: I'm hearing that other areas are not being served currently by the awards we currently have – can we retool the current awards to be inclusive/recognized/receive credit. Also, do we want to follow the staff associations lead and do a faculty member of the month award to celebrate a wider area of faculty?

David: This might be a worthy approach. I know that with student evaluations, there's been some negotiation over the last couple of years to make sure that student evaluations reflected the particular modality of teaching online. When I first arrived, some of those questions just didn't really apply to teaching online, and there were questions that were missing that would have enabled the university and the instructor to get good feedback about online, and it became a blind spot that has been addressed, I think. That might be a potential way for this body to go. Thank you.

Shauna: The staff award gets a free parking spot of their choice for the month. I appreciate your comments, David.

Matt: The recent edition of The Journal of Faculty Development was focused on faculty recognition. Here is a link to all of the articles:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1uSsO2sA5eSQuJpDjxbbUMUX86kzRbttht?usp=s>  
haring

Chris: Any other comments or strong feelings? We aren't deciding on anything today. We have three options – (1) rank our awards and see which one we want, (2) retool what is already being given to include/reflect the blind spots that we want to be seen, or (3) have a ceremony of our own.

John: I support the broadening of current awards

Chrystal: Thunderbird Awards are already long and may become uncomfortably long. I'm of the opinion that it isn't super feasible to add a bunch more awards for faculty when the night is shared also by awards for students and staff.

Chris Younkin: These online and adjunct instructors may not even be on campus and able to come. Red Handed and influencer awards are other ways on campus we recognize people.

Elise: Having been here for a while, awards like Outstanding Educator and Distinguished Educator, I think used to not be part of the T-Bird Awards. I think the question could be, what are we looking for regarding recognition. In other words, those awards were in the graduation bulletin, but were not part of the T-Bird Awards. So I don't know whether the most important aspect of winning one of those awards is being at the T-Bird Awards? It seems not. Perhaps the most important aspect of winning an award might be recognition. It also feels like if there's a teaching award committee already, it wouldn't be that hard to consider another kind of award. I feel like David's GE committee has been pursuing this for a while. In my department, we have no graduate teaching or adjunct teaching, we all do GE teaching. Some awards come with money, other teaching awards don't come with money, but just recognition. Maybe it would help us parse this out if we knew what the different awards come with.

Crystal Riley Koenig: Outstanding and Distinguished Educator both have money, it's about \$800. I'm not sure about all the other ones.

Scott Knowles: I believe all the faculty awards that are awarded at the T-Bird Awards come with a monetary reward as well.

Chris: We aren't voting yet on this – please continue to consider this for next time.

e. Google drive size updates (James Sage)

James: Limits are 25G in Google Drive – if you have a professional justification to get more space you can reach out to your IT representative for more space. There is a network drive and the OneDrive also available. Regarding AI/Google scraping our accounts, as long as we are logged into our SUU account and on the browser you are signed into they will not be gathering our data for their AI. External hard drives and thumb drives – some federal grants require certain protected storage. Check with the SPARK office on data security.

f. Any new business brought by senators (5:03)

Mike: I am my department's curriculum committee chair – where are we considering 90-hour programs? Can we make official proposals? Where do we stand on this?

Shauna: James has significant information. Two institutions that have already approved proposals of 90 credits.

James: I'd say we're in two phases at the moment. If you have ideas for degrees, Camille is keeping a list, which has already been sent to Pres Benson, there is a preliminary list. Lose cost, low stakes. Let Camille know. Secondly, Camille is also working closely with the Commissioners Office on what the template looks like for the R401 Academy. Wait for guidance on Camille. If you're really serious, reach out to Camille and ask her to update the list and how to get started. I believe we're ready to get proposals actually completed, and then we'll follow the same process, as Shauna mentioned, through the Chief Academic Officer peer review process and submitting it to USHE for approval. And then once that's done, I'll submit it to Northwest for approval. Northwest is ready to receive those. I think everything is in place.

Shauna: So much of the philosophy of these programs is that they are direct lines into the workforce, or the industry. You don't want to take a program that really needs a graduate-level degree, or even has major graduate-level options, because we don't know if anyone will accept a 90-degree bachelor or what those degrees will be called. But there's no doubt from USHE, from the legislature, from all the support that we've been receiving from Northwest that this is definitely going to be a reality, and so feel free to work it out with Camille if you have areas in mind that are direct workforce links and that you feel are an appropriate fit to this degree.

Jacob: Following up from the remarks I made at our last meeting. If we were to recast it as a more general social/networking event (rather than professional singles) on campus would this garner enough interest to be a successful type of event? Please informally ask your departments if this would be of interest.

Crystal: I think there are a lot of departments on campus with new faculty and this could be of interest.

#### 8. Standing Committee Updates (5:11)

- a. Faculty Review Board (Michael Kroff)
- b. Parking Ticket Arbitration Committee (Victoria Zhang)
- c. Staff Association Liaison

We had our round table meeting this morning. We had a good discussion about staff having critical conversations with supervisors. This will lead to some training about staff going after these encounters rather than waiting for them.

- d. General Education Committee (David Hatch)

We are headed to one of the USHE conferences. We will be on a panel. Please let us know if there is anything you would like us to consider regarding GE, send them along.

- e. Honors Council (David Hatch)
- f. Graduate Council (Thomas Herb)
- g. University Curriculum Committee (Rachel Parker)
- h. Student Association Liaison (Brandon Walton)
- i. Benefits Committee (Cody Bremner)

Still waiting until the state decides what to do.

- j. Faculty Awards Committees
  - i. Distinguished Faculty Lecturer (Christopher Graves)

We only had one application, so we extended the deadline. Thanks, Chris, for sending that email out. Hopefully you've all got it. If you could forward that to your colleagues and encourage them to apply so that we can get a better pool to choose from. The deadline has been extended to October 31st.

- 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 (5:15)



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

The Faculty Leaves Committee is busily working through all the many applications for sabbaticals. The Academic Affairs Committee sent out the three policies to you today. We are working on the Faculty Grievance policy that handles things that fall out of some of our other processes. We will hopefully present that in the next meeting or two. We are still revising, editing, and making changes. We're also going to make some very small, and I emphasize small, narrow, really specific changes to 6.1., which will hopefully not entertain any other larger changes. We're going in with a little tiny needle to address the fact that we have a gap that is currently not technically counted within our policy, and that is the year you go up for tenure. That doesn't really count towards tenure, and it really doesn't count towards full professors, so we're going to adjust that. We're going to see if we can make it more clear that full professors are the ones who are serving on the University P&T Committee. But just those two very small, very specific items. And outside of that, we'll see what comes through next.

- 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. President's Report (Chris Monson) – Policy/Procedure Arbitration Committee, President's Council, Dean's Council

Traffic Safety idea – SUUSA is in support. I have reached out to Chief Medina and we hope to connect soon. The administration is working on a free speech document, but also a caution about what you say. Always assume you are being recorded when in class. What you say can be misconstrued. Athletes/Athletics – received a lengthy email in reply to some of the comments we shared at our last meeting and in essence the things they are doing are to comply with NCAA rules and policies or they will lose eligibility and money. We are concerned about getting ahead of the industry interest in new hires knowing more about AI as more employers are requiring this from their new hires. We want to get ahead of the Board of Education and the state legislature so we can point out our programs and advise them as opposed to the other way around.

Mindy: This came from the Board of Higher Ed meeting. Students need AI knowledge in the workforce, if they don't have it they won't be employable. We need to determine at what level they are looking for and for us at SUU to decide how to address that. Please discuss this with your departments.

Provost Search: Invitations have been sent from the committee. There will be the first meeting in late October to start planning and writing the job announcement. Academic

Affairs forum will follow for feedback. Around the end of the year the results of the search will be compiled and the committee will start looking at candidates. Around the new part of the year, they will start Zoom interviews. I can share with you who has accepted to be on the committee. The co-chairs are Kelly Goonin and Eric Schmutz. For faculty representation, Shauna and I and the co-chairs went through and tried to get a good list of tenure track, lecturer, and somebody from every college, so this is who has accepted: Matt Barton from HSS; Jared Baker, Construction Management; Tad Brinkerhoff, Graduate and Online, Katie Inglert, Library; Laureen Graves, Education; Selwyn Layton, Health Sciences; Chris Monson, Faculty Senate; Christy Morgan from Student Affairs and Workforce; Jeff Orton from Business; Gail Pollack as a Community Representative; Michael Schmidt as a dean; and Garrett Strasser, HSS and also the graduate programs; and Ashley Zimmerman, Staff Association. Shauna has agreed to stay in the seat through June 30, 2026.

10. Executive Session: (5:26) Motion was made.

11. Adjourn: