

## **FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES**

Charles Hunter Room, R. Haze Hunter Alumni Center

December 4th, 2025

4:00-5:30 pm

*DRAFT*

**Attending:** Chris Monson, Scott Knowles, 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, Crystal Koenig, Rachel Parker, Shane Yardley, Jean Subjack, Lee Wood, Chris Younkin, Jon Karpel, Chris Graves, Qian Zhang

**Not Attending:** Brandon Wiggins, R. Alexander Nichols, Hayden Coombs,

**Proxies:** David Berri for Elijah Neilson, JH for John Meisner, JT for Nate Slaughter,

**Guests:** Shauna Mendini, Camille Thomas, Matt Mckenzie, Tom Herb, Grace Ash

1. Call to order (4:01)
2. Recognition of Presenters and Guests
  - 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, Grace Ash

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

- a. [Nov 20 Minutes](#)

Motion was approved.

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. QPR trainings the first Tuesday of every month in Escalante room (144 E, in student center), 1-2:30
  - c. Please get grades in on time (the Registrar would really love it...)

5. Information Items (4:05)

- a. [Policy 0.0](#) (This is a draft - we are still working on it, but I wanted to share the current version.) [Feedback form](#).
- b. Syllabi for Spring 2026 need to be uploaded by Jan 3.

6. Action Items (4:06)

- a. [Policy 6.1](#) and [memo](#)

This policy change is a very small one. It's trying to close a gap in the year that you apply for tenure. In our old policy, there was no way to account for that in either the next year's or in the current year's tenure application. So it was becoming a gap year. The new language, all it does is make it clear that whatever you accomplish in the year, you apply for tenure or promotion, that year will count towards the next review or promotion period. That's all it's doing. Very simple. Two new sentences and two spots in the policy. A motion was made and passed.

- b. WaFSEC [charge](#) and [faculty compensation procedure](#) changes

Rachel: Use language that includes more leadership roles rather than just department chair, like department leadership.

Gretchen: I think one of the things we have in mind is that typically chairs have a little bit more to do with salary and workload issues and should be communicating with their associate chairs or program directors. Now, if there is general Faculty Senate support for changing the language, I'm totally open to it, but if we want to have a little bit more conversation about that, feel free.

Motions were made to make those changes. Motion was approved to use "Department leadership".

- c. We need a new CSTEM member for WaFSEC (former CSCY member)

Names were shared by senators for nominations. It was decided to address this in a future meeting.

Grant: I talked to Casey Webb, who's in our geosciences department. He's a non-tenure track faculty member who was very interested in representing non-tenure track on that committee. So, he has volunteered his name.

Comment: Brian Bradford from math said he'd be willing to do it.

We will bring this up in a future meeting.

- d. Compensation Procedure Change:

Defining a range in which your compensation should be – Previously there were two ways to define these: either 15 percent below the midpoint or the 5th percentile, whichever is highest or 15% above the midpoint, or 95th percentile, whichever is lowest. This turned out to be redundant for the processes of actually setting the salary ranges and caused more problems than it solved. We were initially asked by HR to get rid of the 5th/95th percentile language. But then realized that no one is being paid 15% below, everyone is being paid 10% or higher so we

wanted to take that opportunity to raise what we're considering to be the norm of how it's set. It would be 10% below or 15% above the range.

Motions were made to approve and the motion passed.

7. Discussion Items (4:16)

a. [Non-substantive change to policy 6.1](#) (adding parenthetical "full")

Scott: Policy language to include a parenthetical full when references a full time professor. This is a non-substantive change it doesn't have to go through the approval process. We nevertheless wanted to make this committee aware.

b. How can we help advisors be more effective?

Ryan: Maybe I could chat with Kelly Stephens. It might be effective if the senate deputized me to have that chat to share what our challenges have been.

Brandon: If there are broad concerns this would be a good place to collect these concerns and get an idea of the scope of the problem.

Chris Younkin: Katie Englert, Honors Director, has been trying to meet with the advisors and has been having some challenges with the effort. I suggested that she reach out to Staff Association as well. Her goal is to talk to the advisors about honors, so that they're aware of it, so they can talk to students about it. I'm sure there are other programs on campus.

Comment: For the math department we've added some new classes the last couple years, and those classes are now being used as prereqs for some other classes, and the advisors sometimes aren't aware that these new classes are now prereqs. I think part of what we can do, at least those that are developing new classes, is to inform the advisors.

Comment: Our department has a lack of consistency. Sometimes we have really great advisors, and then sometimes we don't. I'm not sure what the process is when they reallocate advisors, because it's not just turnover, it's like somebody in the advising office has shifted, and now they're over business, and now we have a different advisor. I like this idea of having Ryan go and talk to advising. I think it would be helpful to have a better understanding of what happens in terms of training when they shift advisors around, or when they onboard a new advisor. Perhaps a procedure should be to have them then come and meet with the departments that they're advising for, because we have had some pretty significant problems, like them not knowing anthropology was a major and only promoting history from our combined department. In summary: turnover and that reallocation issue is something that is a factor for us.

Ryan: What if we opened one of those feedback forms for different departments to collect feedback over the next couple of weeks, and then I could take that, synthesize it, speak with Kelly, come back, give a report, we could maybe invite her here, etc.

Chris: Would people be in favor of this? I will put together a feedback form for us to discuss, and then for Ryan to synthesize and bring to the advising office.

Shauna: I'll bring this up at Dean's Council. One thing that's really helpful is if we could get the advisors at college curriculum meetings, because that way, anything new that is coming forward, they're able to be informed about. If they can be an integral part of a curriculum committee, and even bring them in at the department level would be helpful if there's significant changes in curriculum.

- c. Any new business brought by senators

#### 8. Standing Committee Updates (4:27)

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

Met and talked about the Zoom AI companion being added as an opt in feature. Look for the email from Matt for information and tutorials.

- d. General Education Committee (David Hatch)
- e. Honors Council (David Hatch)
- f. Graduate Council (Thomas Herb)

Waiting for 6.2 to come to the faculty senate.

- g. University Curriculum Committee (Rachel Parker)
- h. Student Association Liaison (Grace Ash)

Only changes we have are a new vice president of clubs, Lincoln Huckabee, and I'm the new vice president of academics. Those are only changes.

- i. Benefits Committee (Cody Bremner)
- j. Faculty Awards Committees
  - i. Distinguished Faculty Lecturer (Christopher Graves)

We've selected Dr. Michelle Orihel as the Distinguished Faculty Lecturer, and that will be held the second week in February, I think.

- 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 (4:30)

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

The committee just went through policy 6.2 and hopefully we'll see that early in Spring semester. We're almost finished with the new grievance policy, you can expect that one likely in January.

The Academic Affairs Committee has started to investigate and think about how we need to revise our Faculty Senate Constitution and bylaws, so we're working on that too.

- 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, [Provost Search](#)

A new localist calendar will be released in the Spring. Moving away from Google to a more localist calendar it will be a lot more streamlined. It will be a one spot update for the whole university. I got the impression that some people were really excited about it.

Elise: Superfluous emails for Zoom calendar invites to Faculty Senate Meetings.

Chris: Matt will look into it.

This is said every year, but just a reinforcement that we absolutely have to meet during finals week. Because of federal guidelines, we have to spend 15 weeks in classes, and we're already bending the rules and saying finals count as classes. Please don't cancel classes during finals week, at least do something during that week so we can meet the federal guidelines.

Provost search in the process, applications are being received.

10. Executive Session? (4:40)