

Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2025 @ 3:30pm

I. CALL TO ORDER & REVIEW OF MINUTES

The Senate assembled in the Academy Room, Noyes Building, at 3:30 p.m.

Present: Trent Fawcett (Pres), Dennis Schugk (VP), Trent Hanna, Steve Hart, Heather Holland, Rachel Keller, Kade Parry, Jason West, Klarissa Wilkinson, Hilary Withers

Absent: Karen Carter

Guests: Jacob Thomas (Parliamentarian), David Allred (Associate Provost), Mike Brenchley (Deans)

*The minutes for the October 8 meeting will be available at the next Senate meeting.

II. SENATE BYLAWS

A. Adjunct Senator Stipend

At the next meeting, J. Thomas will have proposed language for the bylaws that indicate that the Senate petition the Deans Council every year for adjunct senator stipends.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

A. Updates from the Faculty Senate President

1. Reminders. President Fawcett reported meeting with the Faculty Association and the Provost and noted plans to meet with President McIlff the following day. He reminded senators that the Senate and Faculty Association serve as channels for faculty concerns and encouraged colleagues to communicate through their division representatives or contact Faculty Association officers, Cindy Alder, Kade Parry, or Ryan Thalman.

2. IRB Update. President Fawcett provided an update on the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Provost has approved a three-credit-hour release for the IRB Chair, and the committee is now

fully staffed for the semester. Members will meet to select a chair, who will continue through next semester to receive the release time. In the absence of finalized bylaws, Fawcett requested a formal motion to confirm that the elected chair may serve into the following semester.

MOTION by T. Fawcett that the soon-to-be elected IRB chair serve through the Spring 2026 semester. **2nd** by T. Hanna. **Motion carried** unanimously.

Discussion followed on ensuring equitable representation across divisions and on the importance of outreach when proposals involve areas without a current IRB representative. Senators expressed appreciation to the Provost for supporting the committee's work, and Fawcett noted that all projects conducted outside the classroom are expected to undergo at least an expedited IRB review.

B. Office of Academic Affairs (Provost) & Deans Council

1. Canvas Use & Limitations Document. Associate Provost Allred reported that the Canvas Use & Limitations materials are being revised with campus feedback and that the final package will separate policy (major headings) from procedures (supporting details). Senators requested a more polished draft prior to any 30-day review; Allred committed to circulating a “policy-ized” version by next Senate meeting, after which the Senate may solicit final input before its last meeting of the semester. Senators further asked that the next draft be distributed to all faculty, preferably via Academic Affairs email, so divisions that missed the initial notice can respond.

a. Faculty Crosslisting. Discussion focused on crosslisting: Humanities feedback indicated support if crosslisting occurs at the institutional (not individual instructor) level to limit liability. Allred noted ongoing research across the other USHE schools and preliminary reports that Canvas settings can theoretically restrict student visibility by section, though this may not function reliably in practice—placing FERPA risk on individual faculty if settings are missed. Senators also flagged retraining and loss of master “blueprint” efficiencies if individual crosslisting is removed.

2. Course Evaluation Language Revisions. President Fawcett invited senators to share feedback from their divisions on the proposed revisions to course evaluations. Most faculty expressed minimal concern with the updates, though several emphasized the value of retaining questions about student effort or time commitment. Senators discussed possible alternatives—such as measuring perceived effort rather than hours spent—to ensure the question applies across modalities, including online courses. Other feedback included requests for greater clarity on release dates and data access for faculty, and for the reintroduction of the question on student satisfaction with learning outcomes. Associate Provost Allred agreed to refine the wording and distribute a revised draft before the next Senate meeting.

Senators also debated whether to keep or rephrase the statement noting that evaluations inform employment and professional review decisions. Some senators favored removing it to avoid misunderstanding, while others argued that transparency helps students understand the purpose and weight of their feedback. The general consensus was to preserve the principle of transparency while softening the language to convey that evaluations contribute to faculty development and institutional improvement rather than serving as a sole measure of employment decisions. Allred agreed to incorporate these revisions and return with an updated draft for Senate review.

C. Calendaring Committee

1. Concerns about Process. President Fawcett reported ongoing faculty concerns about the recent academic calendar process, noting that many felt they lacked adequate time for feedback before decisions were finalized. Associate Provost Allred acknowledged the issue and committed to improving communication and timelines in future cycles. Senator Hart expressed fatigue from the process but emphasized the need for continued faculty representation on the committee, which currently includes a Senate representative, one at-large faculty member, and a dean.

2. Codifying a Process. Senators agreed that the committee's role and structure should be formally codified, ideally through a policy establishing membership, procedures, and deadlines for calendar development and review. Discussion centered on improving transparency, communication, and accountability between the committee, faculty, and President's Cabinet, with some citing frustration over short timelines, limited notice, and unclear priorities, such as the shift to later semester start dates. Several senators supported revisiting the 2023 faculty, staff, and student survey data to inform future decisions, and Fawcett concluded that the Senate would advocate for a formal calendaring policy through College Council to clarify roles, expectations, and communication going forward.

IV. SENATE BUSINESS

A. AI in the Classroom Taskforce

1. Taskforce Updates. President Fawcett announced that the institutional AI policy will go to College Council in November and then out for a 30-day review, noting his intent to vote in favor on behalf of the Senate. Academic Affairs confirmed that sample language for individual course AI policies has already been added to the Simple Syllabus software.

B. Classroom Presence (Appendix B) Document

1. Updates. Senators relayed faculty concerns that the draft document's tone felt policing and its bullet points appeared to prescribe pedagogy (e.g., test administration), despite its stated purpose as a chair's reference for addressing improper class cancellations. Academic Affairs agreed that the tone and several sections need revision; a revised draft will be circulated (after Deans Council review) for Senate review and discussion at the next meeting.

C. Senate Committee Streamlining

1. Possible TLC & Library Merger. President Fawcett reported on division feedback regarding the proposal to combine and simplify Senate committees. Senators discussed merging the Library and Teaching & Learning Center (TLC) Committees, with general agreement that the Library's primary Senate function—ensuring faculty access to library materials—could be incorporated into the TLC agenda without increasing workload. Occasional ad hoc discussions or library participation in TLC meetings were suggested as alternatives to maintaining a separate standing committee.

2. Possible Off-Boarding of GAB. Senators also revisited removing the Globalization & Belonging Committee (GAB) from Senate purview, as the “global learning” course designation it once oversaw is no longer in use. Members agreed that if GAB continues, it might fall more naturally under the Curriculum Committee rather than the Senate.

3. SPARC Updates. Updates were also given on merging the Service Learning and Undergraduate Research Committees into the new SPARC committee, and on revising the IRB structure to reduce division representation while maintaining disciplinary and demographic diversity. A formal proposal outlining these changes will be brought forward for debate at an upcoming meeting.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting concluded at 4:57 pm.

MOTION by T. to adjourn. **2nd** by R. Keller. **Motion carried** unanimously.

Future Meetings: Aug. 27, ~~Sept. 10~~, ~~Sept. 24~~, Oct. 8, ~~Oct. 22~~, Nov. 12, Dec. 10, Jan. 14, Jan. 28, Feb. 11, Feb. 25, Mar. 11, Mar. 25, Apr. 8, Apr. 22

Minutes by Jacob L. Thomas, Parliamentarian

Approved by the Faculty Senate on November 12, 2025.