

Meeting Agenda

April 23, 2025 @ 3:30pm

I. Call to Order & Meeting Minutes

A. The Senate was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

Senators Present: Sandra Cox (Pres), Trent Fawcett (VP), Karen Carter, Steve Hart, Wes Jamison, Rachel Keller, Adam Larsen, Charley Roetting, Dennis Schugk, Tony Smith, Hilary Withers

Senators Not Present: Alan Christensen, Jeff Wallace

Guests: Jacob Thomas (Parliamentarian), Mike Austin (Provost), David Allred (Assoc Provost), Kristi Stevens (Assoc Provost), Mike Brenchley (Deans), Cody Branch (VP for Student Affairs), Jay Moosman (senator-elect)

B. Minutes from April 9

Motion: A. Larsen, 2nd: H. Withers

Approval: unanimous of all present with slight grammar changes

II. Senate Organization

A. Updates from Division Elections

1. **Fine Arts:** C. Roetting nominated for full term. It was clarified non-tenured cannot substitute for A. Larsen's upcoming sabbatical.
2. **Social Science:** Jessica Jones elected but is becoming a department chair; Klarissa Wilkinson is now the senator-elect.
3. **Faculty Association** elections underway (including Richfield representation).

B. Senate Leadership Reminders

Terms of office for new Senate leaders and new senators begin July 1.

III. Administrative Updates

A. Updates from Cody Branch, Vice-President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management: Academic Standing Policy

VP Branch reported on proposed revisions to the College's academic standing policy. He noted that current procedures have not been effective in helping struggling students recover, and in some cases students have remained in poor standing for several semesters before being dismissed, leaving them unable to graduate. The new approach aims to provide earlier interventions by monitoring grades more consistently throughout the semester, with recommended progress checks around Weeks 4, 8-9, and 10. These checkpoints would rely on faculty posting timely grades in Canvas, which Branch emphasized as essential to identifying at-risk students. Senators raised questions about academic freedom, workload, and whether all faculty, particularly adjuncts, regularly use Canvas.

Branch explained that under the revised policy, students whose performance places them in jeopardy would be contacted earlier and connected with resources before reaching probationary status. Approximately 450 students would have been flagged under this system in Fall 2024. Concerns were expressed about the capacity of existing staff to manage this volume, as well as the need for demographic data to better understand who would be most affected. Branch indicated that advisors, mentors, and student success staff would support the intervention process and that faculty could be notified when their students are flagged, similar to current ADA notifications.

The new policy also proposes structural changes: students placed on probation (below a 2.0 cumulative GPA) would be required to meet with an advisor and develop a Student Success Plan. Continued unsatisfactory performance could result in "involuntary academic deferment" (rather than suspension), with students required to revise their plan before returning. Senators discussed the balance between holding students accountable and respecting faculty workload, and several noted the

importance of clear communication and adequate staffing to ensure the policy's success.

B. Updates from the Office of the President

Nothing at this time.

C. Updates from the Office of Academic Affairs

1. Budget Reallocation Plan. Provost Austin and Associate Provost Allred reported on the College's ongoing reallocation plan. They emphasized that, in keeping with President McLiff's directive, the plan avoids layoffs or involuntary separations; all reductions have been accomplished through voluntary early retirements. Of roughly 30 individuals taking early retirement, between four and six positions will not be refilled. Decisions on which positions to replace have been guided by enrollment and program data reviewed by the taskforce.

Among the eliminations are radio, television, the student newspaper (which will continue only in a smaller digital form), service learning, and Convocations. The discontinuation of the Foundations program was also highlighted as a significant cost-saving measure that aligns with the overall plan. While some programs and activities are being cut, other areas are receiving new investment: for example, the College will continue to fund behavioral therapy regardless of state grant outcomes, and resources are being allocated to expand respiratory therapy, architectural drafting, and other high-demand programs. Tutoring centers will be reorganized, and certain positions will be created or reassigned according to programmatic need.

Austin noted that the Commissioner's Office has given the plan an informal "soft yes," and further confirmation will be sought in upcoming meetings. He reiterated that although some faculty positions will not be replaced, the overall goal has been to minimize disruption while still complying with legislative requirements. Implementation will occur over a three-year period, with approximately half of the changes enacted in the first year to reflect the College's two-year structure.

Senators expressed appreciation for the administration's commitment to avoiding layoffs and acknowledged the difficulty of maintaining that priority given the scope of reallocation. Austin observed that, compared

with peer institutions, Snow's plan is relatively restrained, as other schools have faced much deeper program cuts.

2. Stipends & Course Release Revision Ad Hoc Committee

(T. Fawcett, D. Schugk, and M. Austin)

Provost Austin and Senate VP Fawcett reported on the work of the ad hoc committee tasked with reviewing stipends and course release allocations. President Cox clarified for the record that the initiative originated in Academic Affairs and not the Senate, though Academic Affairs invited the Senate to collaborate on the process.

The committee developed a standardized model for distributing stipends and course releases across Senate committees and administrative assignments. The Deans Council reviewed and approved the draft earlier in the week. Senators discussed specific provisions, including releases for the Honors Director and department chairs, as well as wording changes to ensure clarity (e.g., "Senate committees" rather than "Senate positions"). Questions were raised about whether some releases should be higher, particularly in cases where duties are especially demanding or vary across divisions.

Fawcett noted that he had reviewed Policy 404 to ensure consistency, and that any final changes would need to follow the formal approval process through the Deans Council, College Council, and 30-day review period. Senators acknowledged that the Faculty Senate does not have final authority over the policy, but can voice formal support or opposition. Austin confirmed that the Senate's input would be represented in subsequent stages of review.

Overall, senators expressed appreciation for the effort to create a more transparent and equitable formula, while recognizing that additional refinements may still be needed as the policy moves forward.

D. Updates from Deans Council

1. Book Orders. Senators were encouraged to remind faculty to submit book orders for Fall 2025 as soon as possible.

E. Updates from College Council

Nothing at this time.

IV. Senate Business

A. Proposed Policy #382 Discussion

The Senate discussed the draft of Policy #382, which deals with outside employment for full-time faculty. Senators were divided in their opinions, and several expressed concern about the timing of the comment period during the summer months, when many faculty are off contract. Suggestions were made to amend the “policy on policies” to account for review periods that overlap with off-contract times. Senators also noted instances of shortened comment windows in past reviews, which limited participation.

After discussion, the Senate unanimously passed a resolution to defer the comment period for Policy #382 until August. Provost Austin affirmed that the Provost’s Office would support this resolution in College Council.

B. Committee Reports

1. **Advancement & Tenure Committee** – The committee presented proposed revisions to its bylaws, aligning them with recent state legislation. Key points of discussion included language about “paid service” on faculty CVs and requirements for classroom observations in annual reviews of tenured faculty. After clarifying wording and addressing concerns, the Senate unanimously approved the revisions.
2. **Academic Standards Committee** – Senators reviewed proposed bylaw changes to streamline the process for handling academic integrity violations. Questions were raised about the role of the committee chair, but the bylaws were ultimately approved unanimously.
3. **Institutional Review Board (IRB)** – The committee reported plans to revise its application process and guidelines, particularly to clarify when IRB approval is required (including for exempt studies) and when projects fall outside IRB jurisdiction (e.g., class assignments, internal institutional research). The revisions are intended to provide clearer guidance to both faculty and students.
4. **Supporting Adjunct Faculty Subcommittee** – No report at this time.

5. **Teaching & Learning Committee (TLC)** – The committee discussed the possibility of adding an adjunct faculty representative, with compensation. Senators agreed that adjunct input would strengthen TLC’s work, but also raised concerns about workload and equity. The committee will continue exploring the proposal. Additional discussion addressed the overlap of TLC responsibilities with the Excellence in Teaching initiative.

C. Awarding of Certificates

Certificates of appreciation were presented to outgoing Senate President Sandra Cox, as well as to outgoing senators Alan Christensen, Wes Jamison, and Jeff Wallace.

V. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: W. Jamison; 2nd: T. Fawcett

Approval: unanimous of all present.

The Senate adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

The next Senate meeting will be held on **Wednesday, August 27, 2025 from 3:30-5:00 p.m.** in the Academy Room, Noyes Building.

Minutes by Jacob L. Thomas

Approved: August 27, 2025