

Meeting Minutes

August 27, 2025 @ 3:30pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

Senators Present: Trent Fawcett (Pres), Dennis Schugk (VP), Steve Hart, Rachel Keller, Jay Moosman, Kade Parry, Klarissa Wilkinson, Hilary Withers

Senators Absent: Karen Carter, Adam Larsen (Sabbatical)

Guests: Jacob Thomas (Parliamentarian), Mike Brenchley (Deans), Michael Austin (Provost)

II. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Senators reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting on April 23.

Motion by S. Hart and **2nd** by D. Schugk to approve the April 23 minutes. The **motion passed** unanimously with 1 abstention by K. Parry.

III. SENATE ORGANIZATION

Pres. Fawcett reviewed the purpose of the Senate, which includes committee oversight and support.

A. Senate Membership. Pres. Fawcett noticed that the following divisions are currently without senators. The division has the responsibility of sending senators; if no one is sent, then there is no representation.

1. Fine Arts. Adam Larsen is on sabbatical, and a substitute should be provided by appointment for the remainder of the semester. Also, Charley Roetting has left Snow College and should be replaced for the 2025–2028 term (probably by election). At least one of these senators must be tenured. Dean Huff has been contacted, and Pres. Fawcett and Dean Brenchley agreed to reach out for encouragement.

2. Humanities. Tony Smith has left Snow College. Dean Gowans has initiated the selection process for Smith's replacement to fill the 2024–2027 term. The new senator may be either tenured or nontenured.

3. Adjunct Representative. Sen. Withers has been hired as a full-time contract for one year. Senators discussed her eligibility to continue to represent the adjunct instructors. Sen. Withers had conducted an informal poll of the adjuncts, and 13 or 14 of the 16 respondents voted in favor.

Motion by T. Fawcett that Hilary Withers continue to serve as the adjunct senator for the remaining academic year. The motion passed unanimously.

b. Compensation. In the previous Senate meeting, Sen. Larsen had raised the issue of compensation for the adjunct senator. J. Thomas noted that the only prior mention in the minutes (Sept. 13, 2023) indicated a stipend had been provided in the past, with discussion revolving around the possibility of additional pay if the role expanded.

Pres. Fawcett clarified that the stipend had previously been secured on a one-year basis through petition, amounting to \$1,000, and reviewed current Senate and committee chair stipends and releases. He emphasized that the Senate did not control its own budget and that any continuation would need to be petitioned. Senators discussed whether to pursue the stipend. Sen. Parry and VP Schugk. expressed support. Sen. Hart supported the idea in principle but lamented the lack of Senate budget authority.

Motion by K. Parry and **2nd** by R. Keller that the Faculty Senate formally recommend to the Deans Council that the adjunct senator receive a stipend going forward. The **motion passed** unanimously.

Further discussion ensued about whether Sen. Withers should also receive back pay compensation for her past two years of service. Sen. Hart questioned whether the availability of a stipend might change the dynamics of who was willing to serve as adjunct senator. Sen. Withers responded that adjuncts do not take on the role for the pay, but acknowledged that compensation may encourage more willingness to serve. Provost Austin clarified that the first motion would proceed to the Deans Council, while the second would need to go to Human Resources due to employment rules.

Motion by K. Parry and **2nd** by Sen. Wilkinson that the Faculty Senate formally recommend to Human Resources that Sen. Withers receive back pay compensation for her two years of Senate service. The **motion passed** unanimously with 1 abstention by S. Hart.

B. GE Committee. Pres. Fawcett raised the question of filling the at-large Richfield seat on the General Education Committee, which is a subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee. Discussion emphasized the need for balanced campus input in GE matters, with senators agreeing that the seat

should be filled promptly to maintain equitable participation. The GE Committee itself is in charge of this with Senate support where needed.

C. College Council. With the retirement of Brent Reese, there is a vacancy for the at-large Richfield faculty seat on the College Council. J. Thomas is overseeing the nomination and election process, with the replacement to serve the remaining year of the two-year term. Pres. Fawcett reminded senators that the Senate controls how the five faculty representatives to the College Council are distributed. Sen. Wilkinson asked how “Richfield” should be defined, and Sen. Moosman suggested it be based on where a faculty member spends the majority of their teaching time, noting the varying levels of faculty presence on the Richfield campus.

D. Faculty Association. Senators affirmed their support for the newly elected Faculty Association leadership, with Cindy Alder (Ephraim) elected President; Kade Parry (Ephraim) as Vice-President (and thus ex-officio senator); and Ryan Thalman (Richfield) as Secretary.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

A. Office of the President. Nothing at this time.

B. Office of Academic Affairs (Provost). Provost Austin reported on the campus-wide initiative to increase faculty AI literacy, noting that several training opportunities had already been offered and that the College had purchased ChatGPT licenses. Coursera access is being reactivated following submission of the final invoice, with \$50,000 allocated to support the program. He emphasized that adjunct faculty are also eligible, though licenses must be balanced between fall and spring semesters. Interest has far exceeded expectations, with 80 faculty participating compared to the 20 originally planned, meaning that roughly half of the faculty will gain a baseline level of AI literacy.

The Provost further added that the President and Cabinet have created a series of taskforces, including one on AI, though most are enrollment-focused and administrative in nature with limited faculty involvement. Pres. Fawcett reminded senators of the weekly “A.I. office hours” for additional training hosted by Jonathan Bodrero and Crystal Stott.

C. Deans Council

1. ADA Course Compliance. Dean Brenchley highlighted ongoing concerns about ADA compliance in online instruction, noting that while some faculty have made strong efforts to make Canvas courses accessible, others have not. He stressed that just as buildings must meet accessibility standards, so too must online courses, and that training will be incorporated this year. Provost Austin added that legal requirements are tightening, with much higher standards on the horizon. In particular, all videos must be captioned and all PDFs must be machine-readable. Senators discussed practical options for meeting these requirements, including YouTube’s automatic

captioning and Canvas's OCR tools, while acknowledging that ADA provides resources for specialized accommodations. Both Dean Branchley and Pres. Fawcett emphasized the balance between academic freedom and the obligation to provide accommodations.

2. Competency Exam. The Council also discussed the new competency exam that students will be required to take. Sen. Keller expressed concern that the burden on individual classes was too high, which is why the test was designed to be administered broadly rather than course-by-course. Dean Branchley clarified that participation in the exam will be required but not graded. Senators noted that incentives are necessary to ensure participation, as students would not complete the exam voluntarily. Provost Austin reassured faculty that data collection does not require identical student cohorts between the first and second tests, and further information will be forthcoming.

D. First-Year Experience Report. Sen. Keller reported on the First-Year Experience and orientation events held in August, noting record participation with over 700 students served breakfast on the first day alone. While RSVPs could not be guaranteed, required participation by athletes boosted turnout, and several departments reported higher attendance at their events than ever before—for example, English typically sees six students at their tables but welcomed forty this year. Data collection is underway to evaluate which activities were most effective, with an eye toward long-term tracking of orientation's impact on retention and major declaration. Sen. Keller emphasized the importance of faculty encouraging students to formally declare their majors, and both she and Dean Branchley highlighted the need for additional supplies to handle increased demand. Faculty involvement was praised, with particular recognition for VP of Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Cody Branch's efforts in explaining majors to new students.

IV. SENATE BUSINESS & COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Policy #382 Update Discussion. The Senate revisited Policy #382, which concerns faculty employment obligations, particularly language requiring full-time faculty to report outside employment. Last semester, HR Director Brent Baxter had proposed revisions, but senators raised concerns and postponed official voting and the 30-day review until Fall, with HR agreeing not to move the policy forward until all faculty returned from the summer break. Pres. Fawcett noted that Baxter has since retired and the matter has not advanced, though the new HR Director, Delvonie Kidder, may bring it forward again. He assured senators that updates would be provided.

B. A&T Policy Changes. Pres. Fawcett reported on recent changes to the Advancement & Tenure policy, noting that the revisions—supported by the Senate last semester—have been sent for legal review before proceeding to the College Council for final approval. The updates include language required by the mandated five-year review, alignment with state law, and the addition of provisions for in-depth reviews conducted by deans, with clearer definitions of the review committee. He emphasized that the process is moving forward as quickly as possible.

C. Stipends & Course Release Revision Ad Hoc Committee. Pres. Fawcett provided an update on the ad hoc committee reviewing stipends and course releases for department chairs, noting that he and VP Schugk had worked on this issue under the direction of the Provost last year. He explained that the Deans have approved the revisions, which expand stipends to include roles beyond department chairs and faculty fellows, and are expected to be implemented in the Spring. Provost Austin suggested the taskforce may need to reconvene as potential departmental consolidations may affect some details. Pres. Fawcett said that the formula developed by the taskforce should remain viable under new conditions, but was open to further discussion on the matter.

D. Academic Standards Committee. Pres. Fawcett reported on significant progress in overhauling the Academic Standards Committee, a subcommittee of Curriculum, and praised Sen. Keller for her leadership in the effort. Sen. Keller explained that the committee has redesigned the entire process for handling academic dishonesty cases, with a new Quali form now in place. The form streamlines reporting into a one-step process for faculty: supporting documents can be attached, and the system automatically generates a standardized letter to the student. Students may accept the outcome or appeal, with the form tracking the process through the professor, chair, dean, and, as a last resort, the Academic Standards Committee. Faculty also have the option to withdraw a form if needed. The new system ensures a permanent record from the moment of submission and provides consistent access for chairs and deans. Test runs have been successful, though the committee anticipates minor adjustments during its first full year of use. Pres. Fawcett commended the work and noted that academic integrity, through the Curriculum Committee, falls under Senate oversight. Sen. Keller invited feedback on any issues as faculty begin to use the new process.

E. Service Learning Committee. The Senate reviewed the status of the Service Learning Program and its associated committee. With no current directors and little student involvement, the Service Learning Committee now exists only on paper. Senators discussed whether the committee should be formally discontinued, though Pres. Fawcett emphasized that no decision was needed immediately. The suggestion was raised that Service Learning be merged into the Teaching & Learning Committee (TLC). Sen. Wilkinson, who recently served on the TLC, agreed to attend its next meeting and poll the committee members on the idea.

V. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS FOR FALL 2025 – SPRING 2026

Senators discussed fulfilling Senate committee assignments for the coming year. Pres. Fawcett reminded everyone that the bylaws require that these only be filled by the end of September. Concerns were raised about making assignments without Fine Arts representation.

Discussion then shifted to committee assignments more broadly. While most appointments can be delayed, Pres. Fawcett noted that a Senate representative is urgently needed for the Advancement & Tenure Committee, which meets on Tuesdays, as VP Schugk can no longer attend. Sen. Keller reemph-

asized unease about making assignments without full representation, and senators agreed to table most committee appointments until the next meeting.

Motion by K. Parry and **2nd** by K. Wilkinson to table committee assignments until the next Senate meeting. The **motion passed** unanimously.

In the meantime, Sen. Hart agreed to continue with the GE Committee, Pres. Fawcett with the Curriculum Committee, and Sen. Wilkinson with Teaching & Learning.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by S. Hart and **2nd** by K. Wilkinson to adjourn the meeting. The **motion passed** unanimously.

The Senate meeting concluded at 4:50 p.m.

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, September 10, 2025