

Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2025 @ 3:30pm

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

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

Absent: Hilary Withers

Guests: Jacob Thomas (Parliamentarian), Andrea Cabria (Student Body), David Allred (Assoc Provost), Mike Brenchley (Deans)

II. REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Senators reviewed the draft minutes from the previous meeting on September 10.

MOTION by K. Parry to approve the 9/10 minutes. **2nd** by T. Hanna. **Motion carried** unanimously.

III. SENATE MEMBERSHIP

A. Fine Arts. Jason West, Visiting Professor of Theatre, has been selected to serve a three-year Senate term vacated over the summer. Jason introduced himself to the Senate.

B. Student Representatives. Senate bylaws indicate that a student representative should be included as a nonvoting member. A student rep has not been present for Senate meetings in the past 2–3 years due to scheduling conflicts. This semester, the student body leadership has decided that the four student body senators representing the divisions will rotate attendance.

The student representatives are as follows: Andrea Cabria, Fine Arts; Dyson Winsor, Business; Adrienne Rice, Social Science & Humanities; and Daryl Samayoa, Science & Math.

Andrea Cabria attended this meeting. Pres. Fawcett encouraged the senators to reach out to students to get their perspectives when weighing-in on Senate business.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE UPDATES

A. Office of the President. No updates.

B. College Council. No updates, as there has been no meeting.

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

1. Faculty Institutional Goals Forms. Associate Provost Allred reviewed the new faculty goals process, explaining that all goals are expected to align with institutional priorities but that the system has been streamlined to avoid duplication. In response to concerns raised previously, the process has now been integrated into a Kuali form embedded within the annual faculty self-evaluation, eliminating the need for multiple, separate submissions. Faculty may set annual goals in areas such as durable skills, quality teaching, or professional growth, and the annual self-assessment itself may serve as institutional goals.

Oversight of the goals will vary depending on faculty status: the A&T Committee will review submissions for those seeking tenure or advancement, while Deans will review goals for other faculty. The process applies only to full-time employees, not adjuncts. Benefits of the system include the ability to track goals over multiple years and to easily draw upon them when preparing dossiers for advancement. Senators noted that the previous format felt overly rigid, relying too heavily on limited drop-down categories, but were assured that the new Kuali form is designed to avoid these constraints while still providing structured entry fields.

Senators expressed appreciation that the administration had been responsive to Faculty Senate concerns. Senator Keller emphasized that this outcome highlights the importance of the Senate not only in raising faculty issues to administration but also in returning solutions back to their colleagues.

2. Canvas Use & Limitations. Associate Provost Allred presented a working draft titled “Canvas Use and Limitations,” which outlines expectations for faculty use of the learning management system. The draft includes requirements already approved by the Senate, such as posting grades in Canvas, and integration with Simple Syllabus. It also proposes restrictions on cross-listing courses outside of Banner for faculty, though perhaps others would be able to (such as the TLC in consultation with the Title IX office) on their behalf.

The proposed restriction on cross-listing generated the most discussion. Senators raised concerns that allowing cross-listing could pose FERPA and Title IX risks, particularly if students were able to see enrollment information across different sections. At the same time, it was clarified that the draft is not yet a formal policy; rather, it is under review by both the Deans and the Senate and may

ultimately be implemented only as a working procedure housed within the Teaching and Learning Center.

Senators were asked to take the document back to their divisions for review and feedback, with the reminder that it should not be presented as finalized policy. D. Allred emphasized that feedback is needed as soon as possible to move the process forward.

3. Student Travel Funding. Deans have raised the issue of funding for student trips. They are collecting updated information on trips across departments and divisions. Proposals this year are higher than in the past, and the allocation budget is approximately \$40,000. Departments should submit trip proposals promptly to their Deans. A fair process for evaluating requests is being developed. Request forms are available through Amy Noblett. Faculty travel funds remain separate and are not experiencing the same limitations.

4. Adjunct Senator Pay. The issue of compensation for the adjunct senator has not yet been placed on the Deans' agenda. Senators urged that this matter move forward.

V. SENATE BUSINESS: POLICIES & PROGRAMS

A. AI in the Classroom Taskforce (J. Thomas). The Senate heard a report from J. Thomas on the ongoing work of the AI in the Classroom Taskforce. Current initiatives include drafting a new AI policy for syllabi, developing a community education course, creating a special topics business course, and preparing an environmental impact statement.

A significant portion of the discussion focused on whether faculty should be required to include an AI policy statement in their syllabi. Some senators supported the inclusion of shared language or general guidance, particularly in programs where AI use is already common. The Nursing Department, for example, has added a policy to its student handbook to address AI use directly. Others noted that a universal requirement could be unnecessary in some disciplines, such as performance-based courses, and might introduce additional liability for instructors. Several senators recommended using the Simple Syllabus platform to provide a default AI statement that could be easily edited or deactivated by individual faculty members. This approach, they suggested, would be especially useful for new instructors preparing syllabi under time constraints.

Thomas emphasized that the taskforce aims to develop the policy in the least prescriptive way possible. He encouraged senators to seek feedback from their colleagues, including those on the Richfield campus, and to submit comments and suggestions by the following Friday.

B. Proposed Changes to Course Evaluation Language. The Senate reviewed a draft of proposed revisions to the college's course evaluation form, presented by Associate Provost Allred. Academic Affairs is coordinating with the Senate, the Deans, and departments to update the document's

language and structure. Allred explained that much of the current evaluation form predates the college's current assessment processes and includes questions that are not applicable to all disciplines. The revised template would simplify the form, allow departments to add their own items, and eliminate redundant or outdated "outcomes" questions. He clarified that accrediting bodies such as NWCCU do not require specific questions but expect an overall system of institutional assessment.

Senators discussed ways to improve student participation, including dedicating brief class time, adding Canvas reminders, or offering small incentives. Opinions varied on whether evaluations should be completed during class time. Student representative Andrea Cabrea noted that students tend to complete evaluations when they feel strongly about an instructor, and that shorter forms might increase engagement.

Course Evaluations in Faculty Reviews. The role of evaluations in Advancement and Tenure reviews was also discussed. Senator Keller emphasized that while evaluations are not the sole measure of teaching effectiveness, they remain an essential source of feedback. Several senators supported a shorter, more customizable form with strong open-response options, viewing evaluations primarily as tools for professional reflection rather than punitive judgment.

Moving Forward. Allred confirmed that the revision remains ongoing and invited divisions to submit consolidated feedback through the Senate. Possible future improvements include tracking student effort, refining timing of the evaluation window, and ensuring clear, student-friendly instructions. The Senate will revisit the draft at a later meeting, with the goal of reviewing feedback and considering a vote by midterm.

VI. SENATE BUSINESS: COMMITTEES

A. Committee Unification Taskforce (Subcommittee). Senators Hart and Holland reported on the work of the Committee Unification Taskforce, which is exploring ways to streamline Senate committee structures. A key proposal under discussion is the creation of a new body, the Committee for Scholarly Projects in Academic Research and Creativity (SPARC), which would integrate functions currently handled by the Undergraduate Research Committee (URC) and the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Senator Hart explained that the group is working to resolve questions about how best to coordinate research funding and ethics oversight. Members of the URC expressed concern that combining funding approval (URC) with ethical review (IRB) could create conflicts of interest. Hart noted that while some streamlining is possible, the IRB must maintain a degree of independence, particularly in areas governed by federal regulation. Senator Holland added that combining financial and

ethical oversight could present potential institutional risks, underscoring the need for clear separation of duties.

Senator Hart further suggested that the IRB may not need to remain a standing Senate committee, though representation and accountability would still need to be maintained through another structure. Discussion continued regarding possible models for consolidation and the need for clearer operational guidelines.

B. IRB Stopgap Measure. President Fawcett emphasized the urgency of the situation, explaining that the college currently lacks the required number of IRB members to function as an official committee. Several members of the previous IRB left the institution over the summer, leaving the college temporarily noncompliant with federal requirements. Fawcett noted that faculty are awaiting IRB approval for ongoing research projects and that a temporary solution is needed to restore operations. He requested Senate temporary authorization to assemble an ad hoc IRB for the remainder of the semester while a long-term structure is finalized.

MOTION by S. Hart that, in the absence of formally approved bylaws, the Senate authorize the Senate President to appoint an ad hoc IRB to serve through the current semester. **2nd** by K. Parry. **Motion carried** unanimously among those present.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION to adjourn by J. West. **2nd** by H. Holland. **Motion carried** unanimously.
The Senate meeting concluded at 5:00 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

Meeting minutes by Jacob L. Thomas, Parliamentarian
Approved by the Faculty Senate on October 8, 2024.

