

Meeting Minutes

January 25, 2023, 3:30 p.m.

[Zoom Meeting ID: 824 1109 2322, Passcode: 180732](#)

I. Call to Order & Roll Call (M. Gowans, J. Thomas)

The Senate was called to order at 3:35 p.m.

Senators Present: Andrew Bahlmann, Karen Carter, Alan Christensen, Sandra Cox, Trent Fawcett, David Fullmer, Matthew Gowans (President), Wes Jamison, Jed Rasmussen (VP), Dennis Schugk

Senators Absent: Adam Burningham (adjuncts), Jeff Wallace (Faculty Association)

Guests: Jacob Thomas (Parliamentarian), Mike Brenchley (Deans), Melanie Jenkins (Provost), Kade Parry (Asst. Provost), Stace McIff (College President)

II. Minutes from Previous Meeting

A. Review of minutes from January 11, 2022 (attached; J. Thomas)

B. Vote to approve or amend minutes (M. Gowans)

Motion to Approve: A. Bahlmann; **2nd:** T. Fawcett

Approval: Unanimous of those present

III. Informational Items

A. Updates from the Faculty Senate President (M. Gowans)

1. *Board of Trustees Meeting*

M. Gowans reviewed discussions from the most recent Board of Trustees meeting. As always, the Board addressed updates, budget requests, and so forth. Snow College is looking at developing certain programs as well as investing in new properties in order to expand operations.

Board Chair Leslie Keisel expressed gratitude to the faculty for all our efforts. Wherever she and other board members go, they meet Snow alumni who talk about how great of an experience they had. Snow has a very high reputation, and the Board members notice and appreciate all the good work faculty does.

Tammy Hales, Staff Association President, also expressed her appreciation for the chance to meet with the Senate at one of our previous meetings. M. Gowans said that opening channels of communication between faculty and staff helps to bridge any perceived gap between the two groups. We are all here to help accomplish the same mission.

Pres. McIff joined the Senate at 4:24 p.m. The following items are taken from both her remarks to the Senate as well as M. Gowans's earlier report on Pres. McIff's recent presentations to the Board of Trustees and the Deans Council.

Both addressed how Snow College and other USHE institutions receive funding based on certain criteria:

- (a) **Access**, meaning enrollment percentage of students in our service area who come to Snow College after high school; a three percent increase is required.

- (b) **Completion of Degrees**, which also requires a three percent increase.
- (c) **Graduates attaining high-yield jobs**, or degrees related to high-yield careers.

Pres. McIff noted two caveats: concurrent enrollment students—including those who graduate with associate’s degrees while in high school—are not counted in any of these numbers, and neither are students who don’t graduate from Snow but transfer and graduate at another institution. One particular challenge in meeting these mandates includes the fact that the percentage of HS graduates going to college has declined in recent years; this is a challenge not just for Snow, but for colleges everywhere. As a result, Snow is working towards efforts and initiatives that help us better address them, such as the outreach to Latin students being planned by the Latino Taskforce. Majors and certificates will also be looked into and possibly modified to better align with careers that lead to high-yield jobs.

Pres. McIff also discussed Snow’s priorities for this legislative session, which includes a land purchase in Nephi and land development in Ephraim. Snow is also hoping to soon have access to a “SNOWmobile,” or a bus like a “bookmobile” but for STEM. This will include traveling to rural communities in our service area in order to allow underserved distance education students to complete training such as welding.

Lastly, the state tuition freeze was discussed, and how that will require the college to spend more reserve money to meet cost of living adjustments, etc.

2. *Presidential Search Committee*

M. Gowans provided updates to the presidential search process (he is one of the members of the search committee). The timeline reported in the last meeting is still the same. He assured the Senate that all college stakeholders will have opportunities to ask questions of the final candidates. He believes that a decision will be made by early summer.

M. Gowans has informally polled the faculty on what they'd like to see in a new president and presented some of that feedback to the Senate. Senators also chimed in with their thoughts and items received from their divisions. These included the following:

- Views leadership at Snow College as a long-term commitment (5 years or so), and not as a stepping stone to positions at other campuses; less interested in a “grand vision” or establishing his/her own legacy.
- Committed to general education over degree programs.
- Committed to Snow College's unique vision and value to its communities.
- Committed to maintaining the college's autonomy and unique focus, including the responsibilities incumbent on representing the six-county service area.
- Experience in academia and a commitment to shared governance.
- Transparency during stringent economic times about necessary measures taken (and getting faculty input in the process).
- The idea of a president having a terminal degree (e.g. Ph.D.) seemed less important to the senators, though there was an emphasis on making sure that the job description didn't devalue it.
- Language in the job application that invites diverse candidates to apply. (M. Gowans indicated that the most recent draft he'd seen had an inclusive statement.)

3. *Dean's Council*

M. Gowans will give a report on shared governance at the next Deans Council meeting. The most important aspect of this future meeting for him will be the discussions on the Master Academic Plan (MAP).

Provost Jenkins and K. Parry noted that an MAP will be aligned with already agreed-upon metrics, such as the strategic plans for both the college and USHE. The MAP's metrics won't be surprising—they will be aligned with what's already in place. Avoiding redundancy and additional workload will also be important as the MAP is spelled-out.

B. Upcoming Senate and Senate-Administered Elections (J. Thomas)

Science & Math: Jed Rasmussen eligible for reelection

Business & Tech: Karen Carter eligible for reelection

Fine Arts & Comm: David Fullmer eligible for full-term election

Adjuncts: Adam Burningham eligible for reelection this Fall

Senate President & Vice-President will also be elected in due course

M. Gowans talked to the relevant deans at Deans Council, notifying them that the elections need to happen soon, hopefully by the February division meetings.

IV. Senate Initiative Discussions

A. Policy #402 Revision: Academic Freedom Procedure (W. Jamison)

W. Jamison updated the draft revision of Policy #402. This includes adding the preexisting wording from 7.2 into 4.2.4.4.

M. Gowans noted his opinion that the policy should explain that it does not allow for repeal or the alteration of an advancement and tenure decision. There is already recourse in current policy for appealing an A&T decision, and this policy revision is separate from that. A. Bahlmann, the Senate's representative on the A&T Committee, concurred with this idea.

After some discussion, it was decided that 4.2.4.2 needs only the slight clarification that this policy involves academic freedom grievances which are "unrelated to advancement and tenure."

W. Jamison will continue to work on the revisions, and hopefully be able to work with Provost Jenkins to get a legal perspective from official counsel.

B. Policy #403 Revision: Faculty Grievance Policy (M. Gowans)

M. Gowans noted that the Senate is mentioned in Policy #403 only as an appellate body for grievance decisions regarding tenured faculty. It's in #402 (see previous item) that the Senate is much more involved in protecting academic freedom.

Provost Jenkins noted that traditional employment law binds human resources regarding employment. However, faculty have granted ourselves (through shared governance) additional rights. HR is not allowed to make all decisions regarding faculty, though some personnel issues do require their involvement. K. Carter asked if Policy #403 also refers to non-tenured faculty or tenure-track. M. Jenkins said that it did, but that a non-tenured faculty member could not invoke it for “non-retention.”

Senators provided several points of clarification for Policy #403, including addressing potential contradictions and wordsmithing. Ultimately, the Senate decided to table this matter for the future—motioned by J. Rasmussen and seconded by W. Jamison.

C. Policy #410 Revision: Advancement & Tenure (A. Bahlmann)

The A&T meeting will be held next week; A. Bahlmann promised to make sure that discussion on this is still progressing.

D. Shared Governance Subcommittee (M. Gowans, J. Rasmussen, A. Christensen)

No report.

V. Division & Committee Reports

1. Professional Track. K. Carter has been serving as the chair of the Professional Track Committee, but has recently switched from professional- to tenure-track and believes that she is “committee-less.” Both M. Gowans and M. Jenkins assured her that she could continue to serve as a PT committee member as a Senate representative.

2. Honors. A. Christensen reported that the Curriculum Committee recently approved Honors program revisions to a points-based, as opposed to a course-based, system. This new system will hopefully encourage more students to join, especially those who aren’t at Snow College for a full two years. The points system includes both a one-year (11 points) and a two-year track (14 points). Courses are still involved, but the English 2014: Honors Thesis course has been changed to a capstone course, and students can earn points in a variety of ways. Provost Jenkins announced that Tony Smith of the English and Philosophy Department will be joining Larry Smith of Science and Math as a new co-chair (two Drs. Smith).

3. Library. J. Rasmussen reminded faculty about the Holocaust Museum exhibit coming to the library in September. The library needs faculty to align course content in some way to better utilize these resources. (For instance, talking about Holocaust pseudoscience in a biology class, or reading survivor narratives in an English class, etc.) Provost Jenkins pointed out that how well the campus is engaged with the exhibit will affect future access to Smithsonian resources.

4. Teaching & Learning Center. K. Parry noted that training for online course effectiveness has continued. Half of our online teachers have completed the training and reported high satisfaction. All full-time faculty are now eligible to complete the training; a stipend is available for those who complete the course by March 10. The average completion time is between 10-20 hours. The Teaching and Learning Center gives feedback, and faculty mentors assigned to each participant also review courses. This training helps standardize online course offerings on Canvas to some degree, aligning them with college goals.

VI. Adjournment

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

The Senate adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

The next Senate meeting will be held on **Wednesday, February 8, 2023** from 3:30-5:00 p.m. in the Academy Room, Noyes Building.

Copies of *Understanding Academic Freedom* by Henry Reichman (2021) were distributed at the end of the meeting, one copy per senator. These copies will remain in the possession of each senator until the end of their service; the book should then be passed-on to the next senator.

Items to Take Back

- Academic Freedom Policy revisions will soon be sent to the lawyer for review. The revised policy will come before the faculty shortly thereafter.
- Ask the members of committees we serve on how we, as a committee, play a role in protecting academic freedom.
- Pass on gratitude to and appreciation for faculty from Board of Trustees Chair Kiesel, and the same from Staff Association President Hales.

Attachments

Meeting Minutes, January 11, 2023

Faculty Senate Roster, 2022-2023

Snow College Policy #402: Academic Freedom (Revisions)

Snow College Policy #403: Faculty Grievance

Minutes taken by Jacob L. Thomas

Minutes approved February 22, 2023