

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

August 21st, 2023

Please email corrections to Faculty.Senate@nau.edu.

1. Call to order – Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis calls the meeting to order at 3:04pm.

Those Attending: Kate Ellis, Karen Pugliesi, Roger Bounds, Sara Rinfret, Tarang Jain, Blue Brazelton, Gioia Woods, Justin Mallett, Emily Manone, Laurie Dickson, Maribeth Watwood.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis

The 8/21 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. Minutes for the April FSEC meeting will be sent out in the next weeks, to be voted on in September.

3. Faculty Senate President’s Report – Kate Ellis

We need to continue recruitment of senators for leadership positions with the FSEC.

4. Provost’s Office Report – Karen Pugliesi

Provost Pugliesi gives her report.

- We are creating a booklet outlining information about all new faculty, which will be shared with the faculty community.
- Provost Pugliesi gives thanks for the support and feedback regarding the new faculty search process.
- Last week, there was a retreat with the provost office and all the deans. These conversations went well, and deans created plans to create college level workload policies this coming year.
- Data has been collected from the FAAR system (system used to submit SOEs for annual review), this data was concerning. Many SOEs were missing and incomplete, despite the deadline approaching. This may be due to a lack of alignment regarding teaching, service, and other assignments.
- The new Faculty Ombuds team is now in place, there is now double the capacity when compared to previous years, and now there are resources for Graduate Students.
- Provost Pugliesi is grateful for Monica Brown, the previous Faculty Ombuds, for the work that she has completed over her term.
- This week, the provost office will be sending out the first annual report for the strategic planning advisory board. This will share the accomplishments relative to the elevating excellence program.
- Last week, John Georgas sent out a message from the provost office regarding the work of the Generative AI Task Force. The task force recommends that we embrace Generative AI with caution and think about the implications for the university.
- Parliamentarian Blue Brazelton, who is a member on the task force, states that students are using Generative AI, but not reporting it. Thus, faculty and staff must become educated to become a vanguard for this topic.

- One question that has been asked since the completion of this work is whether we want to ask the Council of Learning to follow up on the work of the task force. The Teaching and Learning Center may also be able to support in educating faculty on this topic.
- The FSEC agrees that it is important that this topic be addressed, so that students and faculty can use the tool appropriately.
- Vice Provost Maribeth Watwood suggests that we point Faculty to educational articles, along with keeping an open line of communication with students and how they use Generative AI. The goal should not be to criminalize the use of this tool.
- The provost office sent out the RFP to all college deans. The goal of this message was to have colleges work together to develop priorities for faculty hiring in this coming year.
- Provost Pugliesi announces that we have recovered from the large number of faculty lost due to the pandemic, and that our current faculty numbers match those recorded at the start of 2019.
- At the same time, when comparing 2023 to 2019, we are still down 10% in student enrollment.
- The provost office has invited deans to put forward priorities of hiring essential, non-faculty staff members.
- Provost Pugliesi states that we must be mindful in allocating resources, as we are still committed to implementing incremental increase to our faculty salaries.
- Faculty attrition at NAU has lowered, meaning we need to change projections we had in the past for faculty departures.
- We are moving forward with plans to implement our new revamped and revised version of NAU Online. We will be beginning a search for a new Vice Provost who will have experience and lead us in building and growing NAU Online.
- We will continue to expand on and grow our programming for behavioral health. This includes evolving and expanding the capacity of the nursing area.
- The provost office will be moving forward more rapidly in changing the nursing school into its own separate college.
- We will continue to develop a robust design on how NAU will provide academic programs to students statewide. A Mechanical Engineering program will be launched in Yuma this year.
- There is a continuation of the 100% career ready plan. A small crew of career guidance professionals will be hired to help support colleges with this plan.
- At the President Convocation, President Cruz Rivera stated a focus on “Academic Momentum.” This plan is to help students with the transition to college and in their first year. More than a quarter of students are lost from the Freshman to Sophomore transition, so supporting them through this transition is a priority to increase retention.
- An important predictor of retention into the second year is whether the student has accumulated 30 units. The President challenged us to raise the proportion of students who obtain this goal.
- To support this goal, we will be looking at the curriculum design and first-year student serving courses and see if there are any trends that may be inhibiting student progress.

- Provost Pugliesi states concerns regarding the prevalence of online classes with no online students to enroll in these courses, along with emptier academic buildings impacting how students and faculty create social bonds.
- Provost Pugliesi shares the importance of cultivating positive student expectations in first-semester courses, as students entering college are looking for guidance on how to be successful.
- This can be accomplished by backing up policies with statistics that support them. For example, creating an attendance policy to cultivate a culture of being present in class and supporting this policy by showing that high attendance has a correlation with greater success in the course. There is encouragement to follow Best Practices that are shared by the Teaching Academy.
- Currently, there are two teams that the provost office is looking to develop. These will be focused on faculty to student engagement and fostering a student centered culture of care across campus. Provost Pugliesi is requesting that faculty representatives be on these teams to provide a faculty perspective.
- Vice Provost Roger Bounds gives an update on the Professional Project Reassignment Program. Soon there will be a document that will be released that shares more information on this program and how to apply. Need to work with deans to prepare them to assess resources of the college, and how many reassignments are possible.
- Vice Provost Bounds states that the proposals for the reassignment programs should be professional project or professional development related to the teaching of the faculty member. For example, if someone teaching Physical Therapy, it would be beneficial if their reassignment is related to physical therapy, to help improve their knowledge and ability to teach on the subject when returning.
- Provost Pugliesi states the importance of reflecting on our program portfolio, and how we can adapt to different trends in coming years.
- Kyle Winfree and Mary Harmon have put in a large amount of work in editing COFS. A document will be shared with their suggestions and discussion can continue.
- One of the largest changes throughout the document is removing items the President was arbiter on and changing that role to the provost, because the President may not be as familiar to what is happening at that level.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis hopes to have COFS approved by the senate in Spring of 2024.
- Discussion regarding the faculty search processes were brought up. With the development of the inclusive excellence training, it will remove the need to have a person of diverse background on each search committee to be replaced with someone who has completed the training. This will be monitored to ensure that it meets the inclusivity goals.

5. VP of Inclusion – Justin Mallett

VP (Vice President) of Inclusive Excellence introduces himself to the FSEC and shares the direction that the Inclusive Excellence Program will go.

- Dr. Mallett states that he found two current gaps at NAU regarding Inclusive Excellence.

- The first is NAU Alignment and how it relates to inclusive excellence efforts. Currently, there are projects around campus to improve inclusivity, but they are scattered and not aligned together. The inclusive excellence framework will be used to help bring these programs together and improve the infrastructure of Inclusive Excellence work.
- The second is the trainings at NAU, trainings are long and do not create a plan to help motivate staff and faculty to improving inclusive excellence. To solve this problem, Dr. Mallett is working alongside human resources to create a tiered approach to the trainings. These will create foundations, and then become more advanced as the person progresses. The hope is that these trainings will be ready in January.
- There has been a team that is reviewing and reprioritizing what used to be called the DSP (Diversity Strategic Plan). This will be transitioned into being called the Inclusive Excellence Plan.
- Dr. Mallett notes that the DSP has a lack of metrics, to see the progress of the plan. They will be putting together a team to create environmental scans to create metrics and collect data regarding progress of the Inclusive Excellence Plan. They will need 1 representative of the faculty senate on this team.
- Dr. Mallett has a goal of changing the language of DEI or DEIJ to Inclusive Excellence at NAU.
- He also changed the name of the Center for University Access to the Center for Inclusive Excellence and Access.
- The Campus Inclusion Team has been put together to hear items from employees, students and faculty members to ensure that they will hear and provide resources to support inclusive excellence.
- Dr. Mallett states an importance that inclusive excellence is based on more than race and gender. Disabilities, veteran status, socio-economic status, sexual identities are all part of diversity and inclusion.
- Dr. Mallett wants to create a directory of Faculty and Administrators who research and are interested in presenting on topics related to inclusive excellence. Thus, people have information to reach out to others and gain more knowledge on these topics.
- The Inclusive Excellence Office will also be working with Statewide faculty and campuses to support them.
- Vice Provost Roger Bounds suggests a feedback report between many events around campus, new faculty orientation, chair training and other events. In doing this we can find out information and change the culture before trends repeat themselves.
- Parliamentarian Blue Brazelton asks a question if alignment also relates to realignment, which may impact faculty members and their departments. Dr. Mallett assures the FSEC that alignment is just about finding out where every resource we have is. This also can lead colleges to creating new action plans to help improve inclusive excellence around the NAU campus.

6. General Studies Update – Emily Manone

General Studies Director Emily Manone gives her updates on the General Studies Program.

- Director Emily Manone shares a flier that gives more information on the [General Studies Program](#).
- Last year there was a postponement in implementing the ethics requirements for the general studies program, pending some decisions and knowledge building. This year, the General Studies Program will begin to discuss these implementation plans again.
- Currently 74 majors and programs have their ethics requirement built into their learning outcomes and curriculum maps. 54 majors and programs still need to add and develop this ethics requirements. The General Studies Program will be working with these 54 majors and programs in integrating the ethics requirements.
- Last year, they also postponed the implementation of the information literacy component. The General Studies Program will begin to communicate with departments who will be in Program review starting Fall 2024 about the information literacy requirements. Currently tutorials for information literacy are being developed for a student facing and faculty facing guide.
- Vice Provost Maribeth Watwood suggests that Generative AI related to ethics and information literacy be included. There are opportunities to offer courses and educate students on Generative AI in these categories.
- Director Emily Manone discusses the Tri University General Education Assessment that is a board charged initiative to collect more data on the 3 universities (U of A, ASU and NAU).
- Last year the report was shared, and a focus group created a toolkit to help support faculty in improving teaching and learning.
- Last year the quantitative reasonings assessment occurred. The data of this assessment will be discussed by a faculty focus group, and a report on this data will be shared to ABOR (Arizona Board of Regents) in November.
- Currently, the critical thinking assessment is underway. This fall there will be communication among department and college leaders to collect authentic student work to review and assess.
- A planning team will be created for the final civic knowledge assessment that will be given next year.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis raises concern about the report shared last year. In this report, it seemed that the universities were comparing data that were not like each other, regarding when the students took the assessment in the semester. Because of this, the data may have shown that some universities scored lower than others.
- Director Emily Manone states that for the quantitative reasoning assessment, a similar problem may occur due to the use of different rubrics to score. This will lead to clarity needed on the scoring and sharing of the results to ABOR.
- For the critical thinking assessment, there will be one assessment tool and an agreed upon rubric from all universities.
- There will also be a change in the report shared to ABOR. Percentages and ratings that better support growth will be used to help everyone understand.
- October 6th will be the deadline for course proposals to be submitted into the General Studies Program.

- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis suggests that VP Justin Mallett helps support the DCC (Diversity Curriculum Committee) and facilitate some revisions so they can support the General Studies Program when it is time to approve courses.
- Currently, the General Studies Program is offering two separate workshops this coming semester. The Inclusive Curriculum Workshops are a series of 3 workshops offered to support faculty in learning more about inclusive perspectives. \$250 is offered to those who complete the 3-workshop series.
- The Indigenous Peoples Curriculum Seminars are longer term cohorts where a smaller group of faculties will meet weekly.
- The FSEC shows appreciation for the money offered for completing the Inclusive Curriculum Workshops.
- For those looking to join one other these programs and workshops series, email Emily.Manone@nau.edu to enquire.

7. FSEC Planning—Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate Kate Ellis requests that the FSEC meet later this week to discuss recruitment. Professor Ellis also mentions that she is hoping the bylaws edits are completed by the end of the fall semester, so that college level senate elections can be moved to early March. In doing this, faculty members can discuss with their chairs to avoid having classes scheduled during senate meetings.

8. New Business/Old Business/ Adjourn—Kate Ellis

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:02 pm.

Motion to Adjourn Approved.