

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes
March 4th, 2024

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 3:02pm.

Those Attending: Kate Ellis, Karen Pugliesi, John Tingerthal, Roger Bounds, Michael Smith, Sara Rinfret, Donna Simon, Marco Cabrera Geserick, Blue Brazelton, Gioia Woods, Maribeth Watwood, Melissa Lawton, John Georgas, Carmin Chan, Dawn Hawley, Aimee Quinn, Nora Timmerman, Erik Nielsen.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis

The 3/4 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 2/5 FSEC meeting minutes are voted on and **approved**.

3. Faculty Senate President’s Report – Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis gives her report.

- Faculty Senate Kate Ellis states that the current Senate Admin position, which is currently held by Andrew Stevens, is a shared role between the Senate & the Teaching & Learning Center. This position will be splitting into two separate full-time roles, for the Senate & the Teaching and Learning Center. Current admin, Andrew Stevens, had a choice to decide what position he would like to take, and he selected the Faculty Senate. He will be transitioning to the Full-time senate role in July.
- President Ellis discusses the upcoming internal senate elections. She states that she is more than happy to stay in and run for another year, but the senate needs to prepare and think of what is best for upcoming years if President Ellis were to end her term and not run for the following year. Keeping in mind and cultivating the leadership of the senate is vital to continued faculty governance.
- The internal senate elections will occur during the full senate meeting on Monday, April 29th.
- In the upcoming year, the chair position of the Arizona Faculty Council (AFC) will rotate back to NAU. President Ellis states that even if she were to not be elected, she would still volunteer to chair the AFC, as the experience for the chair position is extremely important this upcoming year.
- In recent news, Regent DuVal is stepping down as ABOR chair and Regent Mata will be acting chair.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods states her support for President Ellis and offers her thanks to Kate for all the time she has put into this role.
- Vice Provost Maribeth Watwood also offers her thanks to President Ellis and states how valuable she is in bridging the gap between Faculty and Administration.

4. Provost's Office Report – Karen Pugliesi

Provost Pugliesi gives her report.

- April 26th will be the next Faculty/Administrator breakfast. This event is in place to increase the dialogue between various university officials and different NAU Faculty. The topic for this breakfast will be “What is it like to be a faculty member at NAU?”
- NAU will be submitting a new program for approval, a Bachelor of Science in Arts and Cultural Management.
- The Regent's cup will be the week of March 18th – March 22nd. NAU has assembled a team that will be traveling to Phoenix to compete.
- NAU will be submitting information to a group called the Enterprise Executive Committee (EEC.) This committee was put in place by ABOR to learn more about each of the universities' international activities.
- A search committee for the next dean of the College of Engineering, Informatics and Applied Sciences (CEIAS) has been convened. The chair of this Committee is Jason Wilder.
- Provost Pugliesi has been reframing a document that provides the best practices for academic freedom and freedom of speech. She will take this document to the Full Faculty Senate for further feedback.
- The provost office has received each college's draft workload policies. They have begun to review these policies and discuss feedback with the deans. All the policies were sent out to each dean, so that they can review similarities and differences among the colleges and to facilitate continuing revisions to college policies.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis suggests that the FSEC and provost office determines the review and adjustment cycle for the workload policies. This review period will be done collaboratively between the senate, each college, and the provost office.
- Provost Pugliesi states that there have been very prolonged multi-meeting discussions in the president's cabinet regarding stewardship of resources and the prioritization of NAU's efforts. There has been a strong commitment to invest in the people of NAU. Due to changes in the higher education environment and conservative enrollment projections, it is required that we be very rigorous in think about priorities of the university. What priorities have the greatest scope of impact and how can we best utilize our resources to support these priorities. This will be regularly discussed with the Faculty Senate throughout upcoming years.
- Provost Pugliesi also states that it is important that we look to streamline current processes to help free up current resources.
- Provost Pugliesi shares that the deans currently have a large workload and asks the senate, chairs, faculty, and other administrators to be understanding of the large amount of work they are doing this year.
- Three different external searches are occurring for NAU. These searches are, Director for the School of Communications, Director for the School of Forestry, and Chair for the Department of Dental Hygiene.
- In a meeting with the Strategic Planning Advisory Board, data will be shared regarding the changes made to the previous faculty search process, and how that has impacted diversity in faculty cohorts.

- Vice Provost John Georgas discusses Faculty to Student (F2S) this is a homegrown system that has run into some technical difficulties recently, and due to the large lift that it would take to repair, it will be removed in AY 24-25.

5. Code of Conduct & Ethics Discussion – Michael Smith

Chair of the Council on Faculty Rights & Responsibilities, Michael Smith, leads a discussion regarding the revision of the Faculty Code of Conduct and Ethics that were previously located in the Faculty Handbook.

- Dr. Smith has researched and found six other university codes of ethics. Among these, NAU has similar guidelines with a few small differences.
- Dr. Smith has shared a document with this information compiled and asks for FSEC members to suggest edits and revisions.
- Provost Pugliesi states that in the ethics document, they mention a policy of faculty office hours that does not exist currently. Provost Pugliesi suggests that it does not reference a policy and states what we expect.
- Dr. Pugliesi also mentions the topic of student and faculty relationships and how that is addressed in a different policy, and that policy pertains to all staff and faculty.
- Vice Provost John Georgas suggests that we also look at the scenario of when faculty collaborate in scholarly projects, how we can acknowledge all the work and intellectual contributions.
- Vice Provost Maribeth Watwood also raises concerns for students dating Graduate Assistants (GA).
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis suggests that due to time constraints, the FSEC hold a meeting on 3/25 to discuss and revise this document, and prepare to vote to move it forward to the Senate at the FSEC meeting on 4/1.

6. Inclusive Excellence for Teaching – John Tingerthal

Chair of the Council on Learning, John Tingerthal, shares and discusses the Best Practices for Teaching document.

- Chair of the Council on Learning, John Tingerthal, shares the document on Inclusive Excellence for Teaching. His goal is to bring this to full senate in March for a vote of endorsement.
- One main point focused on is the simplification of these teaching practices and organizing them in an effective way.
- Previously, these were recognized as “Best Practices in Teaching,” but since Inclusive Excellence is an overarching theme of these practices, the title was changed to “Inclusive Excellence in Teaching.”
- This document was fully endorsed by the Teaching Academy.
- The graphic is currently organized into three primary groupings: Structure, Environment, and Design. These groups then have practices and strategies that faculty members can implement into their courses.

- The implementation for these practices is to create workshops and professional development opportunities to support faculty in implementing these practices into their courses.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis asks for clarification on who should be attributed with the creation of this document. Dr. Tingerthal states that it was a collaborative effort from the Council on Learning and Teaching Academy, with support and feedback from many other faculty members.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith offers his support for the document and the idea that these practices support many different styles of teaching and instruction.
- Dr. Tingerthal then asks Provost Pugliesi regarding the best strategy to distribute this document and provide this resource to faculty members around the university. Provost Pugliesi states that after the senate, we can look to share this with the Deans and the Academic Leadership Collaboration in the coming months. The President can also share it with outside organizations such as ABOR.
- Provost Pugliesi also suggests that Dr. Tingerthal potentially collaborate with Marketing in the creation of a video that shares these practices and this document.
- Dr. Tingerthal asks if he should include the Implementation Plan when asking for endorsement from the senate. Provost Pugliesi and President Ellis suggest that they do not include it, as to not increase confusion, but to discuss it before voting so that senators have an idea of the next steps.
- The FSEC offers their support for this document and provide an approval to move this document to the full senate.

7. **Carbon Neutrality Plan – Erik Nielsen**

Eric Nielsen is in a meeting during the beginning of this presentation so Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis shares.

- This presentation's goal is to share what faculty can do to be involved in the NAU Climate Action Plan.
- [Link to the PowerPoint.](#)
- The second most concerning topic for current students at NAU is the climate crisis and environmental issues, thus it is important for faculty to be educated on NAU's plan and policies to obtain Carbon Neutrality by 2030.
- There are many policies that NAU will be implementing behind the scenes to improve NAU's Carbon Footprint.
- Provost Pugliesi asks that Erik Nielsen considers when he is to present this to faculty and administrators as their workload is very full and they may not be able to follow up.
- Erik Nielsen responds by stating that he understands this request. He also believes that it is important to provide opportunities for students to engage and express their concerns. These students can also have expertise and skills that can help us reach our goals listed in the Carbon Neutrality Plan.
- Erik Nielsen also brings up recent collected data that provides feedback on certain areas of campus. This can be used to pinpoint behaviors that can be discussed and changed to reduce carbon emissions.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods suggest that the Carbon Neutrality Plan reaches out to Live Well NAU and collaborate to help ease student concerns.

8. Divestment Advocacy Letter, Endorsement Request – Nora Timmerman

Faculty Member Nora Timmerman discusses a Divestment Advocacy Letter with a goal to have it endorsed by the Faculty Senate.

- Dr. Timmerman is the Faculty Advisor for the student club of Fossil Free NAU. This club has put together a letter and statement that recommends that the NAU Foundation Divests from the Fossil Fuel industry, along with making the investment process more transparent.
- Dr. Timmerman states that this would align with the university's Carbon Neutrality plan, as well as better aligns their investment strategies with the Elevating Excellence Plan.
- Currently the students of this club have been reaching out to faculty members, student organizations and alumni associations for the support of this letter.
- Provost Pugliesi states that this letter would be a suggestion of opinion to the NAU Foundation as they have a formal policy of neutrality, and there is a board of directors that are the responsible parties for directing investments. The board of directors' primary responsibility is to maximize financial return to support the university.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith raises concerns regarding counterintuitive effects that divestment can have, as there is good evidence that divestment could have least impact on modifying the behaviors of corporations. He also states that there could be a negative political impact.
- Dr. Timmerman states three counters to this point.
 - Divesting in Fossil Fuel industries can lower the investment risk.
 - Divesting also allows us to align our policies with our current values as a university.
 - Divesting puts pressure on the fossil fuel industry.
- ASU has recently made changes to their investment portfolio and support a commitment to change their policies to align their values with their investments.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis suggests that the letter be forwarded to the Full Senate. President Ellis provides her support for this, but also acknowledges Dr. Smith's concerns.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods states her support but also mentions the importance of creating discussion around campus with the senate and faculty members.

9. Councils and Committee Reports

Council and Committee Reports are not shared due to time constraints.

10. New Business/ Old Business/ Adjourn – Kate Ellis **Meeting is adjourned at 5:05pm.**