

**Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes
April 1st, 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, Roger Bounds, Michael Smith, Tarang Jain, Sara Rinfret, Carmin Chan, John Georgas, Andrew Stevens, Gioia Woods, Marco Cabrera-Geserick, John Tingerthal, Blake Rayfield, Jill Navran, Donna Simon, Pete Fule, Melissa Lawton, Emily Manone.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis

The 4/1 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 3/4 FSEC meeting minutes are voted on and **approved**.

3. Faculty Senate President’s Report – Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis gives her report.

- President Ellis asks the FSEC to begin to think about what priorities the Faculty Senate should focus on in the coming academic year of 2024-2025.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods & Senate President Ellis had a lengthy discussion regarding senate participation for the upcoming year. In this discussion, requiring faculty senators to attend in-person was the focus, with the goal being to increase participation and productivity of the Faculty Senate. If a senator is not on campus or has a situation where they are unable to attend in-person, a zoom link will still be granted to them, but the expectation is for in-person attendance.
- The concern about participation was raised due to a noticeable decrease in participation regarding important topics this past year. Senators also have noted an increased difficulty in participating in the Faculty Senate meeting when on zoom.
- FSEC Secretary Marco Cabrera-Geserick raises concern regarding the large number of senators, and if attending in-person meetings was required, it would be difficult to reserve a space that could cater to potentially 50-60 attendees. President Ellis responds by saying that the Senate would look to reserve a larger room than previous years.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods suggests that the Senate Office look at attendance of Senate meetings and send out letters to notify senators of their absence in previous meetings. She also shares her support for the productivity of in-person meetings.
- Provost Pugliesi shares that the provost office has a list of individuals who are remote and provides a zoom link to them before the meeting. Any other individuals who can not attend the meeting in-person must request the zoom link via email.
- FSEC Parliamentarian Blue Brazelton encourages the FSEC to be careful to not say language that may disenfranchise online professors as they are vital to many different areas of the university. Also, it is important to not pressure new senators who may not feel comfortable with requesting a zoom link, even if it is needed.

- Associate Vice Provost Sara Rinfret states that lack of participation may be due to communication issues and how faculty senators disseminate information to their colleges and departments. In a previous meeting she had heard of instances where faculty members did not receive information from their senators regarding suggested changes to COFS. President Ellis states that each college is assigned an individual to send out the senate meeting Quick Notes, which includes the majority of important topics discussed at the senate meetings.
- The faculty representative for the Strategic Planning Advisory Board is rotating off in the coming year. Senate Vice President Tarang Jain will continue to serve on this committee, but the faculty will need to find another representative for this committee. This role requires a faculty member with experience regarding administrative processes and goals. To give further context, VP Laurie Dickson states that the Board is very diverse and contains individuals who represent staff, graduate students, undergraduate students and faculty, therefore expanding the range of faculty who represented on this Board is important.
- Provost Pugliesi also suggests that Tarang Jain and the faculty representative on Strategic Planning Advisory Board meet yearly with the FSEC to provide updates.
- President Ellis suggests that Summer Senate meetings will be zoom only on June 3rd, and July 1st. These meetings will be from 3:30-5:00pm.

4. Provost's Office Report – Karen Pugliesi

Provost Pugliesi gives her report.

- Provost Pugliesi recommends that Senators attend the Faculty Senate/VPs Breakfast on April 26th, as it is a great opportunity for dialogue. The focus for this breakfast is for university administration to learn and better understand the work that faculty accomplish. All current senators and incoming senators have been invited to this breakfast.
- Recently, NAU's Regents Cup team traveled to Phoenix to compete in the annual Regent's Cup competition. Unfortunately, ASU walked away with the Regent's Cup, but this was still a great experience for the students and faculty involved.
- Next year's Regent's Cup competition will be held in Flagstaff.
- The provost office has recently worked alongside a Demographer in collecting data regarding potential enrollment trends in the future. It is expected that NAU's proportion of students enrolling directly out of high school will rise next year, but level out in the years to come. With this information, it is vital that NAU look to recruit a broader population of students seeking learning opportunities.
- The request for approval of a Bachelor's in Arts & Cultural Management program has been delayed, this approval request will now be presented to the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) during the June meeting, instead of the previously scheduled April meeting.
- The CEIAS dean search is continuing, Provost Pugliesi will be receiving an update regarding their search soon.
- With the feedback collected from the FSEC, Provost Pugliesi has submitted a document on academic freedom and freedom of speech to NAU's General Counsel for review. This document is focused on providing faculty with information to

- promote a greater understanding of these two topics. Provost Pugliesi hopes to receive an update regarding this document and to share it with the Full Senate.
- Provost Pugliesi states the importance of faculty being conscientious of classroom activities and to be judicious about not bringing in personal politics into the classroom.
 - Provost Pugliesi congratulates the two new President's Distinguished Teaching Fellows, Yuly Ascension Delaney from the Department of Global Languages and Cultures and Deborah Huntzinger from the School of Earth and Sustainability. This will be announced at the awards ceremony on April 23rd.
 - Today is the formal deadline for faculty members to notify their chair that they are applying for Sabbatical or the professional reassignment program. Because the professional reassignment program is new, the provost office has distributed a support document with FAQs about the program and the processes to college and department leadership. This new program will create challenges for deans and chairs when reviewing and approving these applications, as many new career-track faculty have an opportunity to apply.
 - On April 3rd, university leadership had a summit with regional partners to discuss design and developments for the creation of a medical school. It is vital that this school be founded on partnerships with the community, instead of the University standing up an individual healthcare operation.
 - A national advisory board will be convened in May for NAU to ask strategic questions regarding the design and planning of the medical school.
 - A report regarding the planning of a medical school will be shared with President Cruz Rivera over the Summer and will be presented to ABOR in August.
 - Cody Canning and Michelle Miller have been working on the refresh of the First Year Learning Initiative (FYLI) program. Provost Pugliesi states that their presentation of suggestions was excellent, and updates will be given to the Faculty Senate in upcoming meetings. The newly titled program, First Year Together, will emphasize an ongoing engagement of course coordinators and faculty members across the university. This collaboration will lead to an ongoing improvement of course design and pedagogical practices and improving student learning and achievement.
 - Provost Pugliesi provides a brief financial update; the University's winter revenue was up by 14% compared to previous years.
 - Next Wednesday will be NAU's Giving Day and there are many fund raising "challenges" in support of programs across campus.
 - FSEC Member Michael Smith asks if there are extra incentives for faculty members to participate in the First Year Together Program. Provost Pugliesi responds that it will help faculty improve their work and practice, along with additional funding opportunities for faculty to participate in professional development.
 - Vice Provost John Georgas discusses a previously mentioned program focused on creating an inclusive access agreement that allows undergraduate students to pay a single time, set fee for access to all their class materials for the semester. This program was developing until the Department of Education opened a negotiated rule that if finalized would place restrictions that would impact the effectiveness of the program. The provost office will continue to monitor the regulatory framework to see if any changes are made that would support this program.

5. CoFS Discussion – Roger Bounds

Vice Provost Roger Bounds gives an update on changes to CoFS.

- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis mentions a question that was recently brought up to her regarding faculty who were moved to the teaching track-Are these faculty, who do not have terminal degree, able to be promoted? Vice Provost Roger Bounds responds saying the answer is yes, all such faculty are able to be promoted. If their colleges or departments are developing policies that would not support this promotion, it directly conflicts with university policy and will not be approved.
- Since the previous discussion, there have been two larger changes made to the CoFS revisions.
 - The first change better articulates what early means regarding faculty promotions. The previous version of CoFS offered no guidance on whether early promotion was allowed. The new document mentions the possibility of early promotion by a year, along with the process in which an early application might be considered.
 - The second change offers clarity surrounding the language of sabbatical eligibility and applications submitted before tenure is awarded to faculty. This change added language that states that approval of a sabbatical is contingent on approval of tenure.
- Vice Provost Roger Bounds mentions the importance of CoFS being general, so that every department or college on campus can be supported by it. With this generality, CoFS also allows units to elect or appoint FSC members. This selection process will be decided by the local units.
- FSEC Member John Tingerthal asks about the timeline for approval of the changes to CoFS. Vice Provost Roger Bounds states that all current feedback will be processed and included in the CoFS edits document that will be shared with the Senate. After this is reviewed and concerns are addressed, there will be a final reading and the changes will be voted on.

6. Task Force: Annual Review – Roger Bounds & Sara Rinfret

Vice Provost Roger Bounds gives an update regarding the Annual Review Task Force.

- The suggestions from the Annual Review Task Force are as follows:
 - Remind departments and units of current practices and requirements.
 - Separate Annual review and feedback with retention review for career track faculty. Logically they are connected, but it is important to keep these separate as they have different rules.
 - Recommendations to only submit one letter, as multiple letters with similar information but stated in a different way is redundant for Annual Review Committees.
 - The Annual Review Committees no longer create a final score or permanent rating, instead they provide feedback and then the chair creates a final rating with that information, along with any other feedback.

- Annual review has a title change to Comprehensive Review.
- Comprehensive Reviews are no longer held yearly, but in years one, three, and five prior to a faculty members first promotion. Then a faculty member would get a full review in year six that determines their promotion.
- After the first promotion, faculty members would have a comprehensive review every three years.
- Retention reviews are still required to happen every year, as it is an ABOR policy.
- New comprehensive reviews would become a Spring only process, in order to compress the dates of all sabbatical applications, retention reviews, comprehensive reviews, etc.
- A new four-point scale has been formulated for the final rating in the comprehensive review.
- These changes would drastically reduce the workload burden on the Annual (or Comprehensive) Review Committees and department Chairs.
- It is important that faculty members still update their FAAR annually, to prevent a situation where they are uploading three years of information in a short period of time before the comprehensive review is due.
- FSEC member John Tingerthal suggests that there be exceptions in the comprehensive review process that allow a faculty member to receive comprehensive review earlier than three years if they score unsatisfactory or need improvement.
- Faculty members will also be receiving feedback while in progress to promotion, even if they are not in a comprehensive review year.
- FSEC Secretary Marco Cabrera-Geserick, suggests that the tiered rating system is defined properly and offers incentives for faculty members.

7. Task force: Professional Development in SOEs – Sara Rinfret

Assistant Vice Provost Sara Rinfret gives updates from the Task force focused on getting Professional Development into Faculty member's SOEs.

- The task force has worked the past year and has suggested a change in the statement of expectations allowing faculty members to negotiate for 0 – 10% of their SOEs to be in Professional Development. The negotiation of this assignment would be between faculty and chairs of their respective departments.
- Provost Pugliesi states that it is important that faculty speak with their chairs regarding professional development that may be outside of the preset budget but could provide skills that would align with the strategic goals of the unit and department.
- To clarify, the professional development will not be a required section of every faculty member's SOE, the suggestion of the task force asks is an option of 0 – 10%.

8. Faculty Code of Conduct & Ethics – Michael Smith

The FSEC will meet next Monday 4/8 to discuss the Faculty Code of Conduct & Ethics.

9. HOLD TIME: Divestment Advocacy Letter, Endorsement Request – Nora Timmerman

Hold time for the 4/15 Full Senate Agenda.

10. Councils and Committee Reports

Council and Committee Reports are shared.

- The chair of the Council on Career Track Faculty Issues, Jill Navran, shares that the council will be having their second open forum for career track faculty to address any concerns they have. Provost Pugliesi will be joining this meeting to answer any questions asked. The career track faculty spotlight will be returning, with nominations closing on April 12th.
- The chair of the General Studies Committee Emily Manone discusses updates to the General Studies Committee Bylaws.
 - New changes reflect the name change to General Studies Committee.
 - New updates include language to show how the General Studies Committee and Diversity Curriculum Committee work together.
 - Additional information on the responsibilities of chairs and committee members, along with added workload expectations.
 - Added references to the best practices document that was recently approved by the Faculty Senate.
- These Bylaws changes will be voted on by the Full Senate in April.
- FSEC Treasurer Blake Rayfield gives an update on the Budget Committee.
 - The Committee recommends that there be a review process of faculty promotions and raises every five years. Currently it is a fixed amount of money that a faculty member gets for each promotion, in reviewing this the provost office can adjust these fixed amounts to make up for inflation.

11. New Business/ Old Business/ Adjourn – Kate Ellis **Meeting is adjourned at 5:03pm.**