

**Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting  
Minutes  
September 9th, 2024**

Please email corrections to [Faculty.Senate@nau.edu](mailto: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, Lisa Bliss, Donna Simon, Miriam Espinoza, Hillary Stowell, Emily Manone, Karen Jarratt Snider, Jermaine Martinez, Sarah Negovan, Karli VanderMeersch, Jennifer Lee.

**2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis**

The 9/9 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 8/19 FSEC meeting minutes are voted on and **approved**.

**3. Senate President’s Report**

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis shares her report.

- The senate has been working with the Provost Office to permit each college caucus leader access to the college’s listserv. This permission will be used to send out the Senate Quick Notes to each college, as well as notify each college of their representatives on the senate.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis has suggested that there be a semesterly all faculty meeting with the Provost. In this meeting, faculty members can ask for further clarifications on provost work and university policies. The date for this meeting will be discussed in the coming weeks.
- The Faculty & Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) breakfast will be Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup> from 7:45-8:45am. The topic Undergraduate Research.
- ABOR will be having their meeting at NAU from September 26<sup>th</sup> – September 27<sup>th</sup>.
- The Arizona Faculties Council (AFC) will be having a working lunch on September 26<sup>th</sup> to discuss the report that will be shared to ABOR. All FSEC members are invited to attend this working lunch. Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis is this year’s AFC Chair.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis will be looking for individuals to serve on the undergraduate attendance policy task force.

**4. HOLD FOR SENATE: Government Affairs, Election Guidance – Katy Yanez**

Time is held for Katy Yanez to discuss government affairs and offer faculty guidance for the upcoming election at the next Full Senate Meeting.

**5. Council and Committee Reports – All FSEC Members**

The FSEC shares their current council & committee reports.

- Senate Vice President Tarang Jain & the Elections Committee have sent out the senator assignments to each committee. The only committee with a current vacancy is the Council on Distance Education. A request for senator interest in this committee has been sent, and we will have a representative selected in the upcoming weeks.
- Senate Treasurer Lisa Bliss shares that she is continuing to look for the Senate Dues noting that the dues were collected, but not properly distributed to the senate's account.
- Chair of the Council on Learning John Tingerthal reports that the council will continue to work on revising the teaching portfolio guidelines.
- Chair of the Council on Faculty Rights & Responsibilities Michael Smith shares that the council is still in the organization process and will be meeting in the upcoming month.
- Chair of the Council on Career Track Faculty Issues Jill Navran shares that the council will be sending certificates to last year's Career Track Faculty Spotlight recipients, and will work with Andrew to update the website.
- Senate Parliamentarian Blue Brazelton & the Bylaws Committee have begun to receive requests to review bylaws and will be reaching out to the various senate councils and committees regarding bylaws updates.

#### **6. Annual Review Process – All FSEC Members**

The FSEC discusses questions regarding proposed changes to the Annual Review Process.

- Vice Provost Roger Bounds explains the proposed cycle changes. These changes are, a comprehensive review every other year before promotion, and a comprehensive review every three years after promotion.
- Pre-promotion faculty members who are not required to have a comprehensive review in a given year may request one and should still meet with their department chair to receive feedback and updates.
- Vice Provost Roger Bounds shares the changes that are already approved.
  - Simultaneous reviews (i.e., Promotion and Comprehensive Review) will no longer occur.
  - The Comprehensive Review process occurs in the Spring.
- Vice Provost Bound shares that there will be an increase of faculty applying for promotion and sabbatical, as now the process allows for these applications to occur in the same year. If the faculty member is denied promotion, their sabbatical application will not be processed. If their promotion is approved, then their sabbatical application will be reviewed that semester.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis clarifies that these changes would be the minimum requirement of comprehensive reviews. If a faculty were looking to receive more feedback from a comprehensive review, they may request one in a year that they are not required to have one.
- Vice Provost Roger Bounds shares that the changes to the rating systems had two goals. The first goal is to remove the word merit from the rating system as it had the ability to change the meaning of a rating. The second is to recalibrate the meaning of the rating system and imbed a growth mindset into these ratings.
- FSEC member Marco Cabrera Geserick voices his concerns for the rating changes, as currently the new language would not align with the previous rating system's

language. He also shares that the new system would underserve faculty members who are new to NAU but have been teaching many years prior to NAU. Finally, Marco shares concern that the new rating system will not change the previous problem of the significant number of highly meritorious scores.

- Provost Pugliesi responds that in our culture, the previous rating of satisfactory was seen as undesirable leading to a reluctance of using the satisfactory rating. This change could help shift the culture surrounding this rating, as it would have less of a negative connotation surrounding it.
- FSEC member John Tingerthal restates that the task was to rename the categories of the rating system; however, it will require a culture shift to really make an impact on the current issues surrounding ratings.
- Senate Vice President Tarang Jain also shares that it will be important to communicate appropriately about these changes to attain the culture shift that we are striving for.
- Senate Treasurer Lisa Bliss shares that these changes may not be negative for experienced faculty coming to NAU as expectations would be based on the statement of expectations for each faculty member. Karen Pugliesi responds by sharing that the statement of expectations is not a document that establishes criteria for evaluations. The statement of expectations only specifies the faculty member's assignment of effort.
- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis suggests that a potential change could be the adoption of a three-level rating scale. Vice Provost Roger Bounds shares that this suggestions was extensively discussed by the Annual Review Task Force. One concern that was shared regarding a three-level rating system is that most faculty would either meet or exceed expectations, causing there to be a lack of feedback in the rating if the faculty member was working toward meeting expectations.
- Vice Provost John Georgas suggests that almost any rating scale may run into a similar issue where the majority of faculty obtain the highest rating. The most important task is a change in culture that embraces the provision of formative feedback to faculty. It is anticipated that this will be facilitated with the adoption of the revised rating scale.
- Provost Pugliesi clarifies that the Comprehensive Review process is focused on how faculty excel in their teaching assignments, not how a faculty member's effort is invested. Otherwise, the Provost Office would expect faculty to work more than a 100% workload to be exceed expectations, which is not feasible.
- FSEC member Michael Smith shares his support for these changes to the Annual Review Process.
- Vice Provost Roger Bounds shares that if these changes are approved, then we would update CoFS. He also shares that the faculty member's Statement of Expectations could be changed to Statement of Effort to clarify that the SOE is an account of how faculty spend their time, not day-to-day processes and teaching practices as these often change.
- Provost Pugliesi mentions that the Inclusive Excellence in Teaching framework can be used to establish some dimensions for faculty evaluation.
- Provost Pugliesi suggests that the FSEC discuss the proposed change from the Faculty Statement of Expectations to the Faculty Statement of Effort in the future.

- Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis suggests that the FSEC move the Comprehensive Review process changes to the senate in two votes. The first change to be voted on would be for the change in schedule. The second change to be voted on is the change in rating scale, as this is more contested. If the second change is not approved, the current rating scale would be kept and the proposed scale would continue to be worked on.
- Senate President also shares the value of the Faculty Senate voting down a proposed change as it shows that we can continue to work on it.

The motion to move the proposed comprehensive review changes to the senate in two different categories, one regarding the review schedule and the second regarding the rating scale changes, is voted on and **approved**.

#### **7. General Studies Report – Emily Manone**

Director of the General Studies Program, Emily Manone gives an update regarding the program's implementation.

- Director Emily Manone shares infographics regarding the General Studies Program.
- The General Studies Program makes up almost 25% of an undergraduate student's education.
- Chair of the General Studies Committee Jermaine Martinez shares information regarding the General Studies Committee. The General Studies Committee is a peer review committee that helps assess a proposed course's alignment with the general studies requirements. This is done by analyzing the syllabi of proposed courses and either approving the course or providing feedback for revision that would align the course to the general studies program.
- The upcoming General Studies Program requires undergraduate students to complete 34 units of general studies courses.
- The FSEC proceeds to make small suggestions regarding the infographics and how to improve them.
- Co-chair of the Inclusive Curriculum Committee Karen Jarratt-Snider shares information regarding the committee's processes. The Inclusive Curriculum Committee is a peer review committee that reviews whether a submitted course aligns with one of the four inclusive perspectives that are present in the general studies requirements. Upon review, the committee will either request more information and provide feedback or approve the course. The committee also offers one-on-one support to faculty who have submitted a course that was not initially approved.
- Karen Jarratt-Snider & Alisse Ali Joseph work with the Teaching & Learning Center to provide "Office Hours" to support faculty course proposals for inclusive teaching perspectives.
- Director Emily Manone shares that it is necessary that faculty and advisors recognize the importance of the General Studies Program and how the program's benefits can be understood by students.

#### **8. ASNAU, GSG, & SAC – Karli VanderMeersch, Jennifer Lee, & Sarah Negovan**

Presidents of ASNAU, GSG, & SAC introduce themselves to the FSEC & share their priorities for the upcoming year.

- ASNAU President Karli VanderMeersch shares that ASNAU will be focusing on creating a Voting Day resolution that will give students the opportunity to participate in the democratic process. They will also work on community-of-care initiatives and collaboration with departments across campus.
- GSG President Jennifer Lee shares that GSG will be focusing on ABOR level institutional neutrality. They will also focus on the graduate studies and professional studies programs with hopes of receiving more support and resources for these programs. The final focus is securing more resources and support for graduate students to travel and hold events.
- SAC President Sarah Negovan shares that SAC will be focused on employee recognition. They will also focus on giving staff members the opportunity to lead and attend NAU sponsored clubs. Sarah also mentions the importance of looking at the similarities between staff and faculty and finding ways for these groups to connect.

#### **9. Provost Report – Karen Pugliesi**

Provost Pugliesi gives her report.

- Provost Pugliesi will be presenting the General Studies Course Crosswalk to ABOR.
- There will be a Strategic Planning and Initiative Committee meeting to discuss how the university can align higher education with workforce demands and societal shifts. The information from this meeting will be shared with the FSEC.
- To follow up further on the President’s Convocation surrounding Strategic Finance, the university will continue to work on strengthening our academic programs and sustaining academic momentum for students. Provost Pugliesi met with the Teaching Academy to discuss the Inclusive Excellence in Teaching document and how it can be incorporated into the Comprehensive Review process.
- We will continue to work on improving NAU Online and Statewide programs to better serve students.
- The development of Engineering Technology, Wildfire Science, and Forest Resource Management Programs align with serving the increasing workforce needs in the state of Arizona.
- NAU will continue to work on building and growing the various health profession programs and nursing programs that we have launched or revised this past year.
- Provost Pugliesi shares that we will focus on analyzing how we currently invest our resources in ways that best align with the university’s strategic goals. A draft of this plan will be released to the FSEC in the upcoming months.
- FSEC members will be invited to the Academic Leadership Summit in October where information will be shared regarding enrollment predictions and how that relates to our strategic plans for the upcoming year.
- College deans have been told that the Provost Office will be retaining the salary savings pursuant to academic year sabbaticals for the upcoming year. This does not mean that sabbaticals will be removed going forward or even next year, but that the colleges will have to use their own resources to fund them.

- As of today, our enrollment numbers are down 100 students than what was initially predicted. However, we have a larger number of retained students, with a smaller number of new students, compared to what we predicted. Many challenges have been linked to this low enrollment number such as FAFSA issues, cost of housing in Flagstaff, competition from other universities, etc.
- With these challenges it is important that we maximize the way we serve students in multiple modalities and locations, as well as providing programs that best give students skills and opportunities that translate to success after graduation.
- Provost Pugliesi shares that a theme of the upcoming year will be examining what we can stop doing so we can redirect resources to other areas of need in the university. An example of this are the proposed changes to the annual review process which aim to reduce the service workload given to chairs and faculty.
- A Faculty Town Hall will be occurring on 9/30 with the Dean of Cal Berkeley's College of Law, Erwin Chemerinsky. Following this presentation, there will be a panel discussion with Senate President Kate Ellis, FSEC member Michael Smith, and other members of the community.
- Provost Pugliesi suggests that the FSEC, members of the Provost Office, and panelists meet in the following week to discuss the book "Free Speech on Campus," written by speaker of the upcoming Town Hall, Erwin Chemerinsky.

**10. New Business/ Old Business/ Adjourn – Kate Ellis**  
**Meeting is adjourned at 4:59pm.**