

**Summer Senate Meeting  
Minutes  
June 3rd, 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 3:32pm.

**Those Attending:** Kate Ellis, Karen Pugliesi, Kane Nixon, David Castellano, Jennifer Duis, Jason Bradley, Emily Manone, Tarang Jain, Maribeth Watwood, Jessie Finch, John Lynch, Scot Raab, Morgan Ruff, Michael Smith, Sara Rinfret, Eric Cerino, Hillary Stowell, Jennifer Russell, Karli VanderMeersch, John Georgas, Roger Bounds, Kristie Wright, John Tingerthal, Lisa Bliss, David Folch, Jill Christensen, Andrew Stevens.

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

The 6/3 Agenda is voted on and **approved**.

**3. Faculty Senate President’s Report – Kate Ellis**

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis gives her report.

- Due to the absence of a presenter, the discussion on the proposed changes to the Annual Review process will move to the 7/1 Summer Senate Meeting.
- Administration has also begun to review the curricular process with goals to streamline procedures and increase efficiency.

**4. Provost’s Office Report – Karen Pugliesi**

Provost Pugliesi gives her report.

- This week, the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) will be convening with their standing committees. NAU has submitted to ABOR a Bachelor of Science in Arts and Cultural Management Program.
- They will be discussing a potential change in ABOR policy regarding the creation or changing of academic programs at the universities. These changes would streamline the current process of approval for these programs, as well as eliminate the need for ABOR to approve any university wanting to accept more than 64 units of credit from a community college.
- There is a new expectation that the executive director approves changes to degree programs that already exist and have been approved by the board, if the change is greater than 25% of the program requirements. The executive director will also approve new or renamed minor programs.
- There is a provision that allows universities to communicate about degree programs that are in development, in order to have enough lead time to recruit students, as this process does not always align with the timeframe of ABOR approval.
- Universities will be required to give an updated budget forecast for the coming year and what the implications of the previous FAFSA issues will entail for enrollment.

- The Audit and Risk Management Committees from each university will also be presenting, sharing risk management assessments and priorities for the upcoming year.
- A new dean of the College of Engineering, Informatics, and Applied Sciences (CEIAS) has been hired. Dr. Charles Chadwell will be joining NAU in August and will also have an appointment in the department of Civil Engineering & Construction Management.
- The dean of the College of Arts & Letters (CAL) Chris Boyer and the dean of the College of Health & Human Services (CHHS) Lillian Smith will be leaving NAU for other opportunities. Julie Piering will be stepping in as interim dean of CAL and Matt Ford will be stepping in as interim dean of CHHS.
- The First Year Together (FYT) program will be supporting 17 multi-section courses in the Fall. The coordinators for these courses have been identified and will be collaborating this summer with chairs, deans, Cody Canning, and Michelle Miller on course designs and master syllabi.
- The provost office currently has 18 proposals for mini grants that would address Artificial Intelligence (AI) and how to incorporate it into our courses.
- Provost Pugliesi has set up discussions with the deans regarding a cluster hire focused on AI. This cluster will include the strategic hiring of at least one individual in each college that will focus on AI applications and how they are relevant in the fields of the college.
- There has been discussion of holding a collaborative symposium with NAU and other community colleges that focuses on providing faculty with more information on using AI.
- The provost office is still intending to move forward with a town hall event in the Fall that provides faculty with learning opportunities on academic freedom and freedom of expression. More updates on this event will be shared soon.
- The college deans have been given a set of guidelines regarding feedback on their college workload policies. These revisions are due on June 10<sup>th</sup>. They will be reviewed again and will be provided additional feedback.
- 100% Career Ready will be continuing this Summer. Faculty are working on making changes to how courses are structured and curricula to develop specific outcomes that are requisites for the entry and advancement of careers in the college's specific fields. Vice Provost Maribeth Watwood offers her thanks to the faculty and university for their participation in the first phase of 100% Career Ready as this program has been successful so far.
- As a part of NAU Health, NAU has held two different meetings regarding the creation of a medical school. The first event was a design summit, where many partners and regional experts from the southwest region of the country met with the goal of creating dialogue and developing partnerships that would help support the creation of a medical school. The dialogue was very successful and NAU was able to secure the facilitation of outside consultants, as well as collect ideas that would make the medical school truly distinctive. The second event was the convening of a national group that was organized by Provost Pugliesi. In this group, ideas and advice were shared with NAU leadership about how to properly develop a distinctive and successful medical school. A report of all this information will be developed and

- shared with President Cruz Rivera. Then President Cruz Rivera will present that report to ABOR in September.
- The General Studies Crosswalk Presentation to ABOR has been postponed until September due to time constraints at the upcoming meeting. This presentation will provide ABOR with information regarding course requirements needed to fulfill the General Studies Curriculum along with information on course descriptions.
  - Currently there is a challenge regarding transfer students and how their credits will transfer into the General Studies Program once the Liberal Studies Program is transitioned out. This challenge is due to students taking prerequisites for the current Liberal Studies Program that may not transfer over properly once the General Studies Program is implemented. Provost Pugliesi proposes a change to the general transfer credit policy which would help prevent this issue from occurring.
  - Arizona Transfer has looked to stay updated with NAU's General Studies Program by changing the Arizona General Education Curriculum (AGEC). These changes will closely align with all the three state universities.
  - FSEC Member Michael Smith asks if there are any updates regarding the new Executive Director of ABOR. Provost Pugliesi states that the interim Executive Director of ABOR is Chad Sampson.

**5. Discussion: Proposed Annual Review Process: Peer Level Review and Proposed Changes to Review Ratings – Roger Bounds, Sara Rinfret & Kate Ellis**

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis leads a discussion regarding proposed changes to the Annual Review Process.

- Two main topics will be discussed today, and members of the Annual Review taskforce will respond to any questions.
  - The process of peer level review, completed by the annual review committee, will include a review comprising of feedback but would not rate the work of a faculty member.
  - There are changes to the review rating scale.
- Vice Provost Roger Bounds clarifies to the Faculty Senate that the Peer Level review will only provide formative feedback to the recipient of the review and will not include a formal rating score. This is because the only score that carries forward on a faculty member's record is the formal score that the chair submits. This change provides the peer review committee the opportunity to give more formative feedback to the faculty member while being more disconnected from submitting a rating.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith shares his support for this change of removing the expectation that the review committees rate their colleagues. Faculty Senate president Kate Ellis also states her support for this proposed change as it should lead to review committees providing much better feedback to faculty.
- Senator Jennifer Duis & Lisa Bliss raise concern because their departments currently provide a rating and not formative feedback to faculty members. President Ellis suggests that Vice Provost Roger Bounds changes the language to ensure that the review committees know that is they are required to provide formative feedback for faculty under review.

- President Ellis also states that because annual review is transitioning to comprehensive review, where faculty are reviewed every other year pre-promotion and every three years post-promotion, the workload of the review committees will be lightened, and they will be able to provide better feedback to faculty.
- FSEC Member Michael Smith suggests the potential of providing guidelines to units around campus to ensure that they are providing formative feedback to faculty receiving reviews. Provost Pugliesi responds by saying that guidelines are needed, and even training would be beneficial for review committees across campus as many units who have not previously provided formative feedback to faculty members would need assistance on how to perform these processes effectively. Also, these trainings could be a way to decrease bias in review committees and train individuals on how to better communicate constructive feedback.
- The Teaching Academy's Guidelines for Excellence in Teaching can also be used as guidelines for review committees and will be implemented soon.
- The second proposed change is that NAU uses a 4-point scale in the review process. This scale in descending order would be, exceeds expectations (4), meets expectations (3), approaching expectations (2), and needs improvement (1). If a faculty member were to receive needs improvement (1), they would be required to have another comprehensive review in the following year.
- This change has been proposed in order to retitle the current rating system to better encourage the exchange of feedback to the faculty member under review.
- FSEC Member John Tingerthal offers his support to this change as it allows a recalibration of the current annual review system.
- Associate Vice Provost Sara Rinfret states that these title changes also better aligns with Human Resources (HR) and their current staff performance system.
- Jessie Finch, a member of the Annual Review Task Force, mentions how the new rating system supports a growth and feedback-oriented perspective compared to the previous rating system.
- Provost Pugliesi states that these changes are proposed to better improve the feedback that faculty are receiving in their review while also lowering the large burden of work that is placed on faculty to submit reviews, review committees, and chairs.
- These proposed changes will also be discussed during the Full Faculty Senate meeting in the Fall.

**6. New Business/ Old Business/ Adjourn – Kate Ellis  
Meeting is adjourned at 4:54pm.**