

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

April 21st, 2025

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, John Tingerthal, John Georgas, Hillary Stowell, Corey Oshikoya, Laura Umphrey, Karl Krotke-Crandall, Nick McKay, Jill Navran, Jennifer Duis, Gioia Woods, Michael Smith, Brandie Reiner, Michelle Thomas, Theresa Bierer, Samantha Clifford, David Castellano, Blue Brazelton, Aimee Quinn, Kevin Tague, Karen Jarratt Snider, Christopher Sthultz, Rachel Starks, Ashley Vaughan, Jennifer Holzapfel, Juliana Suby, Jessie Finch, Miriam Espinoza, Katie Tullman, Claudia Rodas, Lisa Bliss, Tristan Nighswander, Tori Damjanovic, Eric Cerino, Morgan Ruff, Jennifer Russell, Jasmine Garani, KT Thompson, Melissa Lawton, Oaklee Rogers, Abby Fisher, Jennifer Lee, Jane Marks, Dale Cummings, Amy Rushall, David Folch, Cynthia Childrey.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis

The 4/21/25 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 2/17/25 and 3/17/25 Senate meeting minutes are voted on an approved.

3. Senate President's Report – Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate President Kate Ellis shares her report.

- The Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) meeting was on NAU campus April 9th-11th. President Ellis shared a report from the AFC that focused on Academic Freedom.
- The NAU Faculty Senate passed a resolution opposing bill SB1020. This resolution was passed on March 31st.
- The senate office will be collecting annual reports from all senate-charged committees. These reports will be sent out to all senators once collected.
- All senators will receive a letter from Senate President Ellis about what the senate completed this year.
- Senate Internal Elections will be occurring at the end of April. President Ellis suggests that any senators who are interested in FSEC positions should reach out to her for more information.
- NAU President, Jose Cruz Rivera, will be presenting at the final Full Senate meeting on April 28th. NAU credentials will be required to log into Zoom for this meeting.
- Recently, there was a suggestion that NAU help create a Mutual Academic Defense Compact with other schools in the Big Sky Conference. Senate President Ellis shares that if needed in the future, she could propose idea this to NAU President Cruz Rivera.
- On 4/23, Provost Pugliesi will be holding her final provost Q&A of the year. This event will be in the Dubois Center on the Flagstaff Mountain Campus.
- There will be an NAU Senate & Vice President/Provost Breakfast in the Fall. More details on this event will be shared with the senate once finalized.

- Summer senate meetings will be held on June 2nd and July 7th. Each meeting will be Zoom only from 3:30pm-5:00pm. Both meetings are optional to attend.

4. Council and Committee Reports – All FSEC Committee & Council Chairs

The Chairs of the various Senate Committees and Councils share their current council & committee reports.

- Senate Parliamentarian, Blue Brazelton, shares that the senate office will be sending out an email regarding FSEC internal elections. FSEC elections will end on May 7th, and internal senate committees and council elections will be held in the Fall.
- Senate Treasurer Lisa Bliss shares that the Senate will be able to offer two \$1000 Senate Scholarships this year. The two recipients of the scholarships are Rachel Negovan and Ethan Ward.
- Chair of the Council on Faculty Rights & Responsibilities, Michael Smith, shares that the Council met with representatives of NAU's Travel Team and communicated perspectives and shared empathy. A report from this meeting will be sent to the senate once completed.
- Chair of the Council on Career Track Faculty Issues, Jill Navran, shares that the Career Track Open Forum occurred on April 18th. This event was well attended online and the council received great feedback about career track faculty concerns.

5. CoFS Updates – Michael Smith & Roger Bounds

Chair of the Council on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, Michael Smith, and Vice Provost, Roger Bounds, share updates on CoFS.

- Chair Smith shares the proposed updates to the current CoFS document.
 - Many minor “clean up” edits, such as additions or removal of linked electronic documents.
 - Implementation of the new Comprehensive Review process that was approved by the Senate in the Fall.
 - Codifying the comprehensive review process for all different career track positions.
 - Update review levels to match current practices.
 - Separation from comprehensive review and the retention recommendation process.
 - Set deadlines for a faculty to respond to each level of the comprehensive review process.
- The intention is to vote on these proposed changes during the final senate meeting on April 28th.

6. Teaching Portfolio Guide – John Tingerthal

Chair of the Council on Learning, John Tingerthal, leads a discussion on the Teaching Portfolio Guide.

- During the previous Full Senate Meeting, Chair Tingerthal requested to receive feedback about the Teaching Portfolio Guide. Chair Tingerthal states that the feedback received has been generally supportive, with two suggestions for revision.

- Chair Tingerthal provides basic information about the Teaching Portfolio Guide. He shares that this guide helps units develop department specific criteria that can be used to document effective teaching in the comprehensive review process.
- The Teaching Portfolio Guide contains five components:
 - SOE Summary
 - Self-assessment Narrative
 - Activities
 - Evidence
 - Growth and Development Strategy
- One question provided in the feedback of the guide was if this document is compatible with the FAAR system, which is the current software where faculty submit their comprehensive review documents and statements. Vice Provost Roger Bounds shares that settings and the layout of FAAR can be updated to align with the Teaching Portfolio Guide.
- Chair Tingerthal praises the flexibility of this document, and how it can be used across different areas of campus, such as online courses, in-person courses, etc.
- This document will be presented in the next NAU Leadership Summit.
- Senate President Ellis shares that three years ago she charged the Council on Learning with this project, with a goal to put the Teaching Academy's Best Practices Document into action in a Comprehensive Review Guide.
- Chair Michael Smith and Chair Tingerthal discuss how the Teaching Portfolio Guide pertains to academic freedom. Chair Tingerthal and the Council on Learning share evidence of how this document directly supports faculty and departments and allows the departments to select what is being reviewed in an organized fashion.

The Teaching Portfolio Guide is voted on and endorsed by the Faculty Senate with a vote of 25 yays, 4 nays, and 2 abstains.

7. Update: AI Cluster Hires & Website – John Georgas

Vice Provost John Georgas provides an update on NAU's AI Cluster Hire and Website updates.

- NAU has hired two additional faculty members focused on AI. The first hire will be joining the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation, and will be working on AI infused urban planning. This individual will also support students and faculty in the Sanghi College of Engineering. The second hire will be working in digital humanities and will be supporting the College of Arts and Letters.
- The provost office will be discussing the potential hire of more AI specialists in AY25-26.
- The Strategic Enrollment team has been updating the NAU website to improve marketing efforts about NAU to new students. With this update, there will be webpages that migrate from nau.edu, which is outward facing, to in.nau.edu, which is inward facing. These changes will allow NAU to optimize search engine results to better market NAU to potential students.
- Vice Provost Georgas shares an estimate of 33,000 webpages will be transitioned to inward facing. The provost office hopes that this transition is complete by August 1st.

- Vice Provost Georgas shares that deans will be drivers of this information and discussion, and that the web team will make revisions based on the deans' suggestions.
- Senate President Ellis suggests that the provost office create a system where certain entities outside of the university be provided with a short-term login to permit viewing of all inward-facing webpages.
- Vice Provost Georgas shares that in the second phase of this transition, departments will be able to develop a public facing webpage that prospective students can view. Department chairs and faculty will help provide information for each department's webpage.
- Provost Pugliesi shares that the website changes directly align with the President's commitment to restructuring university marketing to recruit more students to NAU.
- Vice Provost Georgas clarifies that newly transitioned inward facing webpages will be linked in the external facing webpages to permit accessibility of information desired by prospective students wanting more context on an academic pathway.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods restates the importance of her department's communication and public relations.

8. NAU Giving Day – Abraham Kelley & Debra Floyd

Abraham Kelley & Debra Floyd are unable to attend the senate meeting, so Senate President Ellis provides an update on NAU Giving Day.

- NAU has hosted Giving Day for the last eight years. The total amount of money raised from Giving Day is just over two million dollars. These funds directly support different colleges, departments, and student groups around campus. For Giving Day, donors can select specific departments or funds they are donating to.
- Senate President Ellis shares that the Giving Day team hopes to have more faculty engaged in Giving Day compared to previous years.
- Senate President Ellis suggests that the Giving Day team highlight scholarships that are not fully endowed. In doing this, it can help raise awareness and increase the support of these scholarships. Providing more information on these scholarships and who is eligible to receive the scholarship would also be beneficial to communicate.

9. Provost Report – Karen Pugliesi

Provost Karen Pugliesi gives the provost report.

- Provost Karen Pugliesi shares that in the previous ABOR meeting, NAU President Jose Cruz Rivera gave NAU's Operational and Financial Review Report. She shared that this presentation went well and was able to provide clear goals and challenges to the Board.
- The Regent's Cup was held at NAU two weeks ago and was a great success. One of NAU's Oxford Debate teams finished first amongst the three universities. Overall NAU placed 2nd out of the three universities.
- Dr. Janelle Chiasera will start as the new dean of the College of Health and Human Services in July.

- The College of Education search committee will convene to refine the leadership profile of the college.
- NAU has submitted an application to the Higher Learning Commission for approval of the Bachelor of Professional Studies degrees. A site visit will occur on June 9th and 10th for the degree programs of Hospitality Management and Engineering Technology.
- On April 22nd, NAU will submit the Quality Initiative Report focused on the 100% Career Ready Initiative.
- On April 25th, NAU will host an Undergraduate Symposium, where undergraduate students can present their research to the community, and select judges.
- This week, each college dean will share a short presentation with the NAU Foundation Board.
- The provost office will activate a “TIGER” Team, which will focus on how to adapt and support faculty who have their research funding disrupted. This may include a pivot of research programs in an effort to receive other sources of funding. Provost Pugliesi shares that the biggest challenge will be about staff who are grant funded. The provost office will be working with this group of staff to help support them and explore solutions if funding is cut.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods raises concern about the cutting of grant opportunities at NAU, such as the various Hispanic Serving Institution (HIS) Grants.
- Chair Smith and Vice Provost Roger Bounds will be hosting a Town Hall at NAU Yuma to help answer questions from faculty.
- Proposals for the 1st Year Together Program have been submitted to the provost office and Provost Pugliesi has endorsed their recommendations.
- NAU will continue to adapt to the changes in resources for AY25-26. Limited and strategic hiring will be one of the strategies that the provost office will exercise in the following year.
- Vice Provost for Academic Programming and Graduate Studies, Maribeth Watwood, will retire at the end of the academic year. Laura Bounds will lead this office next year, and other responsibilities will be distributed amongst other administrators. Deans will also take on responsibilities to support graduate programs as they are vital to the university’s success.
- Provost Pugliesi shares that she will provide the Faculty Senate with updates about international student enrollment for AY25-26.
- Provost Pugliesi restates NAU’s commitment to freedom of expression, academic freedom, and freedom of speech.

10. New Business/ Old Business/ Adjourn – Kate Ellis

The meeting is adjourned at 5:02pm.