

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes October 20th, 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, Roger Bounds, Karen Pugliesi, John Tingenthal, Blue Brazelton, Nick McKay, Juliana Suby, Andrew Stevens, Jerry Thull, Eesha Syeda, Jennifer Duis, Emily Manone, Gioia Woods, Amy Rushall, Luis Fernandez, Christina Baze, Maiah Jaskoski, Corey Oshikoya, Aimee Quinn, Marco Cabrera Geserick, Theresa Bierer, Karen Jarratt Snider, David Castellano, Ashley Vaughan, Andrea Trujillo Lerner, Melinda Treml, Lynn Jones, Rachel Starks, Igor Steinmacher, Kevin Tague, Samantha Clifford, Okim Kang, Shelly Thomas, Jill Navran, Jasmine Garani, Claudia Rodas, Bettie Coplan, Natasha Dmitrieva, Brandie Reiner, Jessie Fince, Seafha Ramos, Miriam Espinoza, Meghan McDowell, Sara Maier, Jenny Holzapfel, Megan McCoy, Mark Manone, David Folch, Jane Marks, Melissa Lawton, Kristin Greenwalt, Karl Krotke-Crandall, Abby Fisher.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis

The 10/20 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 8/25 & 9/22 Faculty Senate Minutes are voted on and **approved**.

3. Faculty Senate President Report – Kate Ellis

Faculty Senate President, Kate Ellis, shares her report.

- Senate President Ellis shares that the University of Arizona has respectfully declined to sign the Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education. ASU has recently been invited to a meeting regarding Compact as well.
- The Compact was opened to all universities and colleges last week.
- In response to the opening of the Compact, and numerous communications received from faculty regarding the Compact, Senate President Ellis drafted a Senate Resolution recommending President Cruz Rivera not sign on to the Compact. This Resolution is discussed amongst the Faculty Senate.
- Senate President Ellis shares that senate resolutions are not binding, but instead the Faculty Senate stating their values, and is for the university President and Provost, and ABOR.
- The Faculty Senate proceeds to make suggestions and edits to the Resolution.
- Provost Pugliesi shares that NAU President Jose Luis Cruz Rivera is receptive to hearing the Faculty Senate's position on the Compact.
- Senate President Ellis shares that it is incredibly important for faculty with differing views to share their opinions of this resolution and other senate business. She recommends that if faculty don't feel comfortable sharing their opinion in senate meetings, they can email Faculty.Senate@nau.edu and their feedback will be shared anonymously.
- A motion and second was given to vote on the Resolution.

- Senate President Ellis shares that after the edits and recommendations have come in, the final resolution will be sent out to the Full Senate, and its approval will be voted on October 21st via Qualtrix Survey.

The Senate Resolution regarding the Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education was voted on by the Senate and **approved**. The resolution can be viewed on the [Faculty Senate Website](#).

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.

- Chair of the Council on Learning, John Tingenthal, shares that the Council has been reviewing a proposal that would reorganize some senate-charged committees. He also states that the Council will continue to work on the implementation of the Teaching Portfolio Guidelines.
- Chair of the Council on Career Track Faculty Issues, Jill Navran, shares that the Council is reviewing the results of the 250+ survey responses that were collected last year. This feedback will guide the development of a report that will be shared with the FSEC and administration.
- Chair of the Council on Faculty Rights & Responsibilities, Luis Fernandez, shares that the Council will be meeting to discuss the curriculum process proposal and will be providing feedback to the FSEC.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods shares that the Faculty Senate & IAAAI are co-sponsoring a faculty forum called “AI on Campus.” The purpose of this forum is to convene faculty experts on AI and be a resource for faculty's questions.

5. Student Opinion Survey Task Force – John Tingenthal

Co-Chair of the Student Opinion Survey Task Force, John Tingenthal, discusses recommendations made to the Senate.

- John Tingenthal shares that a letter sent by 50 faculty was received in 2024, which raised concern about the current student opinion survey process. A task force was then convened to discuss these recurrent concerns and develop a set of recommendations.
- A survey was sent out to chairs and deans in each college to collect information about how student opinion surveys are used and weighed in the comprehensive review process. The results showed that there are significant differences in how each college views these surveys.
- The Task Force came up with three unanimous suggestions for the Faculty Senate to consider:
 - Surveys should only be available for the last two weeks of the session, and surveys should be closed prior to the session ending. The Task Force received some information that in the past there have been technical issues that have led to students being able to fill out the survey after final grades have been submitted.

- Faculty should be able to choose whether they discuss student opinion surveys in their comprehensive review. Removing student opinions surveys is not an option, as they are required by ABOR. Co-chair Tingerthal shares that although faculty would have the choice, it would be beneficial for faculty to address student opinion survey feedback during the comprehensive review process.
 - Student opinion surveys should be weighted at 20% or less in the comprehensive review process.
- The Senate will charge a second Task Force to create a document that encourages open discussion amongst departments about the shortcomings of student opinion surveys, along with best practices that can be implemented.
- The Task Force came up with three suggestions that were not unanimous amongst the group:
 - Suggestion to remove the open-ended questions in the student opinion surveys, as this is where hurtful statements are made. This suggestion was not unanimous, as some faculty shared that this section was the most valuable in terms of feedback collected. The FSEC did not endorse the removal of the open-ended questions.
 - Discontinue automatic postings of surveys in Canvas.
 - Provide guidance to students regarding the best way to provide feedback and avoid bias.
- Senate President Ellis shares that the FSEC has discussed potential ways for faculty members to appeal specific comments which are abusive in student opinion survey answers. If the appeal is accepted, the specific comment would be redacted from the permanent record of that comment. The concerns about this suggestion are questions about free speech for students. Provost Pugliesi suggests potential logistical problems surrounding the large number of open-ended responses collected by surveys.
- Senator Ashley Vaughan states that she agrees with the sentiments shared by Senate President Ellis & Provost Pugliesi. She recommends that limitations and uses of student opinion surveys be added to CoFS, to help faculty and comprehensive review committees better understand its role.
- The Task Force will be charged with: 1: developing guidance for students to be added to the instructions of the survey on the purpose of the surveys; 2: developing guidance for department CRCs and Chairs on the use and weighting of students opinion surveys in the review process; 3: explore an appeal, review, and redaction process for abusive comments in the open ended survey questions.
- Senate President Ellis shares that discussion on the student opinion surveys will continue into next semester.

6. **NSSE/FSSE – Roger Bounds**

Vice Provost Roger Bounds shares the results of the NSSE & FSSE Survey.

- For context, the FSSE & NSSE are two surveys that were distributed to faculty & students in previous years.
- After the results were collected, a taskforce was put together to examine these results and share what NAU could learn from them.

- Some key takeaways were:
 - Affinity for the university rose from a student's first year to their senior year.
 - First year students reported more positive interactions with university advising compared to seniors.
 - Faculty reported higher levels of critical evaluation and reflective learning in their upper division courses while students did not.
 - Students reported higher collaboration and diverse discussions than faculty believed there had been.
 - Students reported that they would like more discussion on how classroom materials and assignments relate to potential careers.
 - Students reported that they spend more time preparing for class than faculty believe they do.
- Vice Provost Bounds mentions the importance of intentionality and describing those intentions to their students.

7. **General Studies Program – Emily Manone**

General Studies Program Director, Emily Manone, provides an update regarding the General Studies Program.

- For context, the General Studies Program launched Fall 2025.
- As conducted in previous years, NAU, U of A, and ASU organize a Tri University General Education Assessment. This assessment focuses on written communication, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, and American Institution Civics. An internal report for NAU will be drafted and shared with the Senate in Spring. This year, they are reporting on American Institutions and Civics to the Board.
- The General Studies Program Alignment Project will continue for the upcoming year, and an in-person Workshop is offered on Thursday, November 13th, 3:30-5:00pm. The next course submission deadline is on December 15th.
- General Studies Director Emily Manone encourages the Senate to provide feedback on the roll-out of the new program.

8. **Provost Report – Karen Pugliesi**

Provost Karen Pugliesi gives the provost report.

- Provost Karen Pugliesi shares that NAU is still fiercely committed to academic freedom.
- The provost office has developed a new dashboard to help manage and organize the Professional Program Reassignment Process (PPRP). There are currently 13 applications pending review. Thirty-six sabbatical applications have also been received across campus.
- Last year, the TIGER team was created to address issues surrounding requirements for promotion and tenure, along with supporting individuals who may be affected by changes in federal funding.
- Provost Pugliesi restates NAU's commitment to faculty and staff compensation.

- In support of strategic finance, the dean of the Cline Library has been charged with examining current resources and subscriptions and propose potential cuts due to budgetary constraints
- The provost office will continue to look at optimizing summer and winter sessions to increase potential revenue.
- Administration convened the Regent's Professors to discuss what it means for NAU to be an R1 university. This group was also tasked with creating recommendations for how NAU can better support teacher scholars across the university, as many areas of campus have different funds and grants available for research.
- First Year Together will facilitate a workshop with counseling services to educate faculty on how to support first-year students with mental health challenges.
- The provost office will continue to work on degree program expectations and conceptualizing how to frame learning outcomes throughout programs. We will also continue to look at curricular complexity to ensure that students have the greatest likelihood of succeeding.
- The College of Arts & Letters (CAL) will complete a dean search this month. The Franke College of Business (FCB) will organize a dean search at the end of the academic year. The College of Education (COE) has been screening candidates for their current dean search.

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

The meeting is adjourned at 4:51pm.