

Faculty Senate Executive Committee Meeting
Minutes
March 2nd, 2026

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 3:03pm.

Those Attending: Kate Ellis, Gioia Woods, Luis Fernandez, John Tingerthal, Juliana Suby, Jill Navran, Lisa Bliss, Roger Bounds, Karen Pugliesi, Hillary Stowell, Yvonne Luna, Michael Smith, Andrew Stevens, Karen Jarratt Snider, Claudia Rodas, Laura Umphrey, Eesha Syeda, Miriam Espinoza.

2. Approval of Agenda and Minutes – Kate Ellis

The 3/2/26 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 2/2 FSEC 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 Faculty Senate needs to assess senate-charged committees. College Curriculum Committees are not currently senate-charged, but complete work that falls under faculty guided policy. Further conversations will occur regarding whether these committees should be senate-charged or not.
- Kerry Thompson reviewed the Curriculum Proposal Form and discovered many areas where the form is asking faculty to fill out information that is not under their purview. The goal is to change this form to better support faculty in the curricular process.
- Senate President Ellis shares that the next Faculty Senate President will continue to work on refinement of the curricular process.
- Senate President Ellis shares that there will be new individuals elected to the President and Vice President role of the Faculty Senate. She recommends that any interested FSEC members reach out to her. The FSEC recommends that the nominees for Faculty Senate President are invited to the upcoming FSEC meeting in April. Senate President Ellis will also brief nominees about important senate information.

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.

- Faculty Senate Admin, Andrew Stevens, shares that college senate elections are due, and the senate office will be compiling the results into an updated roster.
- Senate Parliamentarian, Claudia Rodas, shares that the Bylaws Committee is revising proposed updates for the Senate Bylaws regarding attendance and the use of substitutes when voting.
- Chair of the Council on Career Track Faculty Issues, Jill Navran, shares that nominations for the Career Track Spotlight are closed.

5. Student Opinion Surveys – Michael Smith

Chair of the Student Opinion Survey task force, Michael Smith, discusses recommendations to the FSEC.

- Michael Smith shares updates with the recommendations for Student Opinion Surveys.
- Chair Smith shares that ASNAU provided a recommendation to encourage the completion of student surveys in class time to increase participation.
- The FSEC discusses the potential of AI-generated responses on student opinion surveys.
- The FSEC suggests that the recommendations be split into four sections, in case the senate is ready to vote on parts of the recommendations, while still being able to discuss others.
 - A: Adding a header to the student opinion survey form.
 - B: Sending organized information to faculty members that can be presented to students via email or in Canvas.
 - C: Sending an email to faculty members that provides best practices on Student Opinion Surveys.
 - D: Sending an email to chairs, deans, directors, and comprehensive review committees that provides more information on the process and what was discussed in the Faculty Senate.
- Ex-Officio Gioia Woods recommends that the committee embeds information from the Inclusive Excellence in Teaching Documents into these recommendations.

6. ASNAU Resolutions - ASNAU

Members of ASNAU present a potential resolution regarding the requirement of student attendance during Thanksgiving week.

- For context, Thanksgiving and the following Friday are school holidays. ASNAU is proposing the Wednesday before Thanksgiving becomes a school holiday so that students can travel home to be with their families for this holiday.
- ASNAU surveyed both undergraduate and graduate students and found that many individuals travel home for these holidays and often miss assignments and work on Tuesday and Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving.
- FSEC member Juliana Suby shares concerns about students leaving even earlier in the week if Wednesday is made a holiday.
- Provost Pugliesi shares the policy challenges that arise with ABOR when creating a new university holiday. She recommends that ASNAU change their resolution to recommend that faculty offer asynchronous opportunities so that students can have flexible learning opportunities when traveling for Thanksgiving.
- Senate President Ellis and the FSEC voice their support for Provost Pugliesi's suggestion of providing recommendations to faculty rather than trying to make Wednesday a university holiday.
- FSEC member John Tingerthal also shares that university closure entails that health services and other important resources would be closed.

- ASNAU will continue to work on this resolution, with a goal of presenting it to the full Senate later this semester.

7. Provost Report – Karen Pugliesi

Provost Karen Pugliesi gives the provost report.

- Provost Pugliesi shares that a task force focused on reviewing and updating NAU's degree search webpage has completed their work and created recommendations to improve the current webpage.
- In Fall of 2026, NAU will only have one commencement ceremony, previously there were two ceremonies.
- The Ethnic Studies and Gender Studies programs will be combined into one department. This department will be known as the Department of Social Transformation.
- New programs will be presented to the Board of Regents in April.
- NAU is in the final year focusing on reshaping program portfolios. Colleges will be presenting information about changes to existing programs.
- The provost office and colleges will continue to work on implementing strategies to incrementally reduce budgets to adapt to enrollment changes. Some of these changes include updating course schedules to better utilize faculty time, making shifts to faculty research-related workloads, slowing down the sabbatical and professional development project reassignments processes, and reducing hiring for the upcoming year.
- The provost office will continue to monitor and change graduate student tuition waivers for the upcoming academic year.
- NAU will continue to develop partnerships with other countries to increase international student enrollment.
- Provost Pugliesi shares that the provost office will continue to monitor program portfolios with collaboration from the Faculty Senate.

8. Statewide Sites – Yvonne Luna

Vice Provost Yvonne Luna provides an update regarding NAU's Statewide sites.

- NAU has been working on optimizing statewide campuses and programs. Recently, community colleges across Arizona began offering bachelor's degrees. This change in competition has greatly impacted NAU's statewide student enrollment.
- Currently, NAU's statewide campuses are configured into 4 geographic locations, Southwestern, Central, Southeastern, and Northern. Vice Provost Luna shares the goal of consolidating these programs into 2 distinct regions, Flagstaff and Desert Campuses.
- NAU will begin to close our partnerships with various campuses in Phoenix with a goal of reducing the money spent on leasing agreements. Many of the faculty at these locations are part-time with NAU and full time with the respective community college, so they won't be heavily impacted by the closure of these sites.

9. **New Business/ Old Business/ Adjourn – Kate Ellis**
The meeting is adjourned at 5:14pm.