

**Faculty Senate Meeting  
Minutes  
March 23rd, 2026**

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, Gioia Woods, Michael Smith, Christina Baze, Jennifer Duis, Catherine Harpst, Maiah Jaskoski, Emily Manone, Kyle Winfree, Jerry Thull, Rachel Starks, Theresa Bierer, Shelly Thomas, Abby Fisher, Sara Maier, Jessie Finch, Karl Krotke-Crandall, Gina Nabours, Juliana Suby, Karen Jarratt-Snider, Aimee Quinn, Marco Cabrera Geserick, Nick McKay, Jasmine Garani, Lisa Bliss, Seafha Ramos, Blue Brazelton, Ashley Vaughan, Bettie Coplan, Corey Oshikoya, John Tingerthal, Melissa Lawton, Natasha Dmitrieva, Miriam Espinoza, Brandie Reiner, Igor Steinmacher, Meghan McDowell, Andrea Trujillo Lerner, Jeff Strain, Chris Sthultz, Kathleen Carpenter, Jenny Holzapfel, Dale Cummings, Heather Clark, Andrew Stevens, Hillary Stowell, Eesha Syeda, Bonita Switala, Marjaneh Gilpatrick, Yvonne Luna, Karen Pugliesi, Roger Bounds, Melinda Treml, Corrine McCawley, Lynn Jones, Mark Manone.

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

The 3/23/26 Agenda is voted on and **approved**. The 2/16 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 NAU's School of Informatics, Computing, and Cyber Systems is proposing bachelor's program in Artificial Intelligence and is also proposing a new AI certificate program with a goal to involve faculty across campus in the creation and execution of this program.
- The Arizona Board of Regents has a meeting starting on Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup> in Tucson.
- ASNAU has been working on a resolution regarding Thanksgiving Break which will be discussed further in April.

**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 President Ellis shares that the Faculty Senate is looking for a volunteer to serve on the Parking Appeals Board.
- Senate Vice President, Blue Brazelton, shares that college election results are due, and a new senate roster will be created with the results. Internal senate elections will also be in April, and he recommends that any senators interested in Faculty Senate leadership positions reach out to him directly.

- Chair of the Council on Learning, John Tingerthal, shares that he has been presenting the Teaching Portfolio Guide to various departments across campus.
- Chair of the Council on Career Track Faculty Issues, Jill Navran, shares that nominations for the Career Track Spotlight are closed. The council will host a webinar in April focused on the results of a survey distributed to Career Track Faculty last spring.
- Senate Treasurer, Lisa Bliss, shares that Faculty Senate Scholarship applications are due this Thursday.

#### **5. Bylaws Update – Maiah Jaskoski**

Senator Maiah Jaskoski provides an update from the Bylaws Committee.

- The Senate Bylaws Committee was prompted to work on two separate bylaws issues that have come up recently. The first being the procedures for senator substitutes and if they are permitted to vote. The second being the procedures for electronic voting, and whether only attending senators should be allowed to vote.
- The Bylaws Committee suggests that senators' substitutes do not count towards any quorum and therefore cannot vote, and that all senate votes occur during the meeting and close prior to the end of the meeting.
- To provide more context, the current voting system allows for senators who are not actively participating in the meeting to vote remotely.
- The Senate discusses processes where the vote is private for only senators to vote at the time of the meeting, while also only allowing for senators actively attending the meeting to vote. Senators recommend various processes, such as breakout rooms in Zoom, hosting webinars on Zoom rather than fully open meetings, and sending out the survey only to the senators who actively attended the meeting.
- Senators voice concerns regarding the representation of smaller colleges: if there are no voting substitutes, some colleges may be underrepresented or unrepresented in a vote if the selected senator cannot attend. Senate President Ellis shares an idea where small colleges with one representative can select a proxy or alternative senator, who would have permission to vote if the elected senator could not attend. Senators also recommend that the Dean's office of each college be involved in the selection and approval of an alternative or proxy senator.
- The discussion on this topic will continue in April.

#### **6. Veterans Awareness Training – Pete Yanka**

Pete Yanka provides information regarding the Veterans Awareness Training.

- Pete Yanka shares that every two to three years the Arizona Department of Veterans Services requests that NAU goes through a series of steps to become a veteran-supportive campus. These steps include training, implementation of best practices, and other communications. The goal is to have 500 individuals at NAU to take the Veteran Awareness Training. This training takes one hour to complete.
- Senate President Ellis shares her support for this training in support veterans and non-veteran students.

## **7. Student Opinion Surveys – Michael Smith**

Chair of the Student Opinion Survey task force, Michael Smith, discusses recommendations for the Faculty Senate.

- To provide context, last year a letter was presented with the signatures for 50+ faculty sharing concern about the student opinion survey process. A task force was convened to address these concerns and create recommendations.
- Michael Smith shares updates with the recommendations for Student Opinion Surveys, split into four different sections.
  - 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.
- Senator Maiah Jaskoski mentions concerns from SBS regarding the suggestion that the student's feedback is needed to change the course because there may be scenarios in which the student believes feedback on the structure of the course is unnecessary and this language may push them to be more critical.
- Chair Smith shares concerns about removing more language from Item A as this may reduce its impact or undermine the intent of Item A.
- The Faculty Senate agrees on the vocabulary changes to Item A.
- The Faculty Senate discusses language regarding Item B.
- Senators recommend clarifying that survey responses are anonymous which may increase survey participation. Senate President Ellis shares that providing examples of how student feedback has been utilized in the past has also increased participation.
- Senate President Ellis shares that Item A will be voted on during today's meeting. Items B, C, & D will be discussed further in future Senate meetings.

**Item A of the Student Opinion Survey Task Force Recommendations is voted on and approved by 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 four geographic locations, Southwestern, Central, Southeastern, and Northern. Vice Provost Luna shares the goal of consolidating these programs into two distinct regions, Flagstaff and Desert Campuses.
- NAU will begin to close our partnerships with various campuses in Phoenix with a goal of reducing leasing agreement expenditures. Many of the faculty at these

locations are part-time with NAU and full-time with the respective community college, so they will not be heavily impacted by the closure of these sites.

- These partnerships will be consolidated between four sites within the Central region and two sites within the southern region. More information on these sites will be shared once finalized.
- Vice Provost Luna shares interest in partnerships with Estrella Mountain and Glendale Community Colleges.

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

Provost Karen Pugliesi gives the provost report.

- Provost Pugliesi shares that she was amazed by the Department of Theater's Great Survival Debate. She offers her thanks for the event, and gives credit to Dana Ernst, who won the event with his presentation.
- NAU has six program proposals for the upcoming Arizona Board of Regents Committee meetings. NAU will be presenting fee proposal changes to ABOR as well.
- The Regents Cup will be this Friday and Saturday. Last year, NAU's Oxford Debate team placed first. Provost Pugliesi shares that she looks forward to this event, as it a great opportunity for students to create community with other universities and regents.
- NAU received approval from the Higher Learning Commission regarding two partnerships for graduate programs in Singapore.
- NAU launched a formal effort to prepare for the Higher Learning Commission's comprehensive evaluation which will take place in the Fall of 2027. Six working groups will be formed, with a goal of focusing on different aspects of the review. In Fall, there will be significant opportunities for faculty to participate in these working groups.
- The Provost Office has been working to address concerns regarding the impact of the website restructuring.
- There is an upcoming professional achievement event, where faculty across campus are presented with awards.
- In Fall of 2026, there will be one commencement ceremony rather than two.
- The Faculty Senate discusses potential concerns regarding upcoming changes to advising in colleges.

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

**The meeting is adjourned at 5:13pm.**