

Academic Faculty Senate (2025-2026) Meeting MINUTES 08/22/25; 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Academic Senate	Call to order at 1:34 pm	ZOOM																				
Members Present	<table border="1"> <tr><td>Eric York (Chair)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Jessica Rowe (Vice Chair)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Jaspreet Gill (Senator Carson)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Brigitte Dillet (Senator Fallon/Douglas)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Heather Reardon (NAH Senator)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Curtis Kupferschmid (Senator LA 1)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Christian Copley Salem (Senator LA 2)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Mary Gillespie (Senator LA 3)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Patrick Bell (Senator WCTE/Recorder)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Martin Schmidt (Past Chair)</td><td>Absent</td></tr> </table>		Eric York (Chair)	Present	Jessica Rowe (Vice Chair)	Present	Jaspreet Gill (Senator Carson)	Present	Brigitte Dillet (Senator Fallon/Douglas)	Present	Heather Reardon (NAH Senator)	Present	Curtis Kupferschmid (Senator LA 1)	Present	Christian Copley Salem (Senator LA 2)	Present	Mary Gillespie (Senator LA 3)	Present	Patrick Bell (Senator WCTE/Recorder)	Present	Martin Schmidt (Past Chair)	Absent
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Members Absent	Jacob Council																					
Guests	<p>Kyle Dalpe, Dana Ryan, Jeff Downs, Troy Wadsworth, Dianne Hilliard, Christian Copley Salem, Matt Anderson, David Jacowitz, Jack Sato, Scott Morrison, Winnie Kortemeier, Paul Sebold, Margaret Craig, Alejandra Livingston</p>																					

Agenda Topic	Approval of Minutes (May)
Action Taken	Action
Summary of Discussion	Tabled to review at next meeting to give time to review.

Agenda Topic	4. Executive Updates (Dr. K. Dalpe)
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment: Numbers look strong; updated projections to come. • Leadership: New chancellor in place. • Legislative Planning: WNC preparing for 2027 session; systems team visit scheduled for October. • Board of Regents: Meeting in Elko in September; Kyle will present WNC metrics. • Campus Projects: Major renovation underway (completion Fall 2026); multiple improvements in progress across campuses. • Grants: Awards received for program improvements. • Transparency Request: Rachelle asked for documented meeting minutes showing fund use.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Response: Kyle confirmed planning meetings will be announced; open meetings include observatory, cafeteria, and Douglas Nursing projects. ○ Clarification: Rachelle emphasized request for accessible meeting notes. ● Project Management: Kyle noted WNC is requesting authority to manage projects directly for faster progress.
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Agenda Topic	5. Academic and Student Affairs Updates (Dr. D. Ryan)
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<p>Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concurrent/Dual Enrollment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Progress toward NACEP accreditation. ○ Faculty input central; slow rollout planned. ○ Faculty workgroups to design full model by Fall 2026. ● Annual Plans: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New directors and Microsoft implementation underway. ○ Annual plan due date set for 9/19. ○ New standardized form proposed for consistency; this year’s plans will use current forms, with collaborative development of new forms for future use. ● Enrollment & Aid: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Enrollment looks strong. ○ Student payment drop process streamlined. ○ \$2.9 million in aid distributed to 1,400 students. ● Student Email Issues: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Important emails going to junk folders. ○ IT Response (Troy/David): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Working on solutions and training students on managing email filters. ▪ Tools will help redirect essential emails to inbox. ▪ Balancing security to block fraudulent emails remains a priority. ○ Winnie K. Question: Can MyWNC emails integrate with Outlook? ○ Troy’s Response: Whitelisting and AI-driven fraud detection in place, but technical challenges exist; enhanced mail security needed to prevent breaches.

Agenda Topic	6. Update: Bookstore RFP process (Dr. J. Downs)
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<p>Bookstore & Textbooks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bookstore RFP: WNC issued a request for proposals for a new bookstore vendor; currently ranking vendors and conducting interviews. • Textbook Options: Considering formation of an ad hoc committee to improve responsiveness to textbook needs. • Faculty Concerns: Differences noted between full-time and adjunct faculty textbook selections for the same courses.

Agenda Topic	7. Update: Classroom Scheduling Screens (Troy Wadsworth)
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<p>Digital Display Screens</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper schedules outside classrooms will be replaced with digital displays to provide up-to-date information (e.g., class cancellations, room changes). • Screens will also support alerts and emergency notifications (e.g., active shooter, campus threats). • Rachelle B. Question: Will classroom numbers be replaced? • Troy's Response: Yes—digital displays will include room numbers, with Braille as required; physical numbers will remain above or below the screens.

Agenda Topic	8-9. Policy Revisions and Reviews
Action Taken	Action
Summary of Discussion	<p>8. <u>First Reading</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 3-2-7: Sabbatical Leave – Brigitte Dillet Postponed until next meeting • Policy 4-5-1-2: Hiring Academic and Administrative Faculty <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <u>Policy 4-5-1-2 Discussion:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Title Change: Rename <i>Affirmative Action Officer</i> to <i>Equal Opportunity Officer</i>. ▪ Concern: Moving too many processes to the online recruitment hub may limit the

ability to review and oversee policy changes.

- Red Flags:
 - Committees sharing rankings.
 - Removal of tenure-track positions handled only with president/VP involvement.
- Clarification: This is not a significant policy change, but rather a shift of processes to the recruitment hub—raising oversight concerns.
- Recommendation: Reject the policy as written due to ambiguity. Need: Greater clarity on streamlining, where policy changes will reside, and how oversight will be maintained.

No Vote: Recommendation to reject policy as written and send back to College Council to address ambiguity I process and concerns of process being moved online (website) without oversight of potential changes with out Faculty Senate review.

Second Reading

- **Policy 3-5-1: Grade Appeal – Dianne Hilliard**

- Policy 3-5-1 Discussion:

- **Policy Updates**

- Policies need revision and clearer language.
- Question raised about setting up committees when faculty are off-contract—should this be required, and if so, should compensation be addressed? (To be discussed with Dr. Ryan).

- **Calendar vs. Business Days**

- Current policies use *calendar days* rather than *business/instructional days*.
- Business days are seen as more efficient and consistent across policies.
- Senate recommends using business days instead of calendar days to be consistent with other policies.

- **Grade Appeal Process**

- Concern about the increase in days allowed for grade appeals (currently **30 days**, previously **15**).
- Rationale: Coordinating faculty and student schedules requires additional time.

- Heather R. asked if delays impact student advancement; Diane confirmed no issues so far.
- Suggestion: Shift to **25 business days** for appeals to balance efficiency and consistency.

Motion: Policy 3-5-1: Grade Appeal. Seek clarification with VP office on of contract work/compensation for faculty to participate in grade appeal process. Change 30 calendar days for appeal process to 25 business days.

Bridgette D. – move to approve
 Curtis K – second
 Passed unanimously

9. Policy 3-5-2: Student Grievance – Dianne Hilliard

- Policy 3-5-2 Discussion:
 - **Process Length & Timing**
 - Concerns with overall length of process.
 - Suggestion: adjust timelines to business days (consistent with grade appeal policy).
 - **Appeal Process**
 - Question: Is the decision final, or can students appeal further?
 - Discussion on whether final decision should rest with VP or allow appeal to President.
 - Suggestion: Appeal policies should be consistent across all processes.
 - **Grievance Process Clarification**
 - Current process: informal resolution → grievance filed with VP → committee formed to hear both sides → VP makes final decision.
 - Nursing policy differs: formal grievance → director → VP appeal → committee → VP decision.
 - Concern: all student grievances should follow the same policy.
 - Policy change would expand to include grievances against administrative faculty in addition to academic faculty.
 - **Legal Review**
 - Question raised if WNC legal has reviewed the policy—answer: not yet.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If appeal goes to the President, the President may uphold or modify the VP’s decision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Representation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Suggestion to include an advocate option for students. ○ NSHE policy allows advocates to be present, but they cannot argue the student’s case. <p>Motion: Shift timelines from 30 calendar days to 25 business days to be consistent with grade appeals process. Allow appeals to the President (i.e. to appeal the decision of the VP office). President has the right to hear appeal or uphold the VP office decision. Add provision and process for students to file a grievance for not only academic but administrative faculty as well. Add provision for student advocate to be present for appeals following NSHE policy.</p> <p>Heather R. – move to approve Brigitte– second Passed unanimously</p>
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Agenda Topic	10. NFA Updates (R. Bassen and H. Reardon)
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Issues raised about potential breach of contract, particularly with annual plan changes made without faculty discussion or input. • NFA Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NFA provides legal/attorney support to members. ○ Negotiations are still ongoing. • Faculty Involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Seeking more faculty participation in supporting roles, such as reviewing contracts for clarity and understanding. ○ NFA will reach out to faculty for assistance. • Collective Bargaining <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Negotiations underway with four colleges currently in collective bargaining processes. • Membership Promotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encouragement for new faculty to join NFA.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updates on upcoming NFA processes will be communicated with faculty.
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Agenda Topic	11. Senate Committee Structure and Membership
Action Taken	Discussion/Possible Action
Summary of Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Senate Committee Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Current membership list needs updating for accuracy. ○ Reviewed committee activity. • Suggestions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rotate committee membership. ○ Update Faculty Senate bylaws. ○ Consolidate committees where possible (will check with Martin, former Senate chair, on prior work in this area). • Reminder: Committee chairs cannot be senators. • Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Status and updates to be reviewed at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

Agenda Topic	12. PDC Process (R. Bassen)
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<p>Presentation of Pre-Tenure process</p> <p>WHAT IS THE PRE-TENURE PROCESS?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Faculty-driven process used to evaluate pre-tenure, probationary faculty until the point that they apply for tenure. ▪ Can apply after 3 years (in their 4th year) or 4 years (in their 5th year). Faculty must be awarded with tenure by the end of their 5th year. ▪ It is an internal process within academic faculty senate that <u>does not</u> involve administration until the day the portfolio is sent to them in the application phase.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR PRE-TENURE FACULTY:

- Tenure is a privilege granted by NSHE (Board of Regents).
- Each candidate for tenure is "accountable for successful completion of the tenure process [including] all documentation, meeting deadlines, and fulfilling all procedures."
- Ratings used for teaching and service are: excellent ("A"), commendable ("B"), satisfactory ("C"), and unsatisfactory.
- Minimum to "pass" in first two years for teaching = satisfactory
- Must achieve excellent in teaching and satisfactory (or higher) in service in their final year before applying for tenure.

AD HOC COMMITTEE:

- New tenure-track faculty will be assigned an ad hoc committee with two tenured faculty: chair and member.
- One additional faculty member joins as advocate in their second year.
- The ad hoc serve as mentors and evaluators.
- All members must observe at least one class each per year and write an observation report for each observation.
- The chair will write an end-of-year report with an annual rating for both teaching and service.

PDC IS A FACULTY SENATE COMMITTEE THAT OVERSEES THE PDC PROCESS

- Subcommittee of academic faculty senate. Oversees the progress and process of the pre-tenure faculty.
- They set up the ad hoc committees.
- After each year in the process, they will interview the faculty, review their portfolio, and make recommendations back to them.
- Pre-tenure faculty will also receive an annual report from the PDC.
- Make the tenure recommendations to the president.

WHAT CAN PDC DO TO IMPROVE THE PROCESS?

- Some suggestions from other faculty include:
 - Creating a portfolio folder template for new faculty to copy which would help with consistent organization
 - Reinstating a central point to reference for the guidelines, responsibilities of committees, etc. due to the Microsoft shift (Maybe setting up a Sharepoint?)
 - Updating guidelines with more first-year faculty support like a first semester check in process?

Recommendations: To have clear examples of expectations available for new tenure track faculty.

Agenda Topic	13. Replacement of Vacated Fallon/Douglas Senator Seat (E.York)
Action Taken	Action
Summary of Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eric was elected as Fallon senator, but took over as senate chair thus the need for a new Fallon senator. New Fallon senator will be Brigitte Dillet <p>Motion: Brigitte Dillet to become the new Fallon senator Jessica Rowe– move to approve Heather Reardon– second Passed unanimously</p>

Agenda Topic	14. Adjunct Faculty Senator Selection (E.York) .
Action Taken	Action
Summary of Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two suggested adjunct faculty to fill the senator position. Volunteers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jacob Council (business) Chelsey Council (English). \$70 stipend for adjunct per meeting attendance. 8 meeting per year. <p>Motion: Jacob Council and Kelsey Penrose to fill the vacant adjunct senator positions for Carson and Fallon/Douglas. Will clarify which new senator will take each role. Brigitte D. – move to approve Curtis K. – second Unanimously approved</p>

Agenda Topic	Chair Report (Eric York)
Action Taken	Info/Discussion
Summary of Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post-Tenure Review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> June BOR meeting: Regent requested integration of a post-tenure review process into the NSHE handbook. Concerns: Primarily from students, targeting removal of a specific professor. Clarification: Post-tenure review already exists under NSHE policy (Chapter 6 – faculty discipline).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Discussion: Desire to update Chapter 6 with faculty senate chairs involved. ○ Issue identified as institution-specific, not system-wide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Support & Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Eric emphasizes support for faculty regarding policy and operational challenges (e.g., student email issues, annual plans). ○ Example: Security measures vs. effective student communication (junk mail filtering). ○ Concerns with policy changes introduced without faculty input. • Grading & Timelines <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Winnie K. raised discussion on communication requirements for student timelines and grading, particularly in Open Entry courses. • Ongoing Concerns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Shared governance, administrative decision-making, and communication remain key issues.
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Agenda Topic	Public Comment
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	None

Agenda Topic	Adjournment
Action Taken	Unanimously Adjourned at 4:15 pm
Summary of Discussion	No discussion
Assignments/Potential Agenda Items	
Comments/Information	Submitted by Patrick Bell, Recorder