

Academic Faculty Senate (2024-2025) Meeting MINUTES 12/13/24; 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Academic Senate	Call to order at 1:30 pm	ZOOM
Members Present	Jessica Rowe, Heather Reardon, Curtis Kupferschmid, John Duerk, Patrick Bell, Rachelle Bassen, Martin Schmidt, Jaspreet Gill, Tim Mayo, Mary Gillespie, Robin Eppard	
Members Absent		
Guests	JW Lazzari, Lisa Gallo Swan, Joshua Fleming, Dana Ryan	

Agenda Topic	1. Approval of Minutes for MM/DD/YY
Action Taken	Action
Summary of Discussion	Curtis Kupferschmid – move to approve John Duerk – second Passed unanimously

Agenda Topic	2. Executive updates (Dalpe)
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An all-campus email will be sent to faculty/staff for a successful semester. Good shape with overall enrollment. • A lot going on in the spring. Welcome back will be via Zoom (scheduled). • Will discuss the governor’s budget (legislative year). Will look for continued support for community college funding, cost of living raises for faculty/staff, addressing short falls etc. • Capital construction projects and funding formulas for CCs will be discussed. Bookstore renovation/repurposing. Looking for bidders (must be lowest) can lead to delays.

Agenda Topic	3. LAS Transition Item Update (J. Lazzari; Dany Ryan, L. Gallo Swan)
Action Taken	Info/Discussion
Summary of Discussion	<i>Introduction of J. Lazzari as the interim Director of the Liberal Arts and Sciences (LAS) division. The discussion will focus on</i>

his vision for the division during the transition period and provide an opportunity for faculty to offer feedback and insights.

- Presentation on approach to LA director search. HR search process is underway with 60-day job posting to vet a pool of candidates. A committee will be formed for faculty and staff forums. Interview, presentation, and finalist will be scheduled. Possible process will run until June 2025. The goal is to hire for the best fit for the college.
- JW as interim director of LAS division with assistance from Lisa Gallo Swan as coordinator. Team approach will be taken. JW and Lisa will continue to work in their regular capacities in addition to Liberal Arts role.
- Interim Organization Structure



- JW and Lisa will manage split areas (JW division oversight; Lisa support with division oversight). Scott will continue to provide insight and support. VPASA academic affairs will provide high level oversight.

Duties & Responsibilities

VPASA	Interim Director	Interim Coordinator
Academic Affairs Oversight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Search Oversight • Consultation • Guidance • Academic Planning Position Supervision • Student Relations Supervision • Advising and Access Supervision 	Division Oversight <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Assistant Supervision • Faculty Evaluations • Student Concerns • Fall 2025 Schedule Planning • Dual Enrollment Planning • High School Affiliate Credential Reviews • Budget Oversight • Human Resource Items • Observatory • Grant Oversight w/ Cynthia • Faculty Point of Contact (see breakdown) 	Division Support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dual Enrollment Planning • Fall 2025 Schedule Planning Support • Faculty Evaluations • Student Concerns • Art Gallery • Theater • Cadaver Lab • General Division Support • Faculty Point of Contact (see breakdown)

- Open door policy for communication/questions.
- Questions: None

Agenda Topic	4. Canvas Access for Peer Evaluations
Action Taken	Info/Discussion
Summary of Discussion	Discussion on establishing clear protocols for online course access during peer evaluations. Concerns have been raised regarding unfettered access to online courses, particularly in comparison to the controlled nature of in-person observations, where observers provide notice, state their purpose, and engage in collegial conversations post-observation. Faculty Senate will

explore ways to balance the need for access with maintaining professional autonomy for the faculty being observed, ensuring their materials and communications are shared intentionally. This discussion will also address how these protocols can align with broader mentorship goals for pre-tenured faculty while protecting the integrity of the online classroom space.

Discussion:

1. Concerns About Unfettered Access: There was general agreement that granting evaluators unrestricted access to online courses could compromise the integrity student instructor confidentiality. Discussion emphasized the need to balance access with privacy and the ability to effectively evaluate an instructor. Overall discussion highlighted that no one is advocating for full access to instructor courses, but evaluators should have the discretion to view necessary components for effective evaluation.

2. Need for Tiered or Limited Access

- John D argued for tiered access, especially to discussions, which are crucial for evaluating adjuncts. He clarified that access should be limited to assignments and interactions relevant to evaluation, excluding private communications (e.g., emails).
- Rachelle B and Amy G clarified that CANVAS only allows access to course design elements, not discussions or student interactions.
- Patrick B and Jessica Rowe shared that screen-sharing via Zoom has been used successfully as a workaround, allowing evaluators to see key course elements without full access.

3. **Concerns About Privacy and Student Rapport**

- Mary G emphasized the need to gauge the quality of instructor-student rapport, noting that student feedback is an important indicator of a positive learning environment.
- Joshua Fleming urged caution, advocating for transparency and clear guidelines to prevent excessive access to student communications and other sensitive information.

4. Challenges in the Evaluation Process

- Amy G noted that evaluations are often delayed or incomplete due to a lack of clear access to relevant course materials.
- Martin S pointed out that while face-to-face evaluations are limited to a single observation, online evaluations involve reviewing an entire course, which raises unique challenges.

	<p>5. Call for Clear Guidelines and Policy Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patrick B inquired about existing written policies on online course evaluation. Jessica R confirmed that guidelines exist but are primarily focused on face-to-face evaluations. Amy G mentioned that provisions in the NFA (faculty association) agreement should apply to online evaluations as well. Jessica R added that evaluations should have a limited time frame and involve collaboration with the instructor being evaluated. Martin S agreed to reach out to Ryan Johnson (LMS administrator) to seek clarification on the process. <p>Key Takeaways</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There is no advocacy for full, unfettered access to online courses for evaluators. Tiered or limited access focused on assignments, discussions, and interactions relevant to evaluation is preferred. Screen-sharing via Zoom has been used as an alternative to full access. The process for online evaluations should align with existing face-to-face guidelines but requires clear policy development to address privacy, access, and process. Collaboration between evaluators and instructors is essential, and further clarification from the LMS administrator is needed.
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Agenda Topic	5. Sabbatical Discussion (not on agenda, voted to add)
Action Taken	Info/Discussion
Summary of Discussion	<p>Heather R. – move to approve to add to agenda Mary G. – second Passed unanimously</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Josh Fleming: Request for rotation within sabbatical committee. Concerns with long-term committee members serving for years. Suggestion of rotation of committee members to increase the diversity of perspectives for approving sabbaticals.

Agenda Topic	6. Chair Report (M. Schmidt)
Action Taken	Info/Discussion
Summary of Discussion	<i>Updates from the Faculty Senate Chair, including a recap of the</i>

	<p>recent Board of Regents meeting and its implications for faculty, as well as ongoing Senate initiatives and upcoming priorities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberal Arts director concerns about leadership in VPASA. Suggestion for an open faculty forum for concerns to be expressed.
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Agenda Topic	6. Support/Opposition for Proposed Chapter 6 Policy Revisions
Action Taken	Action
Summary of Discussion	<p>Faculty Senate will vote to either support or oppose the proposed revisions to Chapter 6 of the NSHE Code, which shift the appeals process for employment terminations from the Board of Regents to the Chancellor. Proponents argue that this change aligns with proper supervisory structures and streamlines a complex process, while concerns include potential impacts on transparency, impartiality, and faculty trust in administrative oversight. This vote will reflect faculty opinion on the policy revisions and guide WNC's institutional response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be an action item at the March Board of Regents meeting. Current proposal is to change BOR review to president and chancellor to remove tenured faculty. • Concerns: BOR are subject to open meeting laws (which may be of concern for confidentiality). Concern with chancellor's close relationship with presidents and concerns with non-biased rulings. • Opposed to change: Proposal presented at UNLV faculty senate, and they are also opposed to this change. NFA is also opposed to this change. • Suggestions include a possible non-biased independent panel. <p>Patrick Bell – motion to oppose Curtis Kupferschmid – second Opposed unanimously Abstain (not present for vote): Tim Mayo, Heather Heather Reardon</p>

Agenda Topic	7. NFA Updates (R. Bassen and H. Reardon)
Action Taken	Info/Discussion
Summary of Discussion	<u>Item 1</u>

	<p>5.3.2. The criteria set forth in the annual plan are the result of a collaborative effort by the administration and the <u>Academic Faculty Senate</u>. The <u>WNC president shall create a committee to establish, review and modify</u> the Academic Faculty evaluation criteria. This committee shall consist of at least 50% tenured Teaching Faculty. The criteria shall reflect and support goals as described in the College Mission Statement. The criteria should be broad enough in scope that students, Academic Faculty members, and the needs of the College are adequately met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisions of policy/contract wording. 5.3.2 Annual Plan section. Conflict with wording of evaluation process. E.g. “collaborative effort of administration and faculty senate or formation of a committee by the president”. Who sets the criteria? • Suggestion is formation of an ad hoc committee by president; faculty senate looped in with the process and/or participates in committee selection process. <p><u>Item 2</u></p> <p>9.1.2.6.3. Training to prepare for an annual self-evaluation in accordance with WNC bylaws</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary duties of faculty members. Clarification needed on what “training to prepare” means. References “in accordance with WNC bylaws”. Should be inclusive of new faculty training, PDC committee support. <p><u>Item 3</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration is proposing adding language about communicating with faculty while off contract. If faculty does not respond, administration could choose to move forward with an action based on what is currently known. Example is the issue of a class being canceled, changes in scheduling, adding new sections. • No clear guidance on what reasonable time frame for faculty is to respond. • Suggestions are to have specific deadlines for making decisions such as canceling a class prior to off contract time. • Concerns are making this a rare occurrence, rather than a plethora of off contract decisions that do not involve faculty input.
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Agenda Topic	Public Comment
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equity study. Since study has not completed in a long period of time, it is important to conduct a study of salary comparisons with other institutions. Goal is to present to faculty senate for review. Doesn't make sense to just conduct an internal equity study. • March senate meeting Martin cannot attend, March 14th is a suggested new date for the faculty senate.

Agenda Topic	Adjournment
Action Taken	Unanimously Adjourned at 3:02pm
Summary of Discussion	N/A
Assignments/Potential Agenda Items	
Comments/Information	Submitted by Patrick Bell, Recorder