

Academic Faculty Senate (2025-2026) Meeting MINUTES 11/14/25; 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Academic Senate	Call to order at 1:35 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>Jacob Council (Senator Adjunct Carson)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Kelsey Penrose (Senator Adjunct Fallon/Douglas)</td><td>Present</td></tr> <tr><td>Martin Schmidt (Past Chair)</td><td>Present</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	Jacob Council (Senator Adjunct Carson)	Present	Kelsey Penrose (Senator Adjunct Fallon/Douglas)	Present	Martin Schmidt (Past Chair)	Present
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Members Absent	None																									
Guests	Kyle Dalpe, Sara Afuha'amango, Amy Ghilieri, Margaret Craig, Scott Morrison, Elizabeth Tatterssal, Winnie Kortemeier, Melody Duley, Rachelle Bassen, Rebecca Bevans, Kim DesRoches																									

Agenda Topic	1. Call to Order
Action Taken	Time: 1:32pm

Agenda Topic	2. Roll Call
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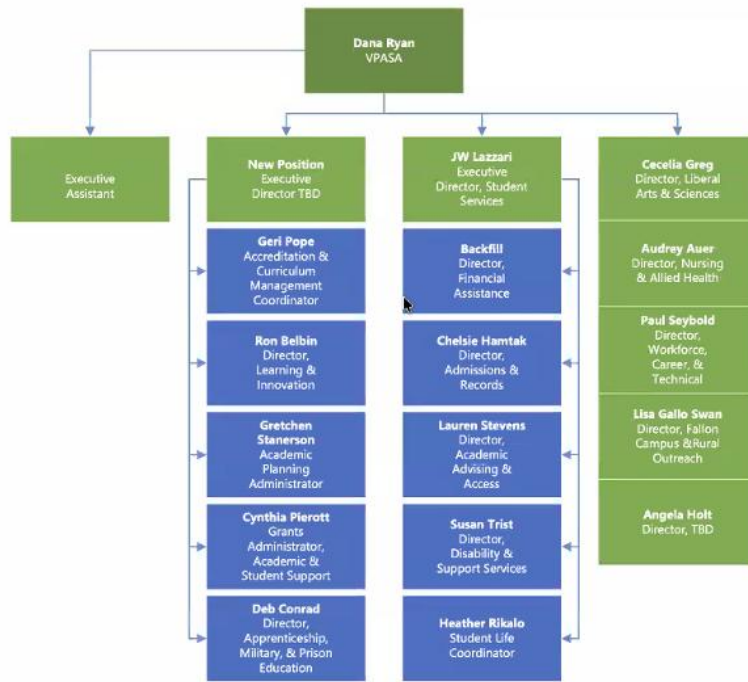
Agenda Topic	3. Executive Updates (Dr. K. Dalpe)
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<p>Notes on discussion: Kyle noted main college updates are shared regularly through email communications. State has a special legislative session, no major discussions involving WNC but will look for funding available to the college (goal for 100% of funding).</p> <p>Key Points Summary: <u>Budget & Fees</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student fee increases proposed: 2%, 3%, 4% over three years (undergraduates) • Upper division possibly 12% to maintain consistency with universities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small institution funding factor currently at 20% (seeking 100%) • Caseload growth from last session not fully funded • Increase in rate high school students pay.
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Agenda Topic	4. VPASA Organizational Structure Concept Update (Dr. K. Dalpe)
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Action Taken	Info
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Summary of Discussion	<p>Notes on discussion: VSPA discussions on academic structure have occurred over multiple years with proposals for additional VPs or Deans to oversee divisions. An ongoing issue over past 4 years has included moving directors to deans' positions with no relevant progress. The college has looked at other NSHE institutions in terms of organizational structures. Current WNC structure is not sustainable as is with an overload of work for the current VP. Goal is to add strategic layering to VP structure. The current structure is flat in nature (see sample below).</p> <p>Issues to address: Need to implement a director of financial aid and possible creation of another executive director (not necessarily tied to academics). Reorganization of direct reports. VPASA and two executive directors (academic and operational). No plans to add another VP. Considering options for funding new positions. Klye proposed a possible administrative structure below.</p>
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Enrollment/Staffing Data Presentation (Melody D.)

Melody presented enrollment/staffing data showing:

- 64 academic faculty positions (including vacancies intended to fill)
- 42 non-academic state positions
- 18 non-state funded positions
- Historical fluctuations in ratios

Fiscal Year	Semester	Academic			Administration			Enrollment	
		FT Academic Total	FT Academic Non-State Positions	FT Academic State Funded Positions	FT Admin Total	FT Admin Non-State Positions	FT Admin State Funded Positions	Headcount	FTE
FY18	Fall 2017	58	0	58	73	22	51	3706	2243
	Spring 2018	58	0	58	72	21	51	3388	2020
FY19	Fall 2018	58	0	58	72	19	53	3379	2052
	Spring 2019	58	0	58	71	19	52	3191	1795
FY20	Fall 2019	57	2	55	75	19	56	3773	2164
	Spring 2020	57	2	55	73	19	54	3669	2038
FY21	Fall 2020	55	1	54	67	10	57	3662	2083
	Spring 2021	56	0	56	64	10	54	3256	1858
FY22	Fall 2021	60	3	57	68	13	55	3771	2092
	Spring 2022	61	3	58	68	12	56	3474	1922
FY23	Fall 2022	62	2	60	70	18	52	3738	2072
	Spring 2023	62	2	60	70	18	52	3698	2010
FY24	Fall 2023	63	6	57	69	15	54	4384	2309
	Spring 2024	63	6	57	73	19	54	4143	2122
FY25	Fall 2024	63	5	58	78	25	53	4448	2277
	Spring 2025	63	5	58	78	25	53	4231	2124
FY26	Fall 2025	64	4	60	80	19	61	4101	2308
		Average	2	57	Average	18	54		

Open Discussion: Request to have final structure given to all faculty and adjuncts on who to contact and when for support, questions, enrollment, other academic issues. Consideration of ratios of balanced academic and administrative faculty. Full-time faculty counts include vacancies intended to fill that are budgeted for. Some data challenges getting data efficiently from historical and Workday (date dependent).

Key points summary:

- Current: 13 direct reports to VP of Academic and Student Affairs
- Proposed: Two executive director positions

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Executive Director of Student Services (Student Success, Financial Aid, Admissions/Records, Career Services, Counseling) ○ Executive Director of Academic Operations (Scheduling, Library, Tutoring, Testing, Career & College Readiness) • Direct faculty division reporting maintained (Liberal Arts, Nursing, CTE, Fallon Campus) • Backfill financial aid director position • Goal: Reduce direct reports, allow VP more time for academic focus • Faculty input requested before implementation • Funding still to be determined <p>Next Steps: Eric: Send Kyle's organizational charts and enrollment data to Faculty Senate members</p>
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Agenda Topic	5. Approval of Minutes (September)
Action Taken	Action
Summary of Discussion	<p>Discussion: Eric: Correct the misspelling in Gretchen's last name in the minutes.</p> <p>Motion: Approval of October 2025 meeting minutes Motion to Approve: B. Dillet Second: Jacob C. Approval: Unanimously</p>

Agenda Topic	6. Policy Revisions and Reviews
Action Taken	Action

<p>Summary of Discussion</p>	<p><i>Technical changes only: Title changes etc. This is a consent agenda item. All items may be approved with a single vote. At the request of any senator, any item may be removed from the group to be discussed and potentially voted on individually.</i></p> <p>Discussion: The senate discussed several technical policy changes that generally update minor technical changes and contact person(s) and titles.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. 7-2-1 Travel: Remove form and rates, refer to website <small>Upon approval of the applicable Vice President, Chief HR Officer/Executive Director, or Chief Advancement Officer/Chief Financial Officer, divisions and units may make exceptions to the rate of reimbursement for lodging when the following applies:</small> b. 7-3-1 WNC Purchasing Policy: Change title of contact c. 7-3-5 Payment Card Industry (PCI) Compliance POLICY: Change title of contact <p>Motion: Motion to approve all policy changes in item 6 Motion to Approve: B. Dillet Second: Heather R. Approved: Unanimously</p>
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<p>Agenda Topic</p>	<p>7. Policy Revisions and Reviews</p>
<p>Action Taken</p>	<p>First Reading</p>
<p>Summary of Discussion</p>	<p>7-2-1-1 Student Group or Field Trip Travel: <i>Significant update</i></p> <p>Discussion: The discussion focused on reviewing and approving a new field trip policy proposed by Winnie and Coral, which clarifies the distinction between field trips and group travel and codifies the long-standing requirement that organizers submit requests at least two weeks in advance, using the updated online form and ensuring all attendees, including non-students—complete liability forms prior to departure. The group discussed why liability forms currently need to be sent to more than one division; historically, they were submitted to the department and then dispersed, but Winnie will follow up with Coral to determine whether forms can be routed only to the division instead of both the division and EHS. Additional topics included legal-reviewed wording changes such as adding parentheses around “student(s)” to account for trips involving a single student, requirements for expenditure forms when college funds are used, procedures for student reimbursement through spend authorizations, and confirmation that Environmental Health will provide first aid kits. With these</p>

	<p>minor modifications, the policy was approved, and Eric Y. will present it to the college council.</p> <p>Key Points Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Codifies existing field trip practices into formal policy • Requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Approval form submission two weeks in advance ○ Liability forms from all attendees before trip commences • Key distinction: Field trips are class-related activities; group travel is not • Only field trips with expenditures require spending authorization • Modifications made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Added parentheses around "s" in "students" to accommodate single-student trips ○ Changed form language to "ensure first aid kit available" instead of "provide" <p>Action Motion: Motion to approve 7-2-1-1 Student Group or Field Trip Travel: Motion to Approve: B. Dillet Second: J. Gill Approved: Unanimously</p>
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Agenda Topic	8. NFA Updates (R. Bassen, H. Reardon)
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<p>Notes on discussion: Provided updates on the start of the bargaining cycle, with Rachelle reporting on the first bargaining meeting attended by representatives from HR, legal counsel, and the Fallon director, noting that unfinished business from the previous year must be resubmitted and that the new team brings helpful fresh perspectives. A request for information has been submitted, draft ground rules are being developed, and the group discussed collaborative approaches to note-taking using an administrative assistant and/or AI tools. Faculty input is being gathered through a meeting held earlier that morning and an upcoming survey designed to identify bargaining priorities and increase understanding of the faculty contract. The first NFA newsletter was released, and Winnie reiterated the importance of NFA membership for protecting faculty rights and working conditions; questions arose about verifying current members and clarifying how membership deductions appear on pay stubs, and the team will double-check enrollment records.</p>

Agenda Topic	9. Structure of Senate Committees (M. Schmidt)
Action Taken	Info/Possible Action
Summary of Discussion	<p><i>Proposal for Senate Committees to reduce understaffed committees and ensure continuity</i></p> <p>Discussion: The Faculty Senate continued its discussion on restructuring Senate committees, with Martin S. noting that the current nine subcommittees could be consolidated and that implementing term limits would help bring fresh perspectives; he requested the formation of a Faculty Senate ad hoc committee to explore these changes using information gathered from last year’s work. Senators agreed that consolidating committees and aiming for roughly five members per committee would better distribute workload, though revisions to the FS bylaws would be required. The group also considered whether adjunct faculty could serve on committees with stipends—given that adjuncts are not typically assigned committee responsibilities—and Eric Y. agreed to investigate the feasibility of including them and providing compensation. Questions were raised about whether committee members must be tenured, a topic left for further discussion. Martin S. and Patrick B. were identified as possible participants, and Eric will send out a call for volunteers. In alignment with Brigitte’s earlier proposal, the Senate unanimously supported forming a 3–5 member task force, with Martin prepared to serve as temporary chair. The meeting concluded with Heather presenting academic calendar options that maintain the required 181 contract days while adjusting dates before and after semesters.</p> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eric: Investigate potential funding sources for stipends for adjuncts to participate in task forces and committees • Eric: Send call for volunteers for Senate committee restructuring task force via email, including condensed version of Martin's proposal • Martin: Serve as temporary chair of Senate committee restructuring task force until permanent chair is determined <p>Action</p> <p>Motion: Motion to approve to form a taskforce to review to study of the structure of senate committees (3-5 members).</p> <p>Motion to Approve: B. Dillet</p> <p>Second: Curtis K.</p> <p>Approved: Unanimously</p>

Agenda Topic	10. 2029-30 Academic Calendar Options
Action Taken	Possible Action
Summary of Discussion	<p><i>Three options are proposed: One with current format, one with contract days after each semester for grading, and a third faculty proposition.</i></p> <p>Discussion: The Faculty Senate reviewed multiple academic calendar options, including two primary versions, a third option referenced in the previous month’s minutes, and even a potential fourth that would adjust traditional faculty break periods. All versions maintained 171 contract days, with the third option redistributing days to align more clearly with contract start and end dates, resulting in a slightly shorter fall semester and a longer spring semester; Heather noted that such variations are consistent with patterns observed over the past ten years. Questions were raised about the handling of Veterans Day, the shifting of days from the start to the end of the fall semester, and inconsistencies in how days were moved between semesters. After discussion, the faculty approved the third calendar option for 2023–2024, agreeing that it best supports grading timelines and faculty workload. The group also considered administrative scheduling, with a shared interest—raised again by Winnie—in consolidating meeting days to minimize faculty travel and reduce early-semester burdens.</p> <p>Key Points Summary: Heather presented third version moving contract days from semester starts to grade-due dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains 181 total contract days (85 fall, 86 spring) • 8 full days before fall semester • 5 days before spring semester • Last contract day aligns with grade submission deadlines <p>Action Motion: Motion to approve third version of academic calendar. Motion to Approve: Heather R. Second: J. Gill Approved: Unanimously</p>

Agenda Topic	11. Faculty Office Hours (Dr. R. Bevans)
Action Taken	Info/Discussion/Possible Action
Summary of Discussion	Discussion: R. Bevans reported enrollment-management data showing that traditional office hours are underutilized, prompting a discussion about modernizing how faculty support

students. With new NFA language allowing greater flexibility, faculty noted that students increasingly prefer Zoom meetings, flexible scheduling, or online booking tools, and questioned whether posting physical office hours is still necessary. Rebecca suggested renaming office hours to “student support hours” to reflect the variety of ways faculty now interact with students—including email, Zoom, and appointment-based meetings. The group agreed that policies should prioritize flexibility, allow multiple methods for documenting student engagement, and maintain enough structure for administrative needs without reverting to outdated, rigid requirements (see current policy below for reference).

3/12/25	9.1.2.3.5	Full-time teaching faculty are expected to dedicate a minimum of five (5) hours per week to being available for students as Student Support Hours. This availability may include a variety of options such as in-person meetings, responding to messages, hosting virtual sessions via Zoom or other platforms, and other methods that align with the course delivery format to effectively support student needs. To best accommodate the diverse needs of <u>students</u> , faculty should distribute their availability hours across at least three days per week.
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Key Points Summary:

Discussion sparked by Enrollment Management Committee data showing office hours underutilized:

- NFA already negotiated new flexible language for faculty office hours
- Flexible formats allowed for office hours: in-person meetings, responding to messages, virtual sessions, other platforms
- Suggested change from "office hours" to "student support hours"
- Faculty can stay in classrooms after class (scheduling accommodation)
- Can schedule 15-minute blocks before/after classes
- Canvas and Outlook have booking functionality
- Pre-tenure faculty documentation expectations remain but accommodate new formats
- Traditional office hours deemed antiquated for current student engagement patterns

Action: None

Agenda Topic	12. Chair Report (E. York)
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Action Taken	Info/Discussion/Possible Action
Summary of Discussion	<p>Discussion: Eric reported on recent meetings with the chancellor regarding the development of a neutrality statement intended to guide institutions in maintaining a neutral stance on political matters. He explained that the scope of such a statement is still under discussion and that, in his understanding, its primary application would be in situations involving the Board of Regents and their practices—not as a broad, system-wide policy imposed on all institutions. Eric emphasized that these were his impressions from the conversation and not an indication that NSHE has formally adopted or mandated any specific neutrality policy. The faculty noted that the issue should be addressed at the institutional level rather than imposing it on faculty senates.</p> <p>Action: None</p>

Agenda Topic	13. Faculty Open Discussion
Action Taken	Discussion
Summary of Discussion	<p><i>Faculty are welcome to openly discuss issues involving the institution.</i></p> <p>Topics of Discussion (Summarized):</p> <p>Faculty Scheduling Communication Initiative The faculty discussed morale issues and agreed to form a small group from the Faculty Senate to address scheduling concerns with the VP office and LAS department. Christian proposed this initiative after hearing widespread faculty complaints about scheduling miscommunications, and the senate agreed to focus on facilitating better communication and identifying specific faculty needs. The discussion also touched on administrative restructuring, with Patrick supporting changes to the VPSA's office and Eric noting that administrative staffing levels have largely recovered post-COVID, though budget implications remain unclear.</p> <p>Improving Faculty Communication and Transparency Christian proposed addressing faculty concerns about scheduling and communication by creating a structured process to discuss issues collectively rather than individually, aiming to improve transparency and reduce fear of retaliation. Jessica supported this approach, emphasizing the importance of having a standing agenda item to address faculty morale and relationships, and suggested using data from a climate survey to inform solutions. Kelsey offered to assist in gathering</p>

information or serving as a point person for sensitive discussions, given her experience with controversial topics. The group agreed on the need for open communication and transparency across departments as a first step toward resolving faculty concerns.

Improving College Communication Systems

The faculty discussed significant communication challenges across the college, particularly regarding academic scheduling and administrative processes. They agreed to create an anonymous survey to gather data on faculty concerns and to request an updated organizational chart with clear reporting structures from administration. The senate also discussed the need to improve documentation and communication systems, with Kelsey emphasizing that faculty should not have to spend weeks determining who to report student academic dishonesty to. Christian shared his experience of having scheduling issues remain unresolved for over a month despite contacting multiple administrators, highlighting the need for better accountability in administrative responses.

Administrative Accountability and Communication

The meeting focused on addressing administrative accountability and communication issues, with participants discussing the need for a clear organizational structure and procedures. Eric suggested framing requests for responsibility clarification with specific examples to encourage productive responses. The group agreed to collect faculty questions about unclear processes and review them in the next Senate meeting. Additionally, they discussed plans for upcoming Chancellor listening sessions and the potential for a climate survey.

Next Steps:

1. Form a Faculty Senate working group to address scheduling concerns with the VP office and LAS department, document recurring issues, and monitor impacts of administrative restructuring.
2. Establish a structured process for discussing faculty scheduling, communication, and morale issues collectively, including adding a standing agenda item to Senate meetings.
3. Gather faculty feedback through an anonymous survey and/or climate survey, with a designated point person (e.g., Kelsey) to collect sensitive input.
4. Request updated organizational charts and improve documentation of administrative procedures, including reporting processes for academic and scheduling issues.
5. Track unresolved administrative concerns and frame requests for clarification of responsibilities with concrete examples to encourage productive responses.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Plan and participate in upcoming Chancellor listening sessions. 7. Finalize the mediator selection procedure (Jacob confirmed eligible). 8. Discuss with Ron providing new instructors with access to course content and clarifying course ownership/IP.
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Agenda Topic	14. Old Business
Action Taken	Info/Discussion
Summary of Discussion	<p>Discussion: The Senate discussed forming a work group to review the formal reprimand process, clarifying that questions about participant eligibility—such as whether LOAs can serve—were resolved, with HR confirming that group composition is not an issue. They also revisited the digital learning policy requiring faculty to respond to students within 48 hours; Patrick noted this is still being discussed in the DLC, and the Senate expressed support for removing this requirement. Kelsey requested that adjunct instructors receive course materials and expectations more efficiently upon hire, and Eric agreed to meet with Ron B. to address this, including clarifying whether course content belongs to the college or the original instructor. Old business included updates on creating a mediator selection procedure, with confirmation that Jacob could participate despite not being covered by Chapter 6.</p> <p>Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rachele and Jacob: Work on creating procedure for selecting a mediator in the event of formal letter of reprimand to faculty member • Patrick: Review Digital Learning Committee's rewording policy to remove 48-hour time limit

Agenda Topic	15. New Business
Action Taken	Info/Discussion
Summary of Discussion	<p>Multiple people have requested a climate survey. Proposal to put together a small group to develop a survey and questions. Eric to put out a call for faculty questions to be able to put on the FS agenda for a future FS. New business included a proposal to make instructor course content accessible to all new instructors, which Eric agreed to discuss with Ron</p> <p>Next Steps:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eric: Collect questions from faculty for climate survey and send out general call for input • Eric: Contact Susan Priest for assistance with climate survey question development • Eric: Discuss with Ron making instructor course content accessible to all new instructors at meeting next week
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Agenda Topic	16. Public Comment
Action Taken	Info
Summary of Discussion	<p><i>Opportunity for faculty to bring forward concerns, questions, or suggestions for future agenda items</i></p> <p>Eric Y: We have had some really tough meetings but we have made positive progress.</p>

Agenda Topic	Adjournment
Action Taken	<p>Motion: Adjourn meeting</p> <p>Motion to adjourn:</p> <p>Second:</p> <p>Unanimously Adjourned at 4:33 pm</p>
Comments/Information	Submitted by Patrick Bell, Recorder