



MEMORANDUM

To: WSU Faculty System-Wide

From: Tracy Klein, Chair, Faculty Senate and Professor, College of Nursing
Chris Riley-Tillman, Provost and Executive Vice President

Subject: Shared Governance Commitment

Date: February 28, 2025

Handwritten signatures of Tracy Klein and Chris Riley-Tillman.

We are writing to reaffirm our commitment from the Provost's Office and the Faculty Senate's Executive Committee to the principles of shared governance throughout the Washington State University system. Our collaborative efforts are essential in fostering an inclusive academic environment that supports the needs of our faculty, students, and staff. We are both focused on the strong working relationship and recognize that this commitment is unique. Many universities don't have this partnership, and we know it will be a significant strength as we navigate the ever-changing landscape.

The provost is responsible for the oversight and administration of the university's overall academic program including enrollment, instruction, assessment, research, and outreach. The Provost's Office works with the university president, academic deans, faculty, students, and staff to promote academic excellence. The provost's engagement with the leadership of the Faculty Senate is a critical component of shared governance by faculty and administration in accomplishing the mission of WSU.

The Faculty Senate serves as a representative body of the faculty community, with a strong focus on representation and communication. The [Senate's purpose](#) is to assess and make recommendations to the system president and appropriate administrative officials of the university, and through the system president to the Board of Regents, on matters affecting the general welfare of Washington State University and its educational, research, and service activities.

The legislative powers of the Faculty Senate are found in the [Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws](#) and encompass several critical areas, including:

- Standards of Admission
- Curricula and Courses
- Standards of Scholarship
- Requirements for Graduation
- Academic Calendar

In addition to these legislative powers, the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws specify Senate power of recommendation in the following important area:

- Review of the Budget: Assessing the university's budget to ensure its general conformity with policies and priorities established or endorsed by the Senate.

Since the beginning of January, the Provost's Office and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee have been meeting weekly to discuss ongoing and emerging issues to ensure strong collaboration. Representative examples of our partnership include:

- Faculty Senate Executive Committee representatives (Tracy Klein and Ken Roberts) will attend all 40+ budget hearing meetings in late April.
- Faculty Senate representatives are currently assigned to the following initiatives: Federal Administration Leadership Team's faculty group (Tracy Klein and Ken Roberts), the Academic Affairs Program Optimization process (Ken Roberts), and the Workload Policy Task Force (Dene Grigar).
- The Faculty Senate Chair publicly reports during every scheduled meeting on the Faculty Senate's business to the Board of Regents. The meeting series is hosted in September, November, January, March, and April.

Through our commitment to shared governance, we ensure that the voices of our faculty are heard and that their expertise and perspectives are integral to the decision-making processes that shape our institution. This collaborative approach enhances the quality of our academic programs and strengthens our commitment to creating a supportive and dynamic learning environment.

We are dedicated to maintaining open lines of communication and fostering a culture of mutual respect and trust. By working together, we can continue to advance the mission of Washington State University and uphold the land-grant values that define our community.

We are grateful for your ongoing support and dedication to our shared goals.