

MINUTES

The Faculty Senate met on Thursday December 4, 2025, in Faculty Senate Conference Room French Admin 344B and via Zoom. Fifty-five (55) senators were present, two (2) vacancies with thirty-six (36) absent, and twenty-eight (28) non-voting participants. The meeting was called to order by Ken Roberts, Senate Chair, at 4:04 pm

Guest Presentations (30 minutes):

Legislative Update – Glynda Becker-Fenter, Vice President External Affairs and Government Relations; Jake Dowd, Director Federal Relations; Michael Bauduy, Assistant Director of Federal Relations; Chris Mulick, Sr. Director State Relations; Connor Haggerty, Asst. Director State Relations Office; Patti Stauffer, Director, Health Sciences Public Policy and Advocacy

Federal Legislation update

WSU's federal and state teams are addressing emerging issues and also actively seeking opportunities to advance WSU priorities. Every member of Washington's congressional delegation visited a WSU location, strengthening relationships and advocacy efforts. These visits help showcase WSU's research and recognize WSU's value.

Members, notably Congressman Newhouse, assisted in reinstating USDA and ARS scientists and securing grant funding. WSU collaborates with major associations (APLU, Science Coalition, AAMC, AAVMC) to amplify its voice in federal policy and funding discussions. These partnerships help influence agencies and Congress more effectively than individual outreach.

Federal funding has faced delays due to a government shutdown and continuing resolutions (CR). This caused backlogs in RFPs, RFIs, and slowed grant cycles. Agencies expect activity to pick up in January. Appropriations leaders agreed on top-line numbers for nine outstanding bills, aiming for passage by January 30. This could restore earmarks and new project funding.

Offensive Priorities

- Advocate for full funding of basic scientific research through annual appropriations for agencies like NSF, NIH, USDA, and defense-related agricultural research.
- Prepare for the 2026 reauthorization by promoting investments in agriculture, research, extension, rural development, trade, and conservation—areas where WSU plays a key role.
- Engage with the Senate Health Committee on initiatives related to college affordability and transparency, showcasing WSU's efforts to help students understand financial aid and loans.



Defensive Priorities

- Oppose drastic cuts to science, research, and development programs critical to WSU's research enterprise.
- Respond to federal rulemaking, such as proposed changes to professional degree loan caps.
- Collaborate with coalitions like APLU, AAU, and ACE to strengthen advocacy, using data and impact stories provided by WSU faculty and researchers.

State Legislation update

- The state faces a \$1.5 billion annual operating budget gap (about 4.2% of the budget), worsened by fixed costs like debt service (7%) and K–12 education (50%). This will lead to an austerity period of at least two years.
- Revenue Trends: Tax collections are growing slower than projected, while spending continues to rise, especially in human services and special education. This imbalance drives the shortfall.
- Governor's budget is expected soon, likely an all-cuts proposal with no new sales or property taxes. Legislature will draft its own budget after an updated revenue forecast in February. Election-year politics may influence decisions.
- Possible one-time fixes include funds from the Climate Commitment Act may be redirected to cover shortfalls.
- Impact on WSU: WSU is in its fourth year of budget reductions:
 - Years 1–3: Cuts due to enrollment declines and limited tuition increases.
 - Year 4: Legislative cuts and unfunded inflationary costs (e.g., cybersecurity insurance, utilities).
 - Significant programmatic reductions, such as closing the Yakima pharmacy program, underscore the severity.

Health policy-related activities

Patti Stauffer (WSU) leads health policy-related activities for Eager, covering both federal and state levels.

Scope of Work

- Legislative work and monitoring agency actions and regulatory efforts.
- Joint advocacy with health professional associations.
- Liaison to policy sections of the State Department of Health and local health jurisdictions.

Current Issue

- The U.S. Department of Education is drafting a rule that redefines professional degrees.
- This proposal has raised concerns across multiple disciplines.
- Nursing programs are the primary focus.
- Future implications for public health and social work post-baccalaureate degree programs.



WSU's Role

- Actively monitoring developments.
- Ensuring delegation understands potential impacts on students, especially regarding financial aid.

I. Call to Order 4:04 pm

II. Approval of minutes from November 13, 2025, Faculty Senate meeting ([PDF](#))

Approved by unanimous consent

III. Additions or changes to the agenda

Motion to move discussion item 1 to action item 10. J. McDonald moved; P. Buckley seconded.

Motion approved; 42 Approve, 2 Reject

IV. Updates

A. Remarks by Faculty Senate Executive Committee

1. Faculty Senate Chair –

The College of Medicine clarified its process for approving Continuing Medical Education (CME) courses following concerns about a recently approved program. Any legally recognized professional organization with actively practicing medical professionals may submit courses for CME accreditation. These courses are evaluated solely on their content and merit by the Office of Continuing Medical Education.

The course submitted by the Society for Evidence-Based Gender Medicine initially met required criteria but has since been suspended pending review by the national accrediting body (ACCME). No timeline has been provided for the completion of this review.

CME course approval does not fall under the purview of the Faculty Senate. Faculty involvement occurs only when subject-matter experts review course materials, but faculty do not participate in final decision-making. CME courses are professional continuing-education offerings, distinct from university curricular courses.

Faculty were reminded that the system redesign survey remains open until end of day 12/5/25 and were encouraged to provide narrative feedback.

2. Immediate Past Chair –

Faculty Senate Executives and colleagues met with Legislators Keaton and Levitt in Pullman as part of campus-focused legislative outreach. The conversation was constructive and bipartisan, with one Democrat and one Republican, representing both experienced and newly elected leadership. Legislator Levitt demonstrated strong familiarity with institutional issues and showed interest in supporting efforts to address the fund split, though state funding was acknowledged as an unreliable primary solution.



Tracy represented the Faculty Senate at the President's Governance and Policy Council, which oversees internal policy, risk management, and shared governance. WSU is currently consolidating executive and business policies into a unified University Policies and Procedures Manual (UPPM) to resolve longstanding issues of overlap and accessibility. As part of this process, Tracy reviewed the existing policy on MOUs and international agreements and successfully advocated for the inclusion of Senate-supported language. This ensures appropriate Senate involvement in agreements related specifically to degrees and courses, while recognizing that many international MOUs fall outside Senate purview.

3. Chair Elect –

New General Education Reform Committee has been established, thank you to all of the CoC members for their work in reviewing the many applications received.

4. Executive Secretary –

Elections will be held during the spring semester for both the Faculty Senate Chair Elect and the Executive Secretary. Details will be posted to the Faculty Senate website early January.

B. Legislative affairs –

No additional update

C. Board of Regents –

Regent Tracy Klein attended her first WSU Board of Regents meeting in November, following an October orientation.

- The Board approved a 3.3% tuition increase for undergraduate and graduate students.
 - Estimated impact:
 - Resident undergraduate: ~\$385 more per year
 - Non-resident graduate students: Just under \$1,000 more per year
 - Professional program tuition adjustments will be reviewed in January.
 - WSU remains relatively affordable compared to peer institutions.
 - However, WSU fees are higher than those at comparable universities, including the University of Washington.

Capital Projects Approved

- Pullman Dining Hall renovation—last updated in 2007; now recognized as a needed improvement to student quality of life.
- Gesa Field upgrades (video board, sound system, LED lights) for WSU football:
 - Entirely privately funded.
 - Project only proceeds if full donation targets are met.



Committee Assignments

- Regent Klein has been appointed to:
 - The Finance and Administration Committee
 - The Academic and Student Affairs Committee

V. Information Items

None

Note: Senators are encouraged to bring questions about discussion items to the Senate meeting. You are also welcome to contact committee chairs if they have specific questions that they would like addressed before the Senate meeting. Additionally, senators are encouraged to ask questions about exhibits before items are advanced to action items.

VI. Agenda Items

A. Action Items

1. (Item #2025.11.13_562_FAC) Proposed Housekeeping Updates to *Faculty Manual* (Exhibits [562A](#), [562B](#), [562C](#), **[562D](#))
*** This exhibit has been added*
J. McDonald moved to add exhibit 562D regarding references to the renaming of the Office of Commercialization to the Faculty Manual Housekeeping updates. P. Buckley seconded the motion.
No discussion
Motion approved; 40 approve, 0 reject
No additional discussion.
Motion to accept Item 562 as amended approved; 45 approve, 0 reject
2. (Item #2025.11.13_563_CRP) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 3, Courses (Exhibit [563A](#))
Motion approved; 45 approve, 0 reject
3. (Item #2025.11.13_564_CRP) Professional Health Sciences Major Change Bulletin No. 2, Courses (Exhibit [564A](#))
Motion approved; 44 approve, 0 reject
4. (Item #2025.11.13_565_CRP) Graduate Major Change Bulletin No. 3, Courses (Exhibit [565A](#))
Motion approved; 44 approve, 0 reject
5. (Item #2025.11.13_566_CRP) UCORE Renewals and Changes approved by the UCORE Committee – Bulletin No. 1 (Exhibit [566A](#))
Motion approved; 46 approve, 0 reject
6. (Item #2025.11.13_568_PHSC) Professional Health Sciences Major Change Bulletin No. 1, Requirements (Exhibit [568A](#))
Motion approved; 44 approve, 1 reject



7. (Item #2025.11.13_569_AAC) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 4, Requirements (Exhibit [569A](#))

Motion approved; 44 approve, 0 reject

8. (Item #2025.11.13_570_Steering) Proposal to Discontinue BA in Hospitality Business Management, WSU Tri-Cities (Exhibit [570A](#), [570B](#), [570C](#), [570D](#), [570E](#), [570F](#))

Motion approved; 43 approve, 2 reject

9. (Item #2025.11.13_572_FAC) Proposed Updates to Faculty Manual II.F regarding Faculty Discipline (Exhibits *[572A](#), [572B](#), [572C](#), *[572D](#), *[572E](#))

** These exhibits are updated documents*

Motion approved; 44 approve, 1 reject

10. (Item #2025.12.4_573_FAC) Recommended *Faculty Manual* Updates to references: BPPM and EP to UPPM (Exhibits [573A](#), [573B](#))

Motion approved; 45 approve, 0 reject

B. Discussion Items

1. (Item #2025.12.04_574_GSC) Recommended Graduate Certificate – Transition from K-12 to Adulthood (Exhibits [574A](#), [574B](#))

GSC approved unanimously, no discussion; move to action 1/15/26

2. (Item #2025.12.04_575_AAC) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 5, Requirements (Exhibit [575A](#))

No discussion, move to action 1/15/26

VII. Constituent Concerns

J. Phelps – only had three (3) days to add questions to course evaluations before they went live. This may be initiated at the college level each semester. Same experience by other CAS faculty. M. Hudelson to inquire and provide information.

VIII. Adjournment 4:42 pm

Matthew G. Hudelson

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Associate Professor, Mathematics

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