

MINUTES

The Faculty Senate met on Thursday January 15, 2026, in Faculty Senate Conference Room French Admin 344B and via Zoom. Fifty-four (55) senators were present, two (2) vacancies with thirty-seven (37) absent, and twenty (20) non-voting participants. The meeting was called to order by Ken Roberts, Senate Chair, at 4:09 pm

Guest Presentations (30 minutes):

Introduction to 3-year Bachelor's Degree – William B. Davis, Vice Provost for Academic Engagement and Student Achievement & University Accreditation Liaison

[90-Credit Bachelor's Degrees at WSU Presentation](#)

Dr. Bill Davis presented an overview of emerging 90-credit bachelor's degrees, a new option now permitted under NWCCU accreditation standards. He explained the historical origins of the traditional 120-credit bachelor's degree and emphasized that the 90-credit model represents not a reduction in rigor but an alternative pathway aligned with evolving educational and workforce needs.

The 90-credit bachelor's degree functions as a fully accredited bachelor's credential eligible for federal financial aid and subject to the same approval process as 120-credit degrees. Key requirements—such as general education, writing in the major, and upper-division coursework—remain equivalent across both degree types. NWCCU imposes heightened scrutiny on these programs, requiring clear evidence of disciplinary depth, demonstrated employer or graduate-school acceptance, robust learning outcomes, and no conflicts with specialized accreditation.

Dr. Davis outlined several institutional motivations for offering 90-credit degrees. These include supporting WSU's land-grant mission, responding to industry requests for shorter pathways into the workforce, creating opportunities for curricular innovation, reducing unnecessary elective credits, and re-engaging adults with some college but no degree. He highlighted that programs may range from 90 to 119 credits, offering flexibility without compromising academic expectations.

He also reviewed national developments: NWCCU's pilot at Ensign College and BYU-Idaho and growing nationwide adoption across diverse fields such as IT, cybersecurity, communication, and criminal justice. Within WSU, the Academic Affairs Committee and Senate leadership have begun identifying necessary policy revisions related to transfer credit, pass-fail limits, admission to the major, minors, graduation requirements, and writing assessments.

Finally, Dr. Davis previewed proposed changes to AR 114E that would formally define 90-credit bachelor's degrees and apply consistent requirements for residency credits, UCORE, writing proficiency, and upper-division coursework. He concluded by emphasizing that academic rigor and student outcomes remain the guiding priorities as WSU considers adoption of this new degree structure.

Senators raised questions regarding potential impacts on curriculum design, lower-division enrollments, the role of electives, and the influence of financial pressures on students' major choices. Dr. Davis acknowledged significant unknowns in these areas, underscoring that the effects will depend on how many programs pursue the 90-credit option and how students navigate degree requirements. He emphasized that programs should evaluate their learning outcomes to determine whether electives or broader curricular breadth remain essential.

No evidence yet suggests whether offering 90-credit degrees will increase enrollment, as few institutions have implemented them and data remain scarce. However, WSU is proactively building the necessary policy frameworks to avoid challenges encountered by early adopters elsewhere. The university aims to position itself to respond strategically as programs explore whether a 90-credit structure aligns with their educational goals and external partnerships.

- I. Call to Order 4:09 pm
- II. Approval of minutes from December 4, 2025, Faculty Senate meeting ([PDF](#))
Approved by unanimous consent
- III. Additions or changes to the agenda
None
- IV. Updates
 - A. Remarks by Faculty Senate Executive Committee
 1. Faculty Senate Chair

Updates from Director's Forum

- The President highlighted continued growth in research activity.
- Emphasis placed on team science and collaborative projects, which are increasingly important for securing major research funding.
- The Provost reported:
 - General Education Reform is progressing; Bill Davis continues in a key leadership role.
 - Faculty are actively participating in development programs, especially the ACUE Effective Teaching Certificate, where WSU has the highest enrollment among participating institutions.
- Pam Scott provided a preview of a new university-wide marketing campaign. The initiative aims to strengthen visibility and drive enrollment growth, a key avenue for increasing university revenue.



Budget Outlook

- The Governor's proposed budget includes:
 - A ~3% cut to WSU and UW, resulting in approximately \$11M less for WSU as well as a revised state self-insurance contribution structure, adding an additional \$7M obligation.
- Combined fiscal impact: ~\$18M reduction for WSU this cycle.

Carry-Forward Spending Policy

- Ongoing concern from faculty and units about guidance on carry-forward account expenditures.
- The Provost is developing a formal policy:
 - A draft shared with deans revealed varying impacts across colleges. Further revisions are underway.
 - A finalized policy is expected in the near future.

2. Immediate Past Chair – Nothing to report
3. Chair Elect – Nothing to report
4. Executive Secretary – Shared information on the Faculty Senate Executive elections (open positions – chair elect and executive secretary). Faculty Manual is now available online in a digitally accessible format.

B. Legislative affairs – Legislative sessions started this Monday. Governor's proposed budget reflects additional 3% across the board for 4-year institutions and 2% increase in insurance premiums. A 1.5% reduction proposed for regional and community institutions.

C. Board of Regents – BoR meeting in Spokane January 22nd & 23rd

V. Information Items

A. (Item #2025.11.13_571_Steering) Updated Election Timetable (Exhibit [571A](#))

B. (Item #2026.01.15_585_CRP) Minor Change Bulletin No. 5 (Exhibit [585A](#))

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 #2025.12.04_574_GSC) Recommended Graduate Certificate – Transition from K-12 to Adulthood (Exhibits [574A](#), [574B](#))
Motion approved; 49 Approve, 1 Reject
2. (Item #2025.12.04_575_AAC) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 5, Requirements (Exhibit [575A](#))
Motion approved; 46 Approve, 0 Reject

B. Discussion Items

1. (Item #2026.01.15_576_CRP) Graduate Major Change Bulletin No. 3, Courses (Exhibit [576A](#))
No discussion, move to action 1/29 meeting.
2. (Item #2026.01.15_577_CRP) Professional Health Sciences Major Change Bulletin No. 3, Courses (Exhibit [577A](#))
No discussion, move to action 1/29 meeting.
3. (Item #2026.01.15_578_CRP) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 4, Courses (Exhibit [578A](#))
No discussion, move to action 1/29 meeting.
4. (Item #2026.01.15_580_FCC) Proposed Faculty Compensation Committee Function Language (Exhibit [580A](#))
No discussion, move to action 1/29 meeting.
5. (Item #2026.01.15_581_IAC) Proposed International Affairs Committee Function Language (Exhibit [581A](#))
No discussion, move to action 1/29 meeting.
6. (Item #2026.01.15_582_CoC) Proposed updated Committee on Committees Function Language (Exhibit [582A](#))
Discussion regarding clarity of last bullet pertaining to evaluation of Senate committee system, updated document to be provided. Move to action 1/29 meeting.
7. (Item #2026.01.15_583_CRP) Graduate Major Change Bulletin No. 5, Courses (Exhibit [583A](#))
No discussion, move to action 1/29 meeting.



8. (Item #2026.01.15_584_CRP) Undergraduate Major Change
Bulletin No. 5, Courses (Exhibit [584A](#))

No discussion, move to action 1/29 meeting.

VII. Constituent Concerns

D. Grigar requested membership of General Education Reform Committee to share during RFO meeting on 1/16/26. B. Davis to provide, official announcement coming in the Insider in the next couple of days.

VIII. Adjournment 4:34 pm

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Matthew G. Hudelson".

Matthew G. Hudelson

Executive Secretary, WSU Faculty Senate

Associate Professor, Mathematics

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