

MINUTES

The Faculty Senate met on Thursday January 29, 2026, in Faculty Senate Conference Room French Admin 344B and via Zoom. Sixty-one (61) senators were present, two (2) vacancies with thirty (30) absent, and twenty-six (26) non-voting participants. The meeting was called to order by Ken Roberts, Senate Chair, at 4:11 pm

Guest Presentations (3:30 pm – 4:00 pm):

Records Retention - Kenya Thomas, Office of Policy and Governance

WSU's Policies, Records, and Forms office provided an overview of the university's public records retention requirements, emphasizing that all records created in connection with WSU business qualify as public records and must be preserved for their required retention period before being destroyed. Retention schedules—both all-university and department-specific—serve as the legal authorization for destruction unless records are involved in litigation or public records requests. Many everyday communications are considered transitory and may be discarded once business is complete, while official copies of substantive records must follow prescribed retention rules. Examples include course history files retained until course discontinuation, class assignments held for one year, and certain specialized departmental records kept permanently. The university is initiating a revision of all schedules and will be contacting departments as part of this process. FERPA-protected student educational records are primarily managed by the Registrar, reducing departmental responsibility. Department Records Coordinators act as liaisons to PRF and support compliance, and PRF encourages departments to reach out for assistance at policies@wsu.edu.

WSU Library AI Tools – Emily Cukier, Science Librarian; Jon Schoenfelder, Reference Coordinator; Alex Merrill, Associate Dean for Technology and Operations

The WSU Libraries introduced three generative AI research tools—Site, Consensus, and Undermined—to help students, instructors, and researchers more effectively locate, understand, and engage with scholarly literature, emphasizing that these tools differ from general AI platforms by relying solely on academic sources and reducing risks like fabricated citations. The current trials aim to determine the value and instructional relevance of these tools, assess their usefulness for tasks such as refining research questions and generating evidence summaries, and gather feedback to guide future investment decisions. Trial access is available to all WSU affiliates for Site and Consensus, while Undermined access is limited, and budget concerns were raised regarding long-term affordability should these tools be adopted more widely.

More information: https://libguides.libraries.wsu.edu/ai_trials

Feedback survey: https://wsu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_dhtykYq1mCMcGW2

Contact emails:

Emily Cukier, (emily.Cukier@wsu.edu), Science Librarian

Suzanne Fricke, (suzanne.Fricke@wsu.edu), Medical Librarian

Alex Merrill, (merrilla@wsu.edu), Associate Dean for Technology and Operations

Jon Schoenfelder, (j.schoenfelder@wsu.edu), Reference Coordinator

Stephen Bollens – WSU Faculty Senate Representative to the State Legislature

Stephen Bollens, Faculty Representative to the Washington State Legislature, provided an update on the current legislative session, outlining his role on the Council of Faculty and partnerships with faculty senates, higher education organizations, and legislative committees. He explained the distinction between odd-year long sessions and even-year short sessions and reviewed the governor's proposed budget, which includes an estimated 5% cut to WSU through a 3.2% across-the-board reduction and a significant increase in self-insurance costs; House and Senate budgets are expected later in February, with final decisions in March. Bollens highlighted three policy bills: SB 5909 on reviewing low-enrollment undergraduate programs, reflecting increased legislative involvement in academic affairs; SB 6321 proposing a Washington Institute for Scientific Advancement, signaling legislative support for research despite low odds of passage this year; and SB 6325 eliminating the fund split, which has received supportive testimony. He emphasized that while fiscal constraints are severe, there are legislative allies advocating for higher education, encouraged faculty engagement in the legislative process, and noted that presentation slides will be shared.

- I. Call to Order 4:11 pm
- II. Approval of minutes from January 15, 2026, 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 – Provided informational updates on several issues, including the university's carry-forward tax policy, which is a progressive tax assessed at the college or campus level on carry-forward balances of core funds (excluding F&A for this year), ranging from 0% for carry-forward up to 5% of a core budget to a maximum of 20% at 50%, with colleges determining how the tax is applied to individual units or faculty accounts; the formula has been posted in the February Chair Blog. He also reported that, following discussions with Sandra Haynes, Chancellor WSU Tri-Cities and WSU Vancouver, taxation on faculty accruals at the Tri-Cities and Vancouver campuses has been walked back for this year. In addition, clarification from the Provost's Office confirmed that Global Campus will not sign entire annual evaluation packets but will only review and sign the teaching-related portion for courses taught through Global. Finally, Ken noted that he recently provided the Regents with an overview of Faculty Senate activities, which is available via the Regents meeting recording.
 2. Immediate Past Chair – Nothing to report
 3. Chair Elect – Highlighted email communication pushed out reminding faculty of Faculty Senate committee openings. Deadline is Friday, February 13, 2026.



4. Executive Secretary – Reminded individuals interested in running for a Faculty Senate Executive position, that the deadline for submission is Tuesday February 3rd at 5:00 pm. Candidates for the positions will be posted on the website immediately after the Steering Committee meeting on February 5th. Ballots will be sent out after the Faculty Senate meeting on February 12th.
 - B. Board of Regents – Tracy Klein reported on recent activity of the Board of Regents' and the two committees participating in (Academic and Student Affairs and Finance and Administration Committees), highlighting discussions on health sciences leadership, enrollment, accreditation, academic review, and financial planning. The Academic and Student Affairs Committee was introduced to Jeff Haney, Senior Vice Provost for Health Sciences, and discussed systemwide outreach, centralized leadership processes, and continued direct communication between deans and the provost. Regents reviewed enrollment and retention strategies, including development of a real-time enrollment dashboard, approved the NWCCU six-year accreditation report with confidence in institutional readiness for the Year 7 site visit, and received updates on academic review processes across campuses, including discontinuation of two Tri-Cities degree programs with no enrolled students and ongoing or planned reviews in Pullman, Spokane, and Everett. The Finance and Administration Committee reported a clean audit, flat tuition and enrollment revenues, strong grant and federal research funding, and anticipated future actions related to professional program tuition, Pullman auxiliary rates, and a Regents budget vote expected in May, as well as approval of WSU's investment policy, with the next Regents meeting scheduled for March 5–6 in Vancouver.
- V. Information Items
- A. (Item #2026.01.22_579_Steering) Proposal to Rename Educational Psychology Program (Exhibits [579A](#), [579B](#))

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 #2026.01.15_576_CRP) Graduate Major Change Bulletin No. 3, Courses (Exhibit [576A](#))
Motion approved; 53 Approve, 0 Reject
2. (Item #2026.01.15_577_CRP) Professional Health Sciences Major Change Bulletin No. 3, Courses (Exhibit [577A](#))
Motion approved; 54 Approve, 0 Reject
3. (Item #2026.01.15_578_CRP) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 4, Courses (Exhibit [578A](#))
Motion approved; 55 Approve, 0 Reject



4. (Item #2026.01.15_580_FCC) Proposed Faculty Compensation Committee Function Language (Exhibit [580A](#))
Motion approved; 56 Approve, 0 Reject
5. (Item #2026.01.15_581_IAC) Proposed International Affairs Committee Function Language (Exhibit [581A](#))
Motion approved; 56 Approve, 0 Reject
6. (Item #2026.01.15_582_CoC) Proposed updated Committee on Committees Function Language (Exhibit [582A](#), *[582B](#))
* This exhibit is updated document
Motion approved; 56 Approve, 0 Reject
7. (Item #2026.01.15_583_CRP) Graduate Major Change Bulletin No. 5, Courses (Exhibit [583A](#))
Motion approved; 57 Approve, 0 Reject
8. (Item #2026.01.15_584_CRP) Undergraduate Major Change Bulletin No. 5, Courses (Exhibit [584A](#))
Motion approved; 57 Approve, 0 Reject

B. Discussion Items

1. (Item #2026.01.29_586_AAC) Proposed 90 credit Bachelor's Degree update to AR50 (Exhibit [586A](#))
See comments under discussion item #3
2. (Item #2026.01.29_587_AAC) Proposed 90 credit Bachelor's Degree update to AR53 (Exhibit [587A](#))
See comments under discussion item #3
3. (Item #2026.01.29_588_AAC) Proposed 90 credit Bachelor's Degree update to AR 114E (Exhibit [588A](#))

A. MacLean reported on feedback from Sociology faculty regarding the proposed 90-credit BA. Faculty expressed significant concerns, indicated they were largely unaware of the proposal, and noted numerous unanswered questions. Given the scope of the proposed change and the need for broader campus input, MacLean moved that the three agenda items related to the 90-credit BA be returned to committee for further consideration.

J. Peters seconded the motion.



Discussion

- Concern was expressed that discussion of pass/fail grading was premature, noting that the 90-credit degree itself has not yet been approved.
- The need for broader faculty and student input was emphasized, noting limited student feedback to date and that many programs may not yet have discussed the proposal.
- The term “90-credit degree” may be misleading, as proposed programs could range from 90 to 119 credits. It was stated that updates to AR114 (E) will introduce a new catalog section defining distinctions between 120-credit bachelor’s degrees and a 90-credit bachelor’s degree, including specific attributes.
- The 90-credit bachelor’s is intended for applied programs and is not meant to compete with traditional four-year degrees, but rather to provide additional flexibility. The 90-credit bachelor’s degree is an *optional pathway*, not a mandate; feasibility will vary by program due to accreditation and curricular constraints. The department will have to make the decision to offer a three-year degree and discuss the broader impacts on other departments if such degrees are implemented.
- It was clarified that the submitted proposals relate to changes to academic regulations to allow 90-credit degrees and does not approve any specific programs, a new degree will still require separate Faculty Senate approval.
- The proposals stem from NWCCU approval of a third type of bachelor’s degree, with no changes required to federal or state reporting beyond standard bachelor’s requirements.
- Proposals will return to committee to allow senators time to consult constituents, gather concerns, and request documentation before reengagement at Senate.
- Executive leadership offered support in facilitating faculty communication and feedback during this period.

Motion on the floor: The motion is to return discussion items 1, 2, and 3 to committee for further review, discussion, and additional input from the university community.

Motion approved; 45 Approve, 8 Reject

4. (Item #2026.01.29_589_Steering) Proposal to Create MS in Sustainable Aviation Fuels (Exhibits [589A](#), [589B](#), [589C](#), [589D](#), [589E](#), [589F](#), [589G](#))

Move to action 2/12/26

5. (Item #2026.01.29_590_Steering) Proposal to Create MS in Viticulture and Enology Program on Tri-Cities campus (Exhibits [590A](#), [590B](#), [590C](#), [590D](#), [590E](#), [590F](#), [590G](#), [590H](#), [590I](#))

Move to action 2/12/26



6. (Item #2026.01.29_591_AAC) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 6, Requirements (Exhibit [591A](#))
Move to action 2/12/26
7. (Item #2026.01.29_592_AAC) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 7, Requirements (Exhibit [592A](#))
Exhibit 592A does not have the full document, a corrected document will be provided for the 2/12/26 meeting.
8. (Item #2026.01.29_593_PHSC) Professional Health Sciences Major Change Bulletin No. 2, Requirements (Exhibit [593A](#))
Move to action 2/12/26
9. (Item #2026.01.29_594_AAC) Proposed EPPM₃₂ regarding the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) Code Assignment (Exhibits [594A](#), [594B](#))
This is a new policy, there has not been a policy on CIP codes prior to now. Move to action item 2/12/26.

VII. Constituent Concerns

A concern was raised regarding a potential upcoming strike by Academic Student Employees (ASEs). Some faculty have reportedly been asked to consider how much of their lab instruction they could cover in the event of a strike, while other faculty have received no guidance. This has raised questions about faculty workload expectations and institutional support for ASEs.

Discussion:

- Clarification was requested on whether faculty are expected to take on additional instructional responsibilities if ASCs strike.
- Concerns were raised about inconsistent messaging to faculty across units.
- Questions were also raised about the university's and Faculty Senate's position regarding support for ASCs during a potential strike.
- It was noted that guidance on teaching coverage during a strike is currently unclear.
- It was suggested that responsibility for coverage may fall to individual units, though this has not been formally determined.
- The broader question of whether faculty *should* assume additional duties during a strike was identified as unresolved and requiring administrative input.
- The issue will be raised with the Provost to see guidance on expectations and responsibilities.

VIII. Adjournment 5:08 pm

Matthew G. Hudelson

Executive Secretary, WSU Faculty Senate

Associate Professor, Mathematics

Email: mhudelson@wsu.edu