

MINUTES

The Faculty Senate met on Thursday April 16, 2026, in Faculty Senate Conference Room French Admin 344B and via Zoom. Sixty-seven (67) senators were present, two (2) vacancies with twenty-six (26) absent, and twenty-one (21) non-voting participants. The meeting was called to order by Ken Roberts, Senate Chair, at 4:22 pm

Guest Presentation: WSU Presidential Update – President Elizabeth Cantwell

- **Context & Direction**
 - WSU is operating in a prolonged period of disruption in higher education (potentially up to a decade).
 - Focus: positioning WSU for long-term success as a modern 21st-century land-grant institution.
 - Emphasis on system alignment, financial stability, and institutional health.
- **Leadership & Organizational Changes**
 - Statewide campuses reorganized under EVP Sandra Haynes (replacing multiple chancellors) to improve coordination and reduce student “friction.”
 - Athletics leadership restructured under John Harlow with new roles to address revenue and evolving college athletics models.
 - Molly Schatzko appointed Faculty Athletics Representative (student-athlete academic success focus).
 - Terry Parvenkoop leads Tribal Relations, strengthening partnerships with regional tribal nations.
- **Systemwide Redesign (10-Year Horizon)**
 - Ongoing initiative to proactively design WSU’s future.
 - Currently refining options; next steps include stakeholder feedback and defining clear criteria for change.
 - Select initiatives already underway (e.g., general education redesign).
- **Financial Outlook & Budget**
 - Core challenges: limited growth in tuition and declining/flat state funding.
 - Legislative advocacy reduced anticipated cuts (~5.4% → ~1.5%).
 - Continued focus on efficiency, transparency, and balanced budgeting.
- **External Funding & Strategic Initiatives**
 - ~\$54M federal support, including \$50M for aquaculture/aquatic innovation.
 - Leadership roles in:
 - Sustainable aviation fuel (Cascadia Accelerator)
 - Nuclear energy research
 - Growing emphasis on public-private partnerships.
- **Research & Innovation Priorities**
 - Strong push to lead in applied artificial intelligence across disciplines (agriculture, health, energy, security).
 - Positioning WSU as a future-ready, innovation-driven land-grant university.

- **Athletics & Pac-12**
 - New Pac-12 launches July 1.
 - Priority: diversifying revenue and adapting to rapidly changing athletics landscape.
- **Engagement & Data-Informed Planning**
 - Campus listening sessions underway; insights will inform redesign.
 - Use of AI to analyze stakeholder data and campus differences.
- **Academic Priorities**
 - Maintain academic excellence and expand undergraduate research participation (~25% currently).
 - Focus on career readiness, mentorship, and student success during a period of societal and technological change.
- **Key Takeaways**
 - WSU must act as a proactive change leader.
 - Continued emphasis on system alignment and reducing barriers for students.
 - Faculty remain central to the university's mission and future.

Questions & Answers:

- **Undergraduate Research Funding**
 - Faculty noted loss of NSF undergraduate research supplements, limiting support.
 - President Cantwell:
 - Indicated no central institutional funds available for replacement.
 - Proposed pursuing large-scale private foundation grants to fund undergraduate research programs.
 - Offered to collaborate **on institution-level proposals**.
- **Elimination of Chancellor Roles (Statewide Campuses)**
 - Faculty expressed concern about:
 - Lack of transparency/data behind decision.
 - Loss of campus leadership and local representation.
 - Increased travel burden and costs under centralized leadership.
 - President Cantwell:
 - Cited low enrollment and high cost-per-student at campuses as key factors.
 - Noted prior model (high-cost chancellors to drive growth) did not achieve intended results.
 - Asserted consolidation is more cost-efficient, even accounting for travel.
 - Emphasized commitment to:
 - Maintaining strong community engagement
 - Ensuring faculty voices remain central
 - Indicated the model will be evaluated over the next 1–2 years.

- **ABD Waiver (Doctoral Tuition Waivers)**
 - Faculty raised concerns that sunseting ABD waivers will:
 - Increase research costs (tuition for advanced PhD students not taking courses).
 - Reduce ability to support and retain graduate students.
 - Potentially shorten PhD timelines unrealistically (e.g., 3-year completion).
 - President Cantwell:
 - Noted this decision falls under the Provost's authority.
 - Acknowledged concerns and research impacts.

Chris Riley-Tillman (ABD Waiver Process)

- **Issues with ABD Waiver Process**
 - Practice is atypical compared to other universities.
 - Caused recurring problems affecting multiple students (not isolated cases).
 - Students reported:
 - Pressure to take comprehensive exams early to qualify as ABD.
 - Perceived delays in graduation to maintain ABD status for funding.
- **Concerns About Student Treatment**
 - Situations created inequities and discomfort for students.
 - Funding structures tied to ABD status contributed to problematic incentives.
- **Alternative Waiver Options**
 - Existing waiver streams allow funding to be tied to research projects, not student status.
 - Principal Investigators (PIs) can select the best candidate, regardless of ABD status.
 - Shift away from ABD waivers led to underuse of these project-based waivers.
- **Impact on Research Metrics**
 - Project-based (flex) waivers count toward research expenditures (HERD metrics).
 - ABD waivers do not, leading to underreporting of research activity.
 - Decline in use negatively affected research spending metrics.
- **Recommendations**
 - Faculty should consult with:
 - Deans
 - Vice Deans of Research
 - Use available alternative waiver mechanisms.
- **Additional Context**
 - ABD students have low-cost enrollment option (~\$50 tuition pool).
 - Reduced credit requirements have eased ABD-related pressures.
 - Transition away from ABD waivers has been communicated for over 1.5 years.
- **Implementation Timeline**
 - ABD waiver phase-out extended to align end dates.
 - Final extension granted for one additional semester (originally ending earlier).
- **Key Takeaway**
 - Faculty are encouraged to move toward project-based waivers improving equity for students and strengthens institutional research reporting.

Questions & Answers:**Faculty Concern Re: Research Funding**

- D. Jackson raised concerns about:
 - Reduced institutional support for CORS
 - Increased burden on PIs to fund research and student support.
 - Growing difficulty sustaining research with rising costs.
- Questioned whether F&A (Facilities & Administrative) funds could better support labs, students, and core infrastructure.

Chris Riley-Tillman (Research Funding)

- **Use of F&A Funds**
 - PIs already receive a portion of F&A, which can be used to support graduate students.
- **Graduate Funding Model – Key Issue**
 - Only ~18% of WSU graduate students are funded on grants, compared to ~42% at peer institutions.
 - Indicates over-reliance on institutional waivers rather than grant funding.
- **Implications of Current Approach**
 - Excessive waivers:
 - Reduce incentive to secure additional grants.
 - Limit alignment with peer research institutions.
 - At other institutions, graduate students are typically funded directly through grants, not waivers.
- **Recommended Shift**
 - Increase graduate student funding through grants.
 - Use project-based (flex) waivers when necessary:
 - Must be built into grant proposals upfront.
 - Especially relevant for agencies with funding caps (e.g., NSF, NIH, USDA).
- **ABD Waiver Concerns Reinforced**
 - Tying waivers to ABD status creates:
 - Misaligned incentives (e.g., delaying graduation, early comps).
 - Risks placing students in disadvantageous situations.
 - ABD students already have a low-cost (\$50) tuition option.
- **Benchmarking**
 - Peer institutions typically fund 30–60% of graduate students on grants, much higher than current levels.

- **Conclusion / Guidance**
 - Move away from student-based waivers (e.g., ABD) toward grant/project-based funding models.
 - Multiple alternative pathways for funding already exist and should be utilized.
 - Cannot guarantee waivers for every grant.
 - Institutional resources are limited.
- **Funding Priority**
 - Emphasis on funding graduate students directly on grants rather than relying on waivers.
 - Departments should first assess whether student support can be built into grant budgets.
- **Guiding Principle**
 - If allowable, graduate student funding should come from the grant itself.
 - Waivers are not the default or guaranteed solution.
- **Key Takeaway**
 - Long-term sustainability and competitiveness require shifting graduate support onto grants rather than relying on institutional waivers, while avoiding incentive structures that may negatively impact student progress
 - Shift expectation away from automatic waivers toward grant-funded student support as the primary model.

- I. Call to Order **4:22 PM**
- II. Approval of minutes from April 2, 2026, Faculty Senate meeting ([PDF](#))
Approved by unanimous consent
- III. Additions or changes to the agenda
J. McDonald motioned to move discussion item #1 to action, P. Buckley seconded.
Motion approved; 54 Approve, 3 Reject
- IV. Updates

A. Remarks by Faculty Senate Executive Committee

1. Faculty Senate Chair - Summary of the feedback on the go-credit bachelor discussion idea is nearly finished. I will provide a summary of those discussion items in the survey in the next day or two. Also, as President Campbell mentioned, the co-design process does continue, and the last meeting was a couple of weeks ago in terms of in-person discussions. There's nothing specific to report this time, but I know that some of this will be coming together, and I expect that some of it will be communicated out after the end of the semester, so I would ask everybody to just be watching out for any updates from that Co-Design Council work over the summer.
2. Immediate Past Chair – Nothing to report
3. Chair Elect – Big thank you to Ken for leading Senate this past year.
4. Executive Secretary – Nothing to report

B. Board of Regents – Next BoR meeting is May 7th

C. Legislative Update – Nothing to report

V. Information Items

None

Note: *Senators are encouraged to bring questions about discussion items to the Senate meeting. Senators 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 #2026.04.02_617_GSC) Proposal to Rename Experimental Psychology Plan to Psychological Sciences (Exhibits [617A](#), [617B](#), [617C](#), [617D](#), [617E](#))
Motion Approved; 55 Approve, 1 Reject
2. (Item #2026.04.02_611_Steering) Proposed 2026-2027 Faculty Senate meeting schedule (Exhibit [611A](#), [611B](#))
Motion Approved; 58 Approve, 0 Reject
3. (Item #2026.04.2_612_Steering) Recommendation from the Faculty Senate Steering Committee for the Steering Committee to carry out all necessary Faculty Senate functions during the period of May 16, 2026, through August 15, 2026.
Motion Approved; 60 Approve, 0 Reject
4. (Item #2026.04.02_614_CoC) Recommendations for Committee Membership 2026 – 2027 (Exhibit [614A](#))
Motion Approved; 57 Approve, 0 Reject
5. (Item #2026.04.02_615_AAC) Proposal to Extend Bachelor of Science (BS) in Computer Engineering to WSU Everett (Exhibits [615A](#), [615B](#), [615C](#), [615D](#), [615E](#), [615F](#), [615G](#), [615H](#), [615I](#))
Motion Approved; 54 Approve, 2 Reject
6. (Item #2026.04.02_618_GSC) Proposal to Establish a Graduate Certificate in Healthcare Statistics (Exhibits [618A](#), [618B](#))
Motion Approved; 55 Approve, 2 Reject
7. (Item #2026.04.02_619_FAC) Proposed Updates to *Faculty Manual* Section III.D.7 Annual Review of Faculty ([619A](#), [619B](#), [619C](#))
Motion Approved; 53 Approve, 1 Reject



8. (Item #2026.04.02_620_GSC) Proposal to Establish a MS in Artificial Intelligence (Exhibits [620A](#), [620B](#), [620C](#), [620D](#), [620E](#), [620F](#), [620G](#), [620H](#), [620I](#), [620J](#), [620K](#), *[620L](#))
**This item has been added*
Motion Approved; 49 Approve, 4 Reject
9. (Item #2026.04.02_621_AAC) Recommended update to AR105 Administrative Changes to Final Grades (Exhibit [621A](#))
Motion Approved; 53 Approve, 1 Reject
10. (Item #2026.04.02_622_AAC) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 10, Requirements (Exhibit [622A](#))
Motion Approved; 53 Approve, 0 Reject
11. (Item #2026.04.02_623_CRP) UCORE Changes approved by the UCORE Committee – Bulletin No. 2 (Exhibit [623A](#))
Motion Approved; 55 Approve, 0 Reject
12. (Item #2026.04.02_624_CRP) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 8, Courses (Exhibit [624A](#))
Motion Approved; 55 Approve, 0 Reject
13. (Item #2026.04.02_625_CRP) Graduate Major Change Bulletin No. 8, Courses (Exhibit [625A](#))
Motion Approved; 56 Approve, 0 Reject
14. (Item #2026.04.02_626_FAC) Updates to *Faculty Manual* Section III.D.8 Process for Tenure and Advancement in Rank (Exhibits [626A](#), [626B](#), [626C](#), [626D](#))
Motion Approved; 53 Approve, 1 Reject
15. (Item #2026.04.02_627_FAC) New *Faculty Manual* Section III.D.8 Faculty Promotion and Tenure Dossier (Exhibits [627A](#), [627B](#))
Motion Approved; 54 Approve, 0 Reject
16. (Item #2026.04.02_628_FAC) Update to *Faculty Manual* Section III.D.1 Part-Time Faculty (Exhibits [628A](#), [628B](#), [628C](#))
Motion Approved; 53 Approve, 0 Reject
17. (Item #2026.04.02_629_FAC) Updates to *Faculty Manual* Section I.B Tracks and Titles (Exhibit [629A](#), [629B](#), [629C](#), *[629D](#), *[629E](#))
**These items have been updated*
J. Miller moved to add additional language to Library Faculty; "Positions are pre-tenured or tenured with the rank of librarian 2, librarian 3, librarian 4, or regents' librarian." J. Roll seconded
Motion to amend Approved; 50 Approve, 2 Reject
Motion to approve item 629 as amended; 52 Approve, 0 Reject

18. Approval of Undergraduate Degrees:

I move that the university faculty recommend to the president and the Board of Regents that, effective at the closing dates for each graduating class, those undergraduate students who have completed degree requirements and whose names remain on the "Official List of Degree Candidates" be advanced to the degrees set above their names as members of the classes of Spring 2026, Summer 2026, and Fall 2026

Motion Approved; 52 Approve, 0 Reject

19. Approval of Graduate and Professional Degrees:

I move that the university faculty recommend to the president and the Board of Regents that, effective at the closing dates for each graduating class, those graduate and professional students who have completed degree requirements and whose names remain on the "Official List of Degree Candidates" be advanced to the degrees set above their names as members of the classes of Spring 2026, Summer 2026, and Fall 2026 –

Motion Approved; 54 Approve, 0 Reject

20. (Item #2026.04.16_631_AAC) Undergraduate and Professional Major Change Bulletin No. 10 Addendum 1, Requirements (Exhibit [631A](#), *[631B](#))

**This item has been updated*

Motion Approved as amended; 51 Approve, 1 Reject

B. Discussion Items**VII. Constituent Concerns****CAS Workload Policy (P. Buckley)**

- Faculty raised broad concerns about the new workload policy, citing lack of time for full review.
- Policy seen as one-size-fits-all, not suited to diverse or lab-based disciplines (e.g., chemistry).
- Teaching load higher than peer R1s; reductions possible but key work (e.g., summer effort, mentoring) not fully counted.
- Penalties for small research groups despite limits on grad student enrollment.
- Small activity changes can trigger large teaching load increases, creating instability.
- Concerns about unsatisfactory reviews, recruitment challenges, and misalignment with department needs.
- No faculty input in development; chairs involved but under confidentiality, limiting communication.
- Faculty Senate response noted lack of department-specific customization and considered advocacy options.

Teaching Policy Concerns (J. Liu)

- Faculty in Mechanical & Materials Engineering report similar concerns about annual reviews and teaching load increases.
- New policy has led to higher teaching loads for many faculty.
- Fairness concern: applying a uniform policy across different units does not account for disciplinary differences.
- Research impact concern: increased teaching during funding transition periods may hinder time needed to secure new research funding, potentially undermining research goals.

Secrecy & Policy Process (D. Grigar)

- Concern raised about chairs being “sworn to secrecy” during policy development; viewed as troubling and potentially inappropriate.
- Similar instances noted in multiple colleges, suggesting a possible pattern.
- Question posed on whether such confidentiality practices are typical or acceptable in policy development.
- Faculty Senate response: unclear how common this is; not typical experience for policies affecting faculty broadly. Noted distinction between normal confidential discussions and college-wide policy development, where transparency is expected. Emphasized importance of department-level flexibility and input in workload models to reflect disciplinary differences and support research/teaching goals.

Funding Concerns (P. Bates)

- Research funding pressures and increasing financial burdens. Perception that research support is being “nickel and dimed” through multiple policies and charges.
- ABD waiver and postdoc unionization decisions:
 - Faculty were not included in discussions. Resulted in significant, unplanned cost increases that must be covered by grants.
- F&A (Facilities & Administrative) funds issue:
 - Administration suggests using F&A funds, but these are being taxed/reduced, limiting flexibility.
 - Faculty cannot save funds for future needs (e.g., tuition after a grant ends).
- Grant/tuition policy concerns:
 - If a funding opportunity allows tuition, faculty are required to include it, even when it is not practical.
 - Example: USDA grants (with low funding caps) force trade-offs:
 - Paying tuition reduces funds available for research, faculty salary, or summer pay.
 - Leads to situations where faculty cannot pay themselves for project work.
- Overall sentiment:
 - Faculty feel they are being asked to do more with fewer flexible resources.
 - There is a perception that the university is not adequately supporting research efforts.

Graduate School response to waiver policy (T. Barry):

- Flex waiver policy updated following discontinuation of ABD waivers.
- Change intended to increase flexibility, including allowing budgetary constraints as a valid reason.
- New policy has led to increased applications, many for varied reasons beyond tuition issues.
- Most requests have been approved, though not guaranteed.
- Details are available in [April 14, 2026, ABD Waiver memo](#) and on the website.

VIII. Adjournment 5:03 pm



Matthew G. Hudelson

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