



MINUTES
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2026
ZOOM
3:05 P.M.

Regular Session

The following members attended the Senate meeting:

T. Adams, M. Akiba, J. Ang, J. Atkins, R. Atkinson, A. Baco-Taylor, R. Ballard, A. Barbu, A. Barton-Hulsey, T. Bick, B. Birmingham, D. Bish, M. Bourassa, J. Brown Speights, D. Broxterman, M. Buchler, D. Butcher, W. Butler, J. Calhoun, I. Chiorescu, C. Chouhy, J. Clark, M. Cortez, M. Day, N. de Grummond, T. Dogru, R. Duarte, A. Fahim, R. Goodman, T. Graban, S. Haiduc, A. Hanley, K. Hanson, W. Hochwarter, C. Hofacker, R. Hughes, K. Jones, T. Kellison, H. Kern, M. Killian, E. Kim, K. Kinahan, T. Kwasnica, A. Lauersdorf, M. Marengo, R. Marrinan, S. Metcalfe, S. Miller, L. Perez-Felkner, S. Piatkowska, M. Porter, E. Powell, J. Proffitt, B. Quaife, M. Ransdell, R. Roberts, N. Rogers, Q. Sang, G. Springer, G. Stanwood, J. Steiner, D. Thoms, C. Uejio, A. Volya, A. Wetherby, G. Williamson

The following members were absent. Alternates are listed in parenthesis:

T. Abichou, G. Adams, F. Barrientos, M. Bishop, J. Broome, E. Bush, W. Christiansen, J. Cogle, K. Dowell, D. Eccles, S. Fahmy, M. Feulner, J. Hamilton, P. Hiver, E. Klassen, T. Ledermann, L. Lee, S. Lester, D. March, C. Moore, O. Moses Anubi, J. Murray-Roman, T. Needham, C. Ogle, S. Pappas, J. Pappas, I. Quinn, L. Rinaman, M. Romney, M. Roper, E. Ryan, P. Sanyal, S. Singh, J. Sobanjo, T. Soldat-Jaffe, R. Stilling, M. Swanbrow Becker, R. Sweat, A. Terracciano, G. Tyson, S. Valisa, A. Wing, H. Yi

I. Call to order

II. Approval of the agenda for February 18, 2026 meeting

Agenda was approved.

III. Approval of minutes for the January 21, 2026 meeting

Minutes were approved.

IV. Report of the Faculty Senate Steering Committee – Jennifer Proffitt

- The Faculty Senate Steering Committee met 3 times since the Jan. 21st meeting, which included meetings with Provost Clark, VP Taylor, General Counsel Caroline Egan, and the search committee team for the new graduate dean.
- The Committee thanked faculty for the success of the FSU Faculty Recharge series sponsored by the Provost and Faculty Senate. Any faculty/staff interested in attending the Spring sessions should refer to the website.

115 Westcott Building, 222 S. Copeland Street, P.O. Box 3061480, Tallahassee, FL 32306-1480
 Telephone 850.644.7497 • Fax 850.644.3375 • <http://facsenate.fsu.edu>

- The ACFS meet during the January BOG meeting. One of the discussions from the meeting was the faculty's opinion on the presidential search process. Ideas were proposed on how to better optimize the process.
- At the BOG meeting, Chancellor Ray Rodriguez shared his thoughts on the H-1B proposal, which would stall hiring of faculty/staff on H-1B visas until January 5, 2027. The ACFS president serves on the BOG.
 - The ACFS president and student representative made arguments against the proposal, but it did ultimately pass for the first vote. Public comment has ended and the BOG plans to make its decisions at the next meeting.
- The FSSC discussed expectations and criteria with Dean Andrew and VP O'Shea for the new graduate school dean. They are in the process of developing a formal job description.
- On February 24th and 25th, the FSU Board of Trustees will meet. The meeting agenda is available on the Board of Trustees website. Senator Proffitt remarked that anyone with questions can reach out to her.
- The floor was open to questions; no questions were posed.

V. **Announcements of the President of the University**

- The upcoming Board of Trustees meeting will include reviewing the renewal of President McCullough's contract, which will extend his term for three more years. New regulation grants extensions to the president's contract period if approved by the Board of Trustees and the BOG.
 - August 15th marks President McCullough's fifth year at FSU.
- President McCullough expressed gratitude to the Faculty Senate for allowing him the opportunity to make the State of the University Address in December. He enjoyed discussing FSU's accomplishments throughout his time with the university (since 2021) and discussing future goals and plans.
- The House and Senate proposed budgets for FSU at the legislative session on January 13th. FSU achieved much success in the House—nearly all PICO requests were approved, such as renovations and new building construction. While not as successful, the Senate agreed to fund \$20 million towards constructing FSU's engineering building.
- The engineering school could use more space to support FSU and FAMU staff/faculty.
- Not much activity currently with proposed legislative policies.
- The guardian bill proposes a restriction on admitted out-of-state students (around 5% of total admitted population for undergraduates). If passed, universities will need to develop an approach to reliable enforcement.
- If passed, the H-1B visa bill will stall employment of visa dependents for the year until 2027.
 - New chair of the BOG, Al Levine, stated that exceptions may be made for hiring international individuals in the engineering and science fields. As of now, decision-making is not confirmed.
- Search continues for the Graduate School Dean and for the College of Social Work.
 - Dean Damon Andrew is the chair of the dean's search committee. Isaacson and Miller are also involved. And Dean Tim Chapin is the chair for the College of Social work dean.
- Stats from Fall 2025 admissions: 92,000 applications and 6,000 acceptances. 10% increase in applications from last year. March 1st is the final deadline for accepting admittances.
 - Record averages in GPA at 4.5, 1430 SAT, and 32 ACT.
 - President McCullough thanked Director of Student Admissions Hege Ferguson for the incredible work.
- Stats from current freshman class: 97% retention rate. FSU ranks in the Top 4 for public universities with the highest freshman retention.
 - 78% 4-year graduation rate last year; FSU ranks 9th among public universities.
 - President McCullough credited Provost of International Initiatives and Interim Dean, Steve McDowell for the achievements. Additionally, Joe O'Shea, the Student Success team, Provost's Office, and Dean of Undergraduate Studies DeOnte Brown were mentioned for the success.
- FSU ranks No. 1 on innovation, economic impact, and ... in the Times' World Top Universities ranking.

- FSU's online graduate degree programs also excel in national rankings. Currently FSU has 13-degree programs that have earned best status. The School of Information and Anne's College are notable standouts in distance learning programs among public schools. The Engineering and Business schools (w. the MBA program) are also highly ranked.
- President McCullough noted the continuous efforts from faculty in making this happen.
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- FSU Health is continuing its healthcare initiatives for local and regional communities in Tallahassee and greater Northwest Florida. The Tallahassee Commission confirmed the transfer of ownership of assets at Tallahassee Memorial Hospital to FSU. The Academic Health Center will be under FSU Health. It's expected on March 11th, the city commission will vote on formalizing the transfer. In exchange, FSU promises to invest in TMH and the new academic health center to support more faculty and infrastructure.
- The Institute for Pediatric Rare Diseases is actively involved in providing testing to young children for rare genetic diseases. This work has attracted a lot of attention among professionals and the public, which will be important to advancing R&D for treatment and cures.
- President McCullough recognized the School of Dance, one of the best national dance programs. FSU's dance instructor received national recognition for her choreography, and instructor Nia Love received the Bessie award for her Undercurrents choreography.
- FSU Athletics recently welcomed the women's lacrosse team. FSU now has a complex built for lacrosse.
- The floor was open for questions.
- **Senator Kathryn Jones, Arts & Sciences** – asked whether the H-1B proposal will likely be passed.
 - President McCullough – answered that he does not know the final decision. He expects the proposal to go forward, and policies may change later next year. Exceptions may be made for individuals working in critical fields like engineering and sciences. Expressed his hopes of easing future H-1B regulations, but they are likely to remain restrictive this year.
 - Kathryn Jones, Arts & Sciences – commented that many international students attended school or trained in the US for a great part of their higher education. Expressed that international students tend to be highly cautious of engaging with unlawful immigration activities.
- **Senator Robin Goodman, Arts & Sciences** – asked President McCullough for his thoughts and expectations on the House's and Senate's budget decisions.
 - President McCullough – stated that he cannot make confirmations but believes that the PICO fraction of the budget will go through. That is funding for construction and for the veteran center, Criminology, Engineering, DeVoe L. Moore, the Nursing School, and FSU Health. The House tends to be highly supportive of FSU requests.
 - President McCullough – stated that the requested budget will also go towards the arts district if passed by the Northwest Academic Order and the House. Operational dollars and performance funding are included in PICO, but preeminence and faculty funding will not be included this year. Amount in operational funding will determine the potential for a salary raise at the faculty senate.
- No other questions were posed.

VI. Reports of special committees

No report from special committees

VII. Reports of standing committees

a. Graduate Bulletin Change - Todd Adams, Chair of the Graduate Policy Committee (addendum 1)

- Changes proposed to the graduate Bulletin:
 - Firstly, a change to the minimum required TOEFL score of 4 for admissions. Students who took the test before January 21st will rely on the old scoring system, while students who took it after the date will be assessed based on the new scoring system.

- Second, Cambridge, Michigan, and Duolingo English-proficiency tests will become permanent options.
- Third, the minimum required Duolingo score is adjusted from 120 to 125. This was recommended by the admissions committee. In the documents provided in the senate meeting materials, anything highlighted in blue and yellow indicates these new proposed changes.
- The GPC committee voted on each of the proposals, and all passed.
- The floor was open to questions.
- **Senator Tarez Graban, Arts & Sciences** – mentioned that votes should be for all three proposals at the same time.
 - Senator Bridgett Birmingham, University Libraries – seconded the motion.
- **A poll was launched. 64 votes. 63 yes. 1 no. 0 abstained. Approved.**
- Senator Todd Adams continued that the GPC committee is looking to revise outdated language in policies on non-native English-speaking students. This is to ensure that the language clearly reflects current policies.
- **Senator Roxanne Hughes, Anne's College** – asked Senator Adams if he wanted people to share their opinions via email or to share them at the meeting.
 - Senator Todd Adams – replied that he would prefer to receive them via email. Discussions are always welcome, but the GPC committee is the best place to have these conversations.
- No other questions were posed.

VIII. Unfinished business

No unfinished business.

IX. New Business

a. ByLaws Updates – Roxanne Hughes, Faculty Senate President, Faculty Senate Steering Committee (addendum 2)

- Changes have been proposed to Faculty Senate bylaws. This occurred because of the merging of the College of Education and the College of Health and Human Sciences. Changes include a new name for the College of Education. Open discussion is welcome. Voting for these changes will happen at the next meeting.
- A Library committee representative from Anne's College is looking to add new members to their meeting committee.
- The Undergraduate Policy committee also needs representation from each of the colleges.
- The floor was open to questions.
- **Senator Bridgett Birmingham, University Libraries** – commented that faculty should take the bylaw proposals back to their respective colleges to get feedback. So that by the next meeting, everyone is ready to vote.
- No questions were posed.
- No other new business.

X. University welfare

a. FSU Food Pantry Overview and Future Opportunities – Dr. Amy Hecht, Vice President for Student Affairs

- The Food Pantry is located on the 4th floor of University Center A and is accessible to all currently enrolled students. Access is limited to once per day. Student Affairs is an organizer of food distribution events around campus.
 - The pantry supplies foods like frozen meat, dry foods, produce, and hygiene products. Cash and food donation spots are located in Strozier, Dirac, and the dining halls.
 - Student Affairs also makes donations of meals and gift cards to students. The FSU Center for Service also assists students in applying for SNAP benefits.
- The Food Pantry gets its food from retail partners, farms, and campus dining. Fresh produce and vegetables come from Second Harvest and other local farms.

- FSU also participates in annual drives. Student Affairs extends their thanks to the faculty for support in rallies for a recent fire that affected student housing of many graduate students.
- The pantry gets around 23,000 visitors annually, around 4,000 students. Visitors experience food insecurity to varying extents. A large portion are off-campus students, many being international graduate students.
- Student Affairs express their gratitude to Trustee Katherine and husband Brian Ballard for their \$1 million donation to the food pantry. Their gift is significant to support future expansions and long-term services for FSU students.
- The food pantry has goals of upsizing the facility, replacing the carpet flooring, and obtaining more durable shelves. A larger space would lessen long queues. The pantry also has goals of supporting nutrition and cooking education and recipe books.
 - Emphasis on redesigning the pantry to be grocery store-like and cultivating a welcoming and nonjudgmental space. Additionally, we would like to make sure that parking spaces and bus stops are nearby for off-campus students.
- The floor was open to questions.
- **Senator Marlo Ransdell, Fine Arts** – offered to assist with connecting the Student Affairs team to carpeting suppliers.
 - VP Hecht – stated that the team would appreciate the assistance as the projects will take a community effort. The team is working on architectural renderings of the pantry to plan for more storage space. The pantry has become an invaluable place for students during affected living incidents.
- No other questions were posed.

b. United Faculty of Florida - Robin Goodman, President FSU Chapter

- The UFF-FSU lobbied against the guardian bill, which supports the capping of out-of-state student admittance rates in Florida universities.
- The UFF-FSU also lobbied against the union-busting bill. The committee ultimately voted in support of the bill. There has been no sign of reamending the bill, so it is not confirmed whether the bill will move forward.
- The committee also filed chapter grievance against public-facing syllabi with reasoning that the university has no right to publicize intellectual property. This is supported by the administration having signed a contract stating that instructional materials are instructors' properties.
 - The case has been moved to arbitration because the university does not handle grievances but the BOG.
 - The Board of Trustees will vote this week.
- The committee filed a lawsuit against the BOG and Board of Education concerning the arbitration ban. Arbitration does not happen often at FSU, but it remains important for faculty/staff to understand how to settle disputes before arbitration, which can be costly.
 - The committee believes the ban is unconstitutional, specifically violating the Interstate Commerce Clause and the Federal Arbitration Act.
 - FSU held this case with UF before FSU was withdrawn from standing due to the absence of a recent arbitration. The judge later brought FSU back as plaintiffs, so it is possible that the case will progress.
- On Friday, February 27th, the Solidarity Social will be hosted at North Flora, Railroad Square. Gaines Street Pies is a co-host. This social is a great place to discuss policies in Florida. Faculty/staff are welcome to bring their families.
- The committee is working to obtain tickets to the circus and a trip to the softball game against UC Berkeley. Dates are still in the air. Any updates or ticket offers will be announced via email. Contact Senator Goodman for any questions.
- The floor was open to questions.
- **Senator Kathryn Jones, Arts & Sciences** – asked what the plans were for the imposition of sociology texts, and whether this will extend to texts in other college departments.
 - Senator Robin Goodman – responded that the webinar on this is being held today. The BOG has developed its own sociology textbook, which FSU and FIU are using. The UFF and the

statewide senate voted against this. FSU currently does not have this in writing. Senator Goodman advised that faculty contact her if there is written evidence of limiting speech in the classroom. There are expectations that this type of text will develop in other colleges.

- Senator Kathryn Jones, Arts & Sciences – asked if there was a contract for writing the textbook or did the BOG write it.
- Senator Robin Goodman – answered that there were 4 sociologists on the committee. It seemed that the textbook was constructed by individuals who are not specialized in the field.
- No other questions were posed.

XI. Announcements of deans and other administrative officers

a. Simple Syllabus – Amy Guerette, Office of Faculty Development and Advancement

- The FDA is continuing to update the FAQs for Simple Syllabus on the FDA website for faculty and staff.
- March 1st is the upcoming deadline for publishing syllabi on simple syllabus. Syllabi must be posted 45 days in advance of a new semester. Syllabi will go live publicly on March 4th.
 - The deadline for the summer semester is March 24th. Deadline for Fall 2026 semester is July 9th.
- Classes that are labeled as discussion, lecture, lab, or medicine (for Col. of Medicine) are classes available on simple syllabus. These classes will all have syllabi and a course component which can be searched for in Coursedog.
 - Classes that are individualized study, DIS, dissertation, thesis, supervised teaching/research, and internship are not publicly published.
- The primary instructor for a course is responsible for creating and publishing the syllabus. If an instructor gets admitted to the course after the deadline, they are required to publish it as soon as possible.
 - The FDA is working on course objectives to automatically transfer to Coursedog; hopefully by Spring 2027 semester.
 - Administrative access to simple syllabus is decided within colleges.
- Dr. Guerette thanked UCC committee member Senator Greg Stanwood for his tremendous help in addressing issues with out-of-date curricula. UCC is helping to get courses streamlined to speed up the process of approval.
- An email will go out to associate deans and department chairs about forms that faculty can access and send in.
- The floor was open to questions.
- **Senator Arash Fahim, Arts & Sciences** – asked what the available options are for course components if faculty is interested in changing the course component in the streamlined process.
 - Amy Guerette – replied that there is a list that contains all the course components available.
- **Senator Tarez Graban, Arts & Sciences** – asked why the course objectives field cannot be opened freely to instructors and must go through form requests.
 - Amy Guerette, FDA – the reason is to ensure that course objectives are consistent and updated. Especially among courses that have multiple sections covered by different instructors and TAs.
 - Jeanette Taylor VP FDA – replied that the system allows the university to stay compliant with the state and that anything shared with the state is consistent with what exists in the system.
 - Senator Tarez Graban, Arts & Sciences – commented that it would be better to make the official SLOs more visible/easier to access by faculty teaching their courses. Enabling faculty to enter in the SLOs could eliminate the need for them to include so many auxiliary documents in Canvas. Added that updating SLOs is not possible for all faculty, as not all faculty work on Coursedog; some units have a designated person who enters in course proposals.
- **Senator Kathryn Jones, Arts & Sciences** – commented that a lot of the faculty are new to Coursedog. Asked whether the new system will prevent faculty from providing enough information about their course in the syllabus. Some microbiology courses have multiple instructors who emphasize different topics.
 - Amy Guerette, FDA – answered that standardization in course objectives is necessary for student transcripts. Dr. Guerette added that more discussions could be held on this matter.

- Jeanette Taylor, VP FDA – added that the objectives are to provide students with enough information on the teaching plan/outcomes. Differences in topic emphasis can be highlighted in the Canvas.
- Jeanette Taylor, VP FDA – recommended faculty members speak with their chair and invite FDA leadership to address concerns. Faculty may benefit from speaking with colleagues teaching the course.
- **Senator Michael Buchler, Music** – seconded Senator Graban on allowing faculty freer access to courses they're instructing. Asked if there is any sort of preventative measure to keep publicized syllabi from unethical use. Stated that syllabi are the property of instructors, so stealing would violate the contract.
 - Jeanette Taylor, VP FDA – responded that there is a warning on the splash page in the syllabus library.
 - Senator Michael Buchler, Music – stated that the academic property decision is on the Board of Trustees agenda.
 - Jeanette Taylor, VP FDA – replied that FSU must comply with regulations set forth by the BOG.
 - Senator Michael Buchler, Music – commented that there should be consequences for cases of stolen academic property.
 - **Senator Tarez Graban, Arts & Sciences** – asked if another function could be built into Simple Syllabus that wasn't publicly visible for instructors to include more specific course outcomes, reducing the need for students to have to navigate multiple course documents
 - Amy Guerette, FDA – answered that everything on the simple syllabus is publicized.
 - Tarez Graban, Arts & Sciences – *explained that not all students access course materials consistently and well. Asked whether, if Simple Syllabus enables a downloadable print copy, the download could integrate the auxiliary documents in Canvas so that students are still only working with a single document.*
 - Jeanette Taylor, VP FDA – responded that the FDA team was open to feedback and would adjust when necessary. The simple syllabus must be publicized.
- **Senator Roxanne Hughes, Anne's College** – someone asked whether there is a change to the July deadline for posting Fall 2026 syllabus if faculty do not have a summer contract.
 - Jeanette Taylor, VP FDA – recommended that faculty speak with their department chair or dean if they need time to create the syllabus during the Spring semester. The start date for knowing Fall semester course assignments is the last week of February. Courses that faculty have taught previously should be structured like the prior model. After publishing, faculty are always welcome to make updates, such as adding new readings.
- **Senator Rob Duarte, Fine Arts** – asked if exporting the syllabus is possible for public viewers. Stated that he has used and published in simple syllabus and is interested in seeing if additional features could be added to minimize unethical use.
 - Amy Guerette, FDA – replied that simple syllabus was built on complying with the minimum requirements of the law. Stated that FDA was open to holding a discussion.
- **Senator Tenley Bick, Fine Arts** – asked why office hours and location needed to be public.
 - Amy Guerette, FDA – answered that office locations do not need to be mentioned. They can be replaced with NA. More information can be found on the FAQs on the FDA website.
- **Senator Timothy Kellison, Anne's College** – stated that instructions on the FDA website may be unclear to faculty. The instructions to include office hours/location and phone number are bold, whereas the comment that it is optional is in normal font.
 - Amy Guerette, FDA – commented that an email address is required. Office hours are still expected because students need to know how to contact instructors, but it is acceptable for hours to be mentioned on Canvas.
 - Senator Timothy Kellison, Anne's College – commented that faculty want their students to know their office hours but simply have privacy and safety concerns.
- **Senator Jen Atkins, Fine Arts** – stated that she did not think it was safe for students and instructors to publicize office hours and locations.
 - Amy Guerette, FDA – answered that faculty can avoid mentioning their course/office locations and meeting date/time from simple syllabus.

- **Senator Qian Xiang (Amy) Sang, Arts & Sciences** – stated that science courses commonly have long course descriptions. Currently, there are two versions of the syllabus, one for students and a simplified version for simple syllabus.
 - Amy Guerette, FDA – replied that two versions of the syllabus are not possible. One of them may go by a different name, such as course/material addendum documents, which would be available on Canvas. They simply cannot both be called syllabi.
 - Jeanette Taylor, VP FDA – answered that if there are already two syllabi, to get one into Coursedog. If the situation is complicated in nature, the FDA team and the specific department can work individually on the matter.
 - Amy Guerette, FDA – answered that course policy on the grading system, such as how students lose/earn points that need to be on simple syllabus. Other information like lab procedures can just be included on Canvas.
- **Senator Bridgett Birmingham, University Libraries** – suggested there be general office hours so that faculty/grad students can make general inquiries regarding simple syllabus.
- **Senator Rebecca Ballard, Arts & Sciences** – asked how to give students specifics in a standardized course description if courses change semester by semester.
 - Jeanette Taylor, VP FDA – recommended reaching out to departments and faculty. Descriptions can be kept broad enough to reflect the teaching plan.
- No other questions were posed.

XII. **Announcements of deans and other administrative officers**

- No announcements.

Senate President Hughes informed that the next faculty senate meeting is scheduled on March 25th, 2026 at Dodd Auditorium.

The meeting adjourned at 5:19pm.

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**NEXT FACULTY SENATE MEETING
MARCH 25, 2026, 3:35 PM
IN-PERSON**



3/27/26