

Faculty DRAFT Senate Minutes

February 11, 2025

Time

3:15 – 5:15 p.m.

Business 3:30 – 5 p.m.

This meeting will be held on Zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/8766137254?pwd=ZS83UlpaVkJRMVM5K0VncENRb1M0Zz09>

Primarily paperless, wou.edu/facultysenate

3:15 - 3:30 p.m.

Better Know a Colleague (informal gathering, optional)

3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Business Meeting

1. Call to order

2. Call of the roll (Senators to sign attendance sheet or enter your name & Division into the Zoom Chat)

- 12 Senators on person, 7 on Zoom

3. Corrections to and approval of minutes from previous meeting

3.1. January 28, 2025 [Draft Minutes](#)

- *Minutes were approved as submitted.*

4. Institutional Reports

4.1. Faculty Senate President's [Report](#) (Steve Scheck)

- The Faculty Senate meeting on February 27th, 2025 will be a Zoom only meeting

4.2. University President's **Report** (Jesse Peters)

- President Peters discussed the current conversations about the federal level decisions being made regarding the future of higher education, explaining that it is an evolving situation
- President Peters discussed the data from the campus survey and how that will be used for future campus improvements
- President Peters reminded senate of upcoming accreditation visit

4.3. University Provost's Report (Jose Coll)

- Provost Coll discussed deficit spending and the process of ensuring sustainability for the university
- Provost Coll discussed the process of how Academic Affairs gathered their data, that data will be provided to division chairs
- Provost Coll expressed his hope to have faculty play a bigger role in the discussion of how the university will change moving forward

4.4. IFS Senators' Report (Tad Shannon)

5. Consideration of Old Business – discussion items

5.1. Updates on roll-out of submission/review process for modifications to current academic catalog (program actions limited to WOU campus review)

- Faculty are encouraged to reach out with any feedback/their experience utilizing the new submission/review process.

6. Consideration of New Business

6.1. Follow-up discussion on Provost Coll's recent Instructional Faculty Directive

Provost's 2-10-2025 memo on Academic Affairs budget [update](#).

- Scheck requested clarity on the current negative deficit. President Peters reviewed the universities prior sustainability efforts to decrease their negative deficit. The current year deficit is estimated at around \$3.5 million
 - President Peters discussed plateauing student enrollment and personal costs, and how those affected the current sustainability efforts
- Scheck inquired about NW Commission visit and asked about the implementation of these new sustainability efforts
 - President Peters explained the varying timeline of how quickly these measures will need to be implemented
- Question posed: If academic programs are the core of the university, why are they first to be cut. What cost saving measures are being implemented in other branches (athletics, administration, student services)? Why cut essential staff/programs, when there are other places that funding could be taken from?
 - Provost Coll - Academic affairs, WUFT - reporting who will be receiving tenure contracts. There was a deadline that needed to be met.
 - President Peters - Widespread conversation is/will be occurring, athletics is not self-sustaining. Academic affairs, there's an opportunity for in-depth conversations between administration and faculty

- VP Mike Green - Discussed how costs are able to be adjusted in some areas, but are limited in others due to needing to meet the basic needs of the student body. Discussed and shared the various types of data that were considered during this process. Stressed the urgency of decreasing universities' negative deficit in order to remain sustainable.
- Question posed: Is there a timing conflict between the submission of fall term class schedules prior to NTT faculty load?
 - Provost Coll - Issue is in discussion. Schedules may need to be adjusted between initial submission and start of fall term. Want to provide enough time for divisions to report feedback and review the provided data
 - Registrar Clark noted they understand there is an evolving situation, more changes to come, flexible.
- Senator Tad Shannon - Budget situation, concern regarding prioritizing program delivery at faculty level, not making decisions to maximize student enrollment. Don't have a way to discuss how programs are prioritized and how the university is working to maintain student enrollment/pathways. Lack of communication/guidance, how to maintain student enrollment while also cutting schedules. Concern about administrative support and having these conversations with faculty. What's the plan? Where's the data?
 - Scheck: Need to confirm how the faculty senate will be getting involved.
 - Coll: Plan to develop Budget Advisory Committee, access to full data with multiple groups represented. There are plans in place about how to increase enrollment. Stressed the importance of keeping estimates regarding enrollment conservative to avoid overpredicting
 - *13.7 Million deficit fund. 55 budget tenure -> actual 84 tenure. Will be estimated around a 9 million dollar fund budget at the end of the academic year.*
- President Peters - commented about how the issue has been overlooked for being "not severe enough". Was overlooked for the sake of attempting to increase enrollment.

General Commentary from attendees and members of the Senate:

- Importance of maintaining the quality of education provided at WOU while also remaining accessible.
- Importance of these decisions being made transparently, not behind closed doors. Desire to understand the guidelines of how programs are being looked at and be a part of the overall conversation

- Requested clarification to the connection between the cuts being made and how the generated revenue from non-tenure staff
 - Provost Coll - multiple factors to consider in academic affairs, revenue being generated versus expenses end in deficit. Explained how the revenue does not stay in academic affairs, has to be disbursed to other areas supporting the university that do not generate their own revenue
- General request for access to the type of information being used for budget creation, more transparency
- Behavior Science comment- Have the consequences of eliminating instructional faculty been properly considered? Including potential effects to enrollment or graduation pace?
 - Coll - No increase in enrollment in recent years. These factors were considered
- Data based on predictions, recently found areas for balancing, there is imprecision in this process.
- President Peters closing comments: encouraged the hard conversations between faculty and administration. This is a time for change.

7. Informational Presentations, Committee Reports, Announcements

No formal presentations or reports scheduled.

8. Open Discussion-Call for Future Business

8.1. Call for future business items

8.1. Closing discussion items from the floor

5 – 5:15 p.m.

Better Know a Colleague (informal gathering continued, optional)