

Academic Senate

Eastern Washington University

Minutes of January 12, 2026

Senators Present: B. Shaw, S. Finnie, L. Matos, B. Grinder, B. Lundgren, J. Klein, G. Sinekopova, E. Rodriguez-Marek, L. Speer, M. Breen, M. Holmgren, A. Van Wig, T. Haskins, K. Decker, M. Binney, J. Ellsworth, M. Breen, M. Holmgren, A. Van Wig, T. Haskins, L. Reeves for G. Kenney, M. Binney, J. Ellsworth, P. Porter, L. MacKenzie, L. Cebula, S. Milton, D. Garraway, M. Winer, J. Durfee, S. Wachtel, K. Garrison, N. Li, D. Sitzman, H. Hillman, L. Anidi, V. Loke, K. Lopez, T. Hechtman, P. Gerber

Officers: G. Hustrulid, B. Idsardi, C. Tyllia, K. Taylor

University Officials: S. McMahan, L. Smith, M. Baca, L. Jarnagin, C. Portillo, C. Jensen, S. Ligon, K. Edquist

1. Call to Order. a. The meeting was called to order at 3:07 p.m. by G. Hustrulid, Faculty Organization President.

2. Chair's Report. G. Hustrulid report can be found at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1iiTEth1Yy3M41kw9nqKO-u6xUMxhl6Ss/view?usp=sharing>

3. Approval of Consent Agenda including Minutes of December 8, 2025. <i>Hearing no objections, the minutes were approved.</i>
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4. ASEWU. C. Jensen reported: a. the ASEWU meetings for this quarter will be held on Mondays at 10:00 a.m. in PUB 207J and all are welcome to attend. b. The ASEWU Superior Court will be co-hosting an executive order panel led by staff members next Wednesday, January 21st at 1:00 p.m. in PUB 319. This event is going to be a summary of events that have transpired over the last year regarding topics such as civil rights, immigration, and financial aid impacts. It will be a place for students to ask any questions that they may have. If you have any students that have voice concerns, or if you would like to go and hear students' perspective on those changes, I highly encourage attendance next Wednesday, January 21st at 1:00 p.m. in PUB 319.

5. UFE. K. Edquist reported: The UFE is keenly aware of faculty's frustration regarding with the lack of any outcome in the current bargain. This has been an unexpectedly drawn-out bargain despite our Bargaining Team being prepared for the past year to engage Management. We remain committed to presenting our dues-paying members with a solid tentatively agreed contract, or any interim tentative agreement that we can achieve, for their ratification. I personally share faculty's frustration and have communicated it to Management through different channels. I am doing everything I can to get responses to the Bargaining Team's communications. The UFE hopes to hold a dues-paying member meeting very soon. Since the UFE's last report to the Faculty Organization on December 5, 2025, the United Faculty of Eastern (UFE) has: responded to multiple inquiries about the status of the current bargain: • responded to faculty concerns about the information requests to EWU by the Freedom Foundation; • represented 1 faculty member under investigation for alleged violations of EWU policy; • represented 0 faculty members in workload disputes; • communicated to Management faculty's frustration with the bargain; • met with the FO about other issues related to bargaining and budgets. • The UFE has elected F. Lynch as our VP of Labor Management. • The UFE is keenly aware of faculty's frustration with the pace of the current bargain. This has been an unexpectedly drawn-out bargain, despite our bargaining teams being prepared for it since early 2025. Emblematic of this process is that UFE presented management with a one-page MOU last Tuesday evening available for their discussion on

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Wednesday. We are very concerned that this delay hurts our institution, the CBA, the bargaining partners, and the bargaining process itself. While I had hoped to be able to announce a formal tentative agreement of the entire CBA ready for ratification, I am happy to say that we have an oral agreement, an MOU that sets the generalist salary adjustment for t 25-26 and it is retroactive to fall of 2025. The UFE will hold a meeting to discuss the MOU with its members before holding a vote on ratification.

6. Legislative Liaison. S. Ligon reported: 1. The Governor's Budget, released in late December, proves better for EWU than most reporting would have us believe. While Washington's 4 regional universities do face a 1.5% funding cut (as opposed to the 3% cuts faced by UW and WSU), when you factor in the maintenance level adjustment, **EWU's funding actually increases by 1.4%, or \$2.5 million dollars** in the Governor's budget. But many changes will occur as the budget evolves during the session, as part of the House and Senate budgeting processes. Still, this is not a bad start, especially when considering that last year's session had us preparing for a 5% cut, though that cut did not come to pass. (Indeed, EWU's biennial appropriation last year increased by 3.8%.) On the other hand, **the fund split** went backwards last year and will continue to affect us moving forward.

2. What is the fund split? Shortly after the great recession, the state changed the way it funded compensation increases in higher ed., budgeting for percentages gained by most other state workers, but funding them based on a split, the thinking being that universities rely on tuition and state funding and can therefore cover part of what's budgeted for compensation. That split started at around 50/50 for the regionals, a significant cut to our base level funding. In the last few biennia, we've made progress on the fund split, until the state covered 70% of that budget line. Last year, though, the state's share fell to 63%, which is not good for us. **3. SB 5828**, Concerning the Washington college grant and college bound scholarship program for students attending private four-year not-for-profit institutions of higher education in Washington. This bill gets a hearing next Thursday and has two sponsors, the chair and ranking member of the Senate Higher Ed Committee. This is a repeat of last year's bill increasing the Washington College Grant award for students at private institutions. **4. SB 5909**, Reviewing and discontinuing low-enrollment undergraduate programs at public baccalaureate institutions. This bill gets a hearing next Thursday. It's one sponsor, Republican Senator Matt Boehnke, is a cybersecurity professor at Columbia Basin College. **5. Where are we going, and how will it all shake out?** February's revenue forecast will shape the House and Senate budgets, which we'll see in last February/early March. **During the session we'll be focused on restoring the fund split (which will be tough this year)**, and trying to prevent further cuts. We'll also be responding to policy bills and working with the Governor's office on improving FAFSA completion rates. As noted in November, I think a good outcome for this session would be no further cuts to EWU's funding or to the College Grant, with maybe even a bump for us in the fund split. Fingers crossed. V. Loke – are you tracking HB 2908 – adjusting Higher Ed funding? S. Ligon – no – he will look into it. V. Loke - It is a reduction in tuition for the next 3 years. S. Ligon – he will look into it and hopefully be able to say something during the meeting.

7. Budget. C. Tyllia reported: he has a section in G. Hustrulid's report with his email in it. He is soliciting feedback from the Provost Open Forum that happened last Friday, January 9th, talking about university budget and budget redesign. There's still some clarification and questions that we have so he is collecting questions or things that need further clarification so we

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can present that request to the administration. He would like to bring attention to the operating budget book for FY 2026. If you go into the Inside EWU site and type in operating budget book, you will find the FY 2026 budget book there and you will find the current budget numbers.

8. Administrative: a. President. S. McMahan reported she will be joining D. Buri and S. Ligon in Olympia, and they will be hosting a legislative forum with the Council of Presidents. All the public universities will be united together, and she'll have a chance to do some opening remarks at the Governor's mansion. Usually those remarks are, yes, we rank 48th in the United State in terms of college going rates. We really need to do what we can to change that but sometimes numbers don't capture what it is we need to do. I think I will be emphasizing the fact that we would have empty schools without teachers that didn't go through the higher education system. She is working on that and would appreciate any ideas on how we can work with our legislators to try to keep the focus on helping us in Higher Education. Secondly, I want to thank the Psychology Department for putting on the workshop last week on extraterrestrial speaker. Our community, which came out in full force on a very snowy night, was very interested. It reminds me of the impact that Higher Education has on the community, so anytime you have speakers come out, please work with us, work with the MarCom Team in getting that advertised. It's a really important vehicle for the university to be able to have discussions and dialogue. They have made a very difficult decision to discontinue our Wheelchair Athletics Program at the conclusion of the 25-26 season. The decision wasn't taken lightly, it was several months of work with both the teams, a couple years of fundraising efforts, working with our Office of Contracts and Grants, working with our development officers, working with the College of Health Sciences and Public Health. It's really the only program that's house and paid for by an academic unit. We tried to work with the coaches and the team to provide some alternatives, and they were not interested in those alternatives. It was a very difficult decision, this is not about one-time funds, this is about ongoing sustainable funding for a team. We will be providing scholarships to the 8 athletes that are participating to finish their careers at Eastern, if they elect to do so. **b. Provost.** L. Smith reported he would like to share a progress report on the PAMCAM model. It is a communication tool that we can all use to have discussions around academic program management. Part of it is really the calculation of the contribution margin but a simplified version of it and that is the foundation for the program. We are in the process, in consultation with a number of stakeholders, in particular the PAMCAM Focus Group who are asking some really good questions. We want to make sure we have reliable data that goes into this model. We've been spending a lot of time on that topic, e.g. when we think of full-time equivalent faculty, what are we really talking about? Are we talking about those who are entirely on payroll or are we talking about those who are teaching? There are significant implications to the numbers so there are a lot of detailed conversations taking place. We want to take this slowing but at the same time we want to make sure that we can come up with something that is useful. I anticipate within maybe the next month, we should be able to roll out a version of PAMCAM that is useable. In December we presented the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan to the Board of Trustees due in large part to a lot of hard work from staff and faculty. Within the next few days, I'm close to getting a Provost memo out describing the next steps for acting upon the recommendations that are in the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan and connected to that is the Academic Master Plan. The communication that is coming out, in consultation with a lot of faculty and staff, will also have a path forward. There are about 20 actions coming out of those plans that I would like to consult with different stakeholders as we move forward. Some good

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news, the first-year retention, fall 2024 to fall 2025, has gone up by 4 percentage points from 67% to 71%. I think that is tremendous and I can't take any credit for that. That is due to the hard work that faculty and staff put in before I got here. We're starting to see the results of some hard work and very intentional actions taken by the university. I am starting to see a lot of positive signs. Our achievement gap, unfortunately, is not closed, at least based upon the data we're looking at. There's lots of work ahead of us but there are signs of improvement. B. Grinder stated there was an email from September 2nd concerning the interim dean for Professional Programs and with the term of appointment is from September 16th to June 30th. I want to know why it is so long. L. Smith stated often times when they bring in new leadership into a college it takes time to get their legs under them. They want to give them more time to learn to listen to their colleagues because it is helpful for the college. B. Grinder stated they have mostly had an interim dean. The first year was a failed search, the second year they brought in a consulting team, and they ended up with a permanent dean who was there for a year and now they are back to an interim dean. This is unacceptable. What we're convinced is about in the School of Business, and maybe Accounting, is we're convinced more than ever that we don't think that the College of Professional Programs was a good idea. It's a ridiculous structure, it hurts us as a school, it hurts the Library. It became obvious that what the Library wants and needs isn't Business wants and needs, isn't what Psychology wants and needs, and it's become evident to us, I've never seen the School of Business more unified in this, that this College of Professional Programs was a huge mistake. L. Smith stated I don't disagree that it's got a lot of different pieces, and I could certainly understand why it'd be very difficult for a dean to work with the stakeholders to manage that. I can tell you for sure that I have been having substantive conversations about the Library. I'm not prepared to make any sort of remarks now, but I have been giving it a lot of thought. I have a meeting set-up with the Library to discuss the possibilities of certain scenarios. I'm being vague on purpose because the decision has not been made and I've also had those conversations with. B. Grinder stated they believe that is the dumbest idea they have had. L. Smith stated he has been investing a lot of time in finding ways to alleviate a lot of their issues. D. Sitzman stated Social Work recently put in curriculum changes to the CIM system and they were held up for a really long time and then we finally receive word that they were halted based off of feedback from the Vice Provost and deans from our Committee of Deans from other colleges, and they never made it to CPAC. My department is concerned and would like to know if curriculum is still under the purview of faculty. L. Smith stated curriculum is and of course, his approval process. I have to acknowledge that the process is not working well or certainly not well enough. That was obvious in some of the meetings that I presented over and that's on me. I have to do better. I think I owe you better and so the process is not working well. One of the goals that I added for Academic Affairs is part of that. What he believes they were going to articulate in writing is the rationale for the decisions that were made at that meeting. V. Loke stated will they be providing rationale or do the requests just stopped or just on hold at this point? L. Smith stated for those that are going through review and you'll have an opportunity to respond to that. There were some that were paused, e.g. the Applied Doctorate for Cybersecurity, that it was a decision to give time for additional research. For those that were approved they will go through. V. Loke asked for those that are paused, can they have the ability to give input so they can put that back into the process. L. Smith stated they can't. There are ones that need clarification. B. Grinder stated he got a poorly worded email from the chair before Senate, since they are moving back to Cheney, they thought it would make sense to go to from 4 credit to 5 credit classes for a lot of reasons. The chair didn't communicate very

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clearly and said something about a bunch of deans who said we couldn't do it. I would like an explanation of why they can change their classes to 5 credit. L. Smith stated the deans didn't decide, I consult with the deans, and I make that decision in consultation with the deans and other stakeholders. I do value their perspective as I do yours and others. Sometimes when there is a new program or changes to curriculum then it impacts other colleges and so what's important to me is that all of the colleges have an opportunity to listen and reflect upon the changes that sometimes have ripple effects across the campus. That's why I bring the deans into these conversations, not to make the decisions, I make those decisions, but I definitely lean on their commentary. B. Grindler stated they would like to have an explanation of why and as quickly as possible. L. Smith stated he would get that to them in the next couple of days. B. Shaw stated these are things they have planned and whether they are pausing them then they would appreciate it if they could do something because it would leak into the fall. This will impact students and how they have to advise them. L. Matos stated Provost Smith mentioned the process and the process not working, could you elaborate on that and how we are going to fix it. L. Smith stated getting the information to the provost's office earlier, the completeness of the information that's provided, the rationale, if it is a new program, there should be some sort of proforma of some sort, there should be some market analysis, some more detailed justification. Not in all cases, I realize that some cases does not require that, but I think the timing and the content that is brought to the Provost's Office is a factor. That is something that is on me to address and fix in consultation with others. L. Reeves stated at the Rules meeting last week, it was brought to our attention that the BOT met and some of our members were present. She would like to hear how he thinks the BOT thinks about the faculty. Over the years, I've been on UFE and many executive committees representing the UFE, and I have never felt disrespected by the Board of Trustees, but it appears something has changed. I wonder what your impression is and if you know the cause and what we might do to build a better relationship with Board of Trustees. L. Smith stated I can't speak for the Board of Trustees, I can just let you know what my impression is. I can tell you that I've never heard a member of the Board of Trustees, they've expressed frustration, in some instances, but they've always expressed appreciation and admiration, from what I can tell, in my interaction with them. My impression is that they look favorably upon the faculty and staff. They appreciate what they're doing, they also, at the same time, I'm feeling a sense of urgency on their part to help the university grow in the right direction. How is that connected to the faculty? How is there urgent need for the university to grow connected to their attitude toward that? I think they empathize, they understand that everyone is in a difficult situation. We have a lot of work to do. They recognize that so empathy is a term that comes to my mind. The landscape is changing and so I do think that we have to continue to act with a sense of urgency and be intentional in what we're doing. Those are the vibrations I'm getting from the Board of Trustees. Not a sense of disrespect for the faculty but a sense of urgency and they're communicating that. They communicate that to me and to members of the leadership team at Eastern. They want things to happen because they care about students, staff, and faculty. So, what can faculty do to make it happen? I think one of the things you can do is continue to do what you do. It's very easy to lose sight of the fact of how hard the faculty and staff are working for our students, in particular, when no one's watching. That is where I see the difference. In fact, I was just meeting with two faculty members today in the Library, and they're talking about the amazing work that they're doing in the community supporting refugees. I talk about the faculty as a whole, as well as staff, are hardworking, they care about students, so my ask is to continue to do what you're doing, to focus on going after

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those university goals while we maximize academic integrity and financial sustainability which is the hard part because finding that intersection between academic integrity and financial sustainability is difficult. L. Reeves stated I think it would be helpful to remind the Board that the faculty has saved the university on many occasions. We have sacrificed for the sake of the university, we gave up our professional development money, we contributed money during difficult fiscal era recently, so I believe in the faculty, I'm proud of the faculty and I'm proud to be faculty and I hope that you'll give that message to the Board the next time you talk to them. M. Binney stated I wanted to get clarification on what you meant by achievement gap and it not closing. L. Smith stated there are various demographics within the university and ideally, we would want all of the students to grow, and to be successful. Clearly, there are some students who are more prepared and are going to leave this university with a 4.0 and 5 job offers but generally speaking we want to close the gap between different demographics in the university. What we don't want to happen is for them to succeed less, perhaps because of maybe their financial status so we want to close that gap and that's from the data that I've seen so far, that gap is not closing. To close that gap is in alignment with the mission of this university. **c. Vice President for Business and Strategy.** i. M. Baca reported we're going to be selecting a new site for the new residential hall, and that decision will be coming soon. If you have any feedback on the site, please let me know. The three sites are Pierce & Dressler, but across the street there is an empty lot, and then behind Anderson, in that particular lot, so input is valuable. I've talked about our Campus Master Plan; we'll be coming out with the architects to get your feedback. J. Durfee stated he went into the Campus Master Plan and filled out the survey and it's kind of confusing. What is the end result of that? If we don't get enough people to say the quad isn't getting used as much, then will it be torn down? M. Baca stated he would look into it and reach out to him. **d. Vice President of People and Culture.** i. C. Portillo reported we will participate in the Martin Luther King March on January 19th and hopefully everyone will be able to join them. It is an incredibly wonderful community-building event. We have proudly participated for many years and will continue to do so. The other item is the New Year celebration and this year's theme is Mardi Gras. We have a lot of fun planned and hope you can take time out of your busy day to come and enjoy the fund, the wonderful food that we will have to offer. I would like to bring to your attention our continued participation with Viva Vino, which is one of the signature events for Nuestras Raices. This will take place on the 21st of February and if you are interested in attending, please let me know. We can always make room for more people to join us at our table. **e. Vice President for Student Affairs.** L. Jarnagin reported we have brought a new partner on board, her name is M. Whittingham. She was the former AVP of Enrollment Services and what brought her to my attention is her expertise in the area of onboarding new students. They conducted a search for a Senior Director of Eagles First Year, meaning all things first year student experience and unfortunately, we had to close that without filling it. M. Whittingham just happened to come across my radar screen shortly after that and after talking with her they decided she would fill that role as an interim for the period of a little over a year. That is important because in our Strategic Plan, under the Student Success area, is revamping the first year. The first year is comprised of a number of different experiences for students but unique to the areas that I'm working in that I'm concerned about, are things such as parent communications, parent engagement, and parent involvement. We know specifically for our first-gen students, for our students from underserved background, that familial involvement is critical for retention and helping students stay in college through the rough times. We have a fledging parent program

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area, being run by M. Reyna, in the orientation area, and they want to pay more attention to that in order to help our parents and our families understand what their students experience and how they can support them as well as how the university can support them as family members of Eagles. Another area is orientation, and this is an area the provost and I are working closely together on. We see orientation as essentially the student's first day in college. It is the entry portal to being a student here, you come, you learn how to be a student, you get advised, you get scheduled together, you get registered for your classes, etc. We've made some changes in this program over the last couple of years, but we're really looking to make a number of significant adjustments to this partnership. We're excited about M. Whittingham's 18 years of experience overseeing orientation, we know she will bring some great changes and innovations to this area. In looking at the First Year Seminar, you may recall they ran a pilot of a first-year seminar this last fall. We're waiting for census in order to get our data from that. There is a group of us, including our chair and our vice chair, as well as some faculty, academic staff, staff from Student Affairs, that will be attending their First Year Experience Conference in Seattle next month. The idea is for us to continue to learn how we can make a first-year seminar that fits Eastern. We can read books, we can look at articles to know what the national practices are, but what we really need to focus on is our demographics, our student population, as a relatively small to mid-sized regional institution. This Friday is the Services and Activities fees proposals. If you are submitting or interested in submitting a proposal to receive or to be considered to receive services and activities funding, please make sure that you have that submitted by the deadline this Friday. The webpage is linked in the administration report. S. Finnie stated he is highly interested in first year discussion of how to improve the onboarding. Do you have information, on the quantitative side, something like an 8-year, 6-year, the retention of the top load. What's the gap? What's the fallout in freshmen numbers? Do you have any numbers that can measure outcomes of and then breaking it up by populations. L. Jarnagin stated she doesn't have that information with her, but she can bring that to a future meeting.

9. Council Elections/Selections/Confirmations. *Faculty Values Committee* – O. Özturgut, Education, and D. Pell, Occupational Therapy; *Honors Advisory Board* – P. Victor, Library; *Research and Scholarship Committee* – K. Kebede, Sociology and Justice Studies. **Hearing no objections, the nominations, except O. Özturgut are approved. Motion was made to move the nomination to FVC to New Business for O. Özturgut. Motion approved.**

10. Information Item. a. PRD Slide Show.
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1M-dYJ7p18VZ8HJYALKHKWEripn5r8R5_/view?usp=sharing

11. Unfinished Business. *None.*

12. New Business. a. O. Ozturgut, Education to FVC. This will be brought forward at the next meeting.

13. Good of the Order. *None.*

14. Meeting adjourned at 4:56 p.m. The next regular meeting is scheduled on January 26, 2026.