



# PB Meeting Minutes

**November 19, 2025 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm**

**Zoom:** <https://usffa-net.zoom.us/j/81764954683?pwd=VUPLwOaC1RbIUlbX2EfHUB7SeftlfJ.1>

Reps Present:

Brandi Lawless, President		Michael Stanfield, Arts		Gina Solares, Gleeson	X
John Zarobell, VP of Member Advocacy	X	Rachel Brahinsky, Arts	X	Amy Gilgan, Library	X
J Garrett-Walker, VP of Shared Governance	X	Marco Durazo, Arts		Ursula Aldana, SOE	X
Ben Levy, VP of Member Engagement	X	Geoffrey Ashton, Arts		Gena Castro Rodriguez, SOE	X
Leigh Meredith, VP of Communications	X	Sadia Saeed, Arts		Matt Meister, SOM	
Anthony Patino, VP of Finance	X	James Wilson, Sciences		Jerome Stewart, SOM	X
Mark Miller, Arts		Scott Nunes, Sciences	x	Kelley Booth	X
Phillip Choong, Arts	X	David Guy Brizan, Sciences	X	Monika Hudson	X
Aline Hitti, Arts	X				

**Other members:** Randy Souther, Carol Spector, Tika Lamsal

## 3:30-3:35 Call to Order

- Approval of Policy Board Minutes for [November 5, 2025](#)

## 3:35-3:45 Agenda Item 1: President's Report (J Garrett-Walker)

*Purpose: Pres. Lawless will be out of town for work travel; she will provide a written report on recent events to be read by Eboard*

Information	Eboard filed a grievance regarding the foreign-language waiver; we will keep you updated.
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# PB Meeting Minutes

	<p>Awaiting finalization of bylaws changes in order to finalize negotiation team. Management would like informal conversations before formal bargaining, but we've indicated we don't want to bargain twice.</p> <p>Upcoming GMM meeting is an opportunity to speak candidly to Pres. Aceves. Please come and encourage your colleagues to attend. When we show up in force we demonstrate solidarity, engagement, and power in numbers.</p>
Discussion	
Decision	

## 3:45-4:05 Agenda Item 2: Proposed Bylaws Change for JUC (John Zarobell)

*Purpose: Review the JUC's proposed bylaws changes for potential impact on shared governance. See proposed bylaws changes [here](#).*

Information	<p>Joined by Tika Lamsal, the new faculty Co-Chair of the JUC. We wanted to review the bylaws proposed by a subcommittee over the summer (before Tika joined the board).</p> <p>Changes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- "Makes recommendations" instead of "reviews and advises"</li> <li>- Does not advise on fiscal or budgetary considerations</li> <li>- Faculty co-chair will be selected by the committee and approved by the USFFA (vs the previous process, where the co-chair was chosen and approved by the USFFA)</li> <li>- That an "open session" can be defined as a "webinar" (faculty members can attend but not speak, raise a hand, or otherwise be visible - except through the webinar "Q&amp;A" function)</li> </ul> <p>The vote is to approve or not approve the changes. But the discussion really revolves around whether these changes are problematic for shared governance.</p>
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The changes to "Makes recommendations" instead of "reviews and advises" might not be that problematic because the previous sentence still contains the "reviews and advises" language.</li> <li>- The two main bodies for shared governance is JUC and UBAC. And we've all noticed that there seems to be a move to weaken rather than strengthen these bodies. The webinar seems the most problematic in this arena, as well as the choosing of the chair. This is supposed to be shared governance.</li> <li>- It's essential that administration NOT pick the faculty members. So the faculty members of the JUC could be a better group to pick the chair, but we don't want the administration having power to choose, since they have as many votes as the faculty, and if a faculty member were missing.</li> </ul>



# PB Meeting Minutes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It's clear that so much work has gone into these changes. However, it's confusing to see the comments that indicate continued deliberation about the changes - this doesn't seem like all the conversation is fully resolved. So it's difficult to tell what, exactly, we would be voting on or approving.</li> <li>- Can we add a friendly amendment to our motion - "we have the following concerns, but we aren't ready to weigh in until we see a final version." We reserve the right to vote again.</li> <li>- Can we drop the part about "the purpose" but focus on the chair selection and the webinar.</li> <li>- Do we say that we are not prepared to vote at this time, and indicate our concerns as to</li> </ul>
Decision	Table the motion - we will communicate our concerns to the JUCC concerning a) the format and b) the two issues mentioned above

## 4:05 - 4:20 Agenda Item 3: FDF Opportunities and Limitations (Ben Levy)

*Purpose: Review current drop in FDF utilization; identify causes and solutions*

Information	<p>The FDF funds in CAS are not being fully utilized. About 1.6 million in total, 1 million goes to CAS. The committee noted that well under halfway of those funds are being used. The funds are utilized less each year.</p> <p>Concerns have been raised about increasing bureaucracy so that it's harder to apply for the awards, and more restrictions on how funds are being used.</p> <p>Would be helpful to hear how FDF is going across divisions. What opportunities and challenges?</p>
Discussion	<p>Does anyone know if this is an issue in other divisions?</p> <p>We might want to run a campaign to let people know; some people are not applying for everything - anxious about applying for the 3rd conference, etc.</p> <p>The application process has gotten harder but it's not that hard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Response is that actually it's gotten harder to support students (like RAs) through FDF.</li> </ul> <p>Max hasn't increased for a long time - now it's about \$4000. People would apply for more if the limit were raised.</p> <p>Lack of information is the main problem. No guidelines or much information. I found out that it's ok if you end up spending money on something</p> <p>LDF fund - definitely has been all used. Last year we hit the cap, so this year we're implementing new ways for prioritization (junior librarians, presenters,</p>



# PB Meeting Minutes

	<p>etc). One thing we didn't look at was whether there are fewer requests - but we have noticed rising costs.</p> <p>Agree that there's a lot of reconciliation bureaucracy.</p> <p>It can help if we shared stories on how these funds were used to support research. Maybe spotlights on a website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Great point - how can we do this? More spotlights on faculty research projects on our website, etc. Was trying to find out what research faculty were doing around international issues - hard to get any info. CRASE has newsletters, they could be promoting FDF projects.</li> </ul>
Decision	Please include this (if you can) in your upcoming Division reports - status of FDF, etc.

## 4:20 - 4:40 Agenda Item 4: Questions for Pres. Aceves at GMM (Leigh Meredith)

*Purpose: Draft questions for Pres. Aceves at the upcoming General Membership Meeting (brief breakout rooms for brainstorming - solicit members and come with ideas!)*

Information	
Discussion	<p>Questions brainstormed:</p> <p><a href="https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gZgFLEcu4loCLLaD66QEPChZG3Zuz_f_pXJgVDPGHc/edit?usp=sharing">https://docs.google.com/document/d/1gZgFLEcu4loCLLaD66QEPChZG3Zuz_f_pXJgVDPGHc/edit?usp=sharing</a></p>
Decision	

## 4:40 - 4:50 Agenda Item 5: Finance Committee Report (Tony Patino)

*Purpose: Updates on Finance Committee meeting with USFFA Financial Advisor, Steve Huxley*

Information	<p>Helpful meeting - we have an investment goal with him that's minimizing risk and maximizing growth. But there's nothing in there about socially responsible investing. Do we want our investments to be more aligned with our values? We might want to have more discussion and research around what are the risks to socially responsible investment? Or alternatives.</p> <p>In Jan, we are planning to have an open finance meeting that anyone can join. We can invite Steve to a larger meeting as well.</p>
Discussion	
Decision	

## 4:50 - 5:00 Agenda Item 6: Division Report (Arts): Mark Miller

*Purpose: Reports from divisions, intended to share information and concerns across the university*

Information	Rep not present
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# PB Meeting Minutes

Discussion	
Decision	

## 5:00 - 5:10 Agenda Item 6: Division Report (COSEC): Scott Nunes

*Purpose: Reports from divisions, intended to share information and concerns across the university*

Information	<p>CS is submitting a proposal for a new AI major - soft launch in 2026. October admission event, complaints that not all departments had the opportunity to be represented in the Q&amp;A and try and recruit students. Issues with communication to the audience and internally (for example, the theme of "modern technology" wasn't communicated to all departments). Could be better opportunities for shared governance and communication if more collaboration.</p> <p>Comments about maintenance of university vehicles - not in good shape. The warning lights and backup cameras, build up of rust. This is a real issue for field trips - raises safety issues.</p> <p>Sabbatical replacement information comes really late in the year and make it difficult for chairs. Raised with the Eboard, but it's not in the CBA, so union can't get directly involved, but another opportunity for better shared governance. Chemistry is having 3 of 9 FT faculty members going on sabbatical. Last minute adjustments and PT hiring.</p>
Discussion	
Decision	

## 5:10 - 5:20 Agenda Item 8: Division Report (FASONHP): Kelley Booth

*Purpose: Reports from divisions, intended to share information and concerns across the university*

Information	<p>Shared Governance Task force formed; plan is to update bylaws by end of academic year. First FASONHP meeting of the year - task force is looking at CAS structures to make us more aligned with the rest of the university. Trying to make more of a faculty/admin collaboration.</p> <p>Overall, the plan is to make recommendations to the dean for shared governance. End of Jan, recs to Dean; March, will present to FASONHP and USFFA.</p> <p>TCP Meeting - TCP new contracts coming in the Fall.</p> <p>Big curriculum redesign in BSN program - deadlines from the state. Batch approval. Being mindful that we're doing this in an organized way.</p>
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# PB Meeting Minutes

Discussion	
Decision	

## 5:20- 5:25 Agenda Item 9: Officer Reports

*Purpose: Additional reports, as needed, from other USFFA Eboard officers*

Information	
Discussion	
Decision	

## 5:25-5:30 Announcements and Open Comment

*During this section of the meeting, any USFFA member can make an announcement or raise an issue that ought to be addressed at a future Policy Board meeting. No motions or discussion is permitted during this section of the meeting.*

Old business - any updates on the Benefits Task Force?

- Task force met - potential steps forward, but nothing resolved. They want us to take the names of the benefits providers out of the contract so they can negotiate better rates. However, we don't want to take out the named benefits without having a backstop - i.e, a guarantee that our benefits don't get worse. The administration does share our benefits, so their interests are similar to ours. But we still want to have some power of approval over the benefits package. In 2008, we had a big confab between administration and various unions, and came up with the current benefits package. They would be willing to enter into this process again; they are researching comparator institutions about their benefits packages.

Division Councils Meetings		Report Rotation
Gina & Amy	Library	9/17 & 11/5
Ursula Aldana	SOE	9/17 & 11/5



# PB Meeting Minutes

Jerome Stewart	SOM	10/1& 11/19
Kelley Booth	FASONHP	10/15 & 11/19
Mark Miller	Arts	10/15 & 12/3
Scott Nunes	COSEC	10/15 & 12/3