

October 3rd, 2025

ARKANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

October 3rd, 2025

Reynolds 204

Attendees: Audrey Folsom, John Hershberger, Kacie Altom, Julie King, Rashele Wade, Jason Causey, Suzanne Melescue, Anne McGee, Dwayne Powell, Stephanie Hoeckley, Rob Williams, Karen Graham, Banafsheh Aghayeebianeh, Eric West, Kristen Sumler, Richard Segall, Hao Yang Teng, Guolei Zhou, Eric Dry, Scott Mangan, Donna Caldwell, Savannah Cormier, Toccara Carter, Mark Lewis, Bert Greenwalt, Ibrahim Duyar, Pradeep Mishra, Rollin Tusalem, Gary Edwards, DayDay Robinson, LTC J. Matt Weeks

Proxy Attendees: Kacie Altom for Amanda Mohler and Jamie Pasmore, Eric Scudamore for Veronika Scudamore, Chiqian Zhang as proxy for Alexandr Sokolov

Guests: Kevin Hennings (parliamentarian), Will McLean, Alyssa Wells, Madeline Ragland, John Howard, Tom Moore

Absentees: Marceline Thompson-Hayes, Kim Vickrey, Robert Bradley

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Kacie Altom.

Order of the Day: Motion to approve the order of the day by John Hershberger, seconded by Rashele Wade, all are in favor, the motion carried.

Approval of Minutes: The motion to approve the September 19th, 2025 meeting minutes by Richard Segall, seconded by Rob Williams, all are in favor, and the motion carried.

New Business

Madeline Ragland, Assistant Vice Provost for Academic Student Services.

Commencement announcement

December commencement was packed last year so we will add a 2nd ceremony in December. There will be a 10 am and a 2 pm ceremony in December and May. Campus communication will go out the week of 10/6/2025.

We will keep this format going forward. We will no longer have an August commencement ceremony. The students finishing in August can choose to walk in May or December. Pinning and hooding ceremonies can continue as scheduled as the departments and programs wish.

Why are we eliminating August? Spacing, funding, and staffing considerations. It aligns with best practices for universities across the nation.

Questions: Will the lineup of colleges change? Will the split between morning and afternoon assignment change? A: Not planned but will consider. We plan to try to distribute the attendees evenly between the 2 commencements. We could consider alternating which colleges attend morning or afternoon between December and May.

A concern was brought up about the graduates leaving after they receive their diploma. The “leave as they receive their diploma” order was approved by the board of trustees. It helps with traffic.

A concern was brought up about the faculty seating rearrangement to greet the graduates from their college during commencement. It causes some confusion when we come and go. Maybe we need a clearer announcement for when the colleges switch and a more orderly way to rotate.

Old business

Committee Reports

Equity Policy – the plan is to have the Equity policy by the end of the fall semester. The faculty senate needs to vote on it on 11/21. It will go out to the senators by 11/5 so that they can share it with their faculty. We will discuss it on 11/7.

Have we seen the dean’s version of the provost’s Equity policy yet? No.

The provost’s policy will be available for feedback from the Faculty Senate. It is currently with legal counsel.

The Faculty Senate’s version of the Equity policy is your opportunity to advocate for what we want in the policy. The provost will take it into consideration for the final draft of the Equity Policy

The Financial Aid and Scholarship Committee has new roles. It will hear financial aid appeals and help with scholarship applications that are “orphaned” (they don’t already belong to a specific college or department). Historically, appeals were processed by the financial aid office, which poses a conflict of interest.

Secretary’s update about **Faculty Senate Minutes storage** after the website change:

The new website design strongly discourages the use of PDFs and Word documents. It’s an accessibility issue. We want to be ADA-compliant. The new website launches soon (this fall), therefore, we have not posted any of the newly approved minutes. After a discussion with Chris Boothman and Todd Clark, the Faculty Senate executive committee opted to use the Knowledge Base to post the approved Faculty Senate minutes for this academic year and going forward. The Faculty Senate will have a page in the Knowledge Base, and minutes will be posted as webpages there. We have 20+ years of historical Faculty Senate Minutes in PDF format. Eric Dry suggested that we use the Institutional Repository to house the historical Faculty Senate minutes. We will coordinate with the library to make this happen.

3:31 pm adjournment by Kacie Altom

Minutes recorded by Audrey Folsom

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