

Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2025 @ 3:30pm

I. Call to Order & Review of Minutes

A. Assembly & Attendance

The Senate assembled in the Academy Room, Noyes Building, at 3:30 pm.

Senators Present: Dennis Schugk (VP), Trent Hanna, Steve Hart, Heather Holland, Chris Lee (sub), Jay Moosman, Kade Parry, Jason West, Larissa Wilkinson, Hilary Withers

Senators Absent: Karen Carter, Rachel Keller (sub: Chris Lee)

Guests: Jacob Thomas (Parliamentarian), Dyson Winsor (Student Rep), Justin Thorpe (Director of the Teaching and Learning Center), Carol Kunzler (Library), Shawna Cole (Advising)

B. Review of Minutes

Senators reviewed the minutes from the November 12 meeting. **MOTION** by S. Hart to approve the minutes. **2nd:** J. West. **Motion carried** unanimously of all senators present.

II. Senate Membership

A. Adjunct Senator Representation

Senator Withers has accepted a full-time, tenure-track position in English & Philosophy beginning Spring 2026. The Senate discussed how this change in status affects her continued service as the adjunct representative. After congratulating her, senators agreed that she may continue serving as adjunct representative until a new adjunct senator is elected early in the Spring semester. Once elected, the new senator will immediately assume the seat along with voting rights. Senator Withers will remain available to mentor her successor as needed.

MOTION by J. West to implement these changes based on Senator Withers's change in status. **2nd:** T. Hanna. **Motion carried** unanimously.

B. Senate & At-Large Committee Representation

The Senate continued its discussion on representation in light of the upcoming split of the Business & Technology Division into two schools, acknowledging significant uncertainty around Tech Ed faculty contracts, workload expectations, and the implications for Senate and committee service. Senator Moosman expressed concerns about the shift from credit-hour to clock-hour contracts, potential effects on overload pay, and the lack of clarity regarding committee obligations. Senators explored various models for ensuring Tech Ed representation—including rotating liaisons or formalized channels for gathering feedback—but agreed that more information from Tech Ed faculty and administration is needed before making structural decisions. President Fawcett will gather additional input, senators will seek feedback from their divisions, and the conversation will continue at the next meeting once clearer guidance and faculty perspectives are in hand.

III. Administrative Updates

A. Faculty Senate President

1. Firearms on Campus. President Fawcett reported on a recent meeting with other senate presidents and USHE, explaining that Utah's updated open-carry law now allows permitted students to carry firearms openly on campus, including in classrooms. While Snow has not encountered related issues, faculty were reminded that state law prevents instructors from restricting firearms in syllabi, though campus police may verify permits when appropriate; further guidance and possible training from Academic Affairs will be explored.

2. Publication of Course Syllabi. President Fawcett also reviewed the new USHE requirement to pre-publish course syllabi—including “major assignments,” a term intentionally left flexible—and reassured faculty that certain deviations from posted syllabi cannot be used punitively.

3. Advancements Approved. Finally, President Fawcett shared positive news from the most recent Board of Trustees meeting: all faculty recommended for advancement, tenure, or professional-track progression received formal approval.

B. Deans Council

Senate VP Schugk reported that the most recent Deans Council meeting largely focused on planning faculty hires for next fall, though no final decisions have been made. He also conveyed a new USHE resolution encouraging institutions to integrate AI instruction into their programs—an initiative not yet mandated at the course level but likely to shape future policy. President Fawcett and others noted that the expectation is for colleges to teach AI skills as part of

the curriculum. Dean Branchley added that the Council also reviewed Faculty Evaluation Team (FET) assignments, with divisions coordinating to cover several needed committee slots across campus.

C. Office of Academic Affairs

1. LMS (Canvas) Use & Limitations Document. The Senate reviewed the updated LMS (Canvas) Use & Limitations policy, focusing on clarification between the new policy document and the accompanying procedures document, ensuring that procedural guidelines are not inadvertently elevated to policy.

a. Data Security. Senators raised questions about data security—particularly the removal of sensitive A&T materials from Canvas to protect both faculty and the institution—and sought clarification on matters such as required syllabus content, student enrollments that remain visible after drops, and the need to avoid concluding enrollments due to Title IV and Title IX record-keeping requirements.

b. Crosslisting Canvas Courses. Crosslisting rules generated significant discussion, with senators requesting clearer wording, guidance from Academic Affairs on whether certain crosslistings (especially within modalities) are merely “discouraged” or effectively prohibited, and improved organization of that section of the document. The Senate also discussed impending federal accessibility requirements for digital course materials and encouraged the inclusion of resource links in the procedures document to help faculty meet those standards.

By the end of the conversation, members agreed that the policy was generally sound but identified several areas needing clarification or minor revision, which will be communicated back to Academic Affairs and the Teaching & Learning Center (TLC) for follow-up.

2. Course Evaluation Language Changes. The Senate reviewed the proposed revisions to the student course evaluation questions, with President Fawcett noting that Academic Affairs hopes to implement the new instrument by Spring 2026. Senators supported the overall goals of simplifying the form and improving response rates but emphasized the need for additional faculty and division feedback before a final version is approved. Discussion included directing the draft to the Chairs Council for broader input and making minor clarifications to wording, particularly around questions of student effort and general sense of belonging.

MOTION by K. Parry to support continued revision of the evaluation questions pending final changes to the process. **2nd:** H. Holland. **Motion carried** unanimously.

a. Course Evaluation Release Timeline. The Senate also agreed to revisit in a future meeting the timeline for when course evaluations are released to faculty, noting that current delays reduce their usefulness for planning and improvement.

3. Classroom Presence Document. The Senate revisited the revised classroom presence document, acknowledging that its earlier draft had raised significant faculty concerns. President Fawcett noted that Academic Affairs has reworked the document and intends to recirculate it as an informational guide for chairs when addressing disproportionate faculty absences. Senators questioned its necessity and warned against potential “policy creep,” emphasizing that any such document must remain clearly advisory rather than disciplinary. Members suggested softening directive language, moving key guidance (such as contacting Academic Affairs for absences of two weeks or more) into the main text, and clarifying its strictly informational purpose. The Senate will continue discussion at the next meeting before taking any formal action.

IV. Senate Business

A. General Education (GE) Committee

Senator Hart reported continuing discussions about courses proposed outside their traditional GE categories. A subcommittee of GE is working to develop a balanced approach, but no consensus has yet been reached.

B. Calendaring Committee (S. Hart)

President Fawcett noted that the College President supports creating a formal calendaring policy to ensure broad input on proposed calendar changes. Progress is slow due to the “policy of policies,” which requires a vice-president to sponsor the policy, but work is underway.

C. Committee Unification & Streamlining

1. IRB. President Fawcett announced that the IRB is now fully operational with John Tyler as chair; faculty should direct IRB-related questions to him rather than to the Senate President.

2. SPARC. Discussion tabled.

3. Library Committee. Tabled until the new Library Director is hired.

4. Offloading GAB from Senate Purview. The Senate briefly revisited the idea of transferring the Globalization & Belonging Committee (GAB) out of Senate oversight. With no objections and after confirming informal support from involved parties, a **MOTION** was made by S. Hart to transfer GAB to be an independent, non-Senate committee. **2nd:** H. Holland. **Motion carried** unanimously.

D. Senator Requests & Concerns

1. Prerequisite Enforcement. President Fawcett raised ongoing problems with students enrolling in courses without having completed required prerequisites—a task that in recent years has defaulted to department chairs. While other institutions use automated systems to prevent such enrollment, Snow’s process still allows errors to slip through. Senators expressed interest in exploring more reliable, automated enforcement.

V. Adjournment

President Fawcett extended the support of the Board of Trustees to the faculty, thanking them for their service as the school enters the Christmas season.

MOTION by T. Hanna to adjourn. **2nd:** K. Wilkinson. **Motion carried** unanimously.

The Senate meeting concluded at 5:00 pm.

Future Meetings: Aug. 27, ~~Sept. 10~~, ~~Sept. 24~~, ~~Oct. 8~~, ~~Oct. 22~~, ~~Nov. 12~~, ~~Dec. 3~~, Jan. 14, Jan. 28, Feb. 11, Feb. 25, Mar. 11, Mar. 25, Apr. 8, Apr. 22

Meeting minutes by Jacob L. Thomas, Parliamentarian

Approved by the Faculty Senate, January 14, 2026