



Matthew Gowans, President  
Jed Rasmussen, Vice-President  
Jacob L. Thomas, Parliamentarian

## Meeting Minutes

August 30, 2023, 3:30 p.m.

### I. Call to Order & Roll Call

The Senate was called to order at 3:32 p.m.

Welcome to new Senator from the Humanities Division, **Rachel Keller**, who will fill the remaining two years of Andrew Bahlmann's term; and to **Adam Larsen**, the new senator from Fine Arts & Communications.

**Senators Present:** Matthew Gowans, Jed Rasmussen, Adam Burningham, Karen Carter (remote), Alan Christensen, Sandra Cox, Trent Fawcett, Wes Jamison, Rachel Keller, Adam Larsen, Dennis Schugk, Jeff Wallace

**Senators Absent:** none

**Guests:** Jacob Thomas, Parliamentarian; Sheryl Bodrero, Dean of Humanities

### II. Minutes from Previous Meeting

#### A. Review of minutes from April 26, 2023 (J. Thomas)

M. Gowans suggested that some language be changed from the minutes draft to better reflect his feelings that the Board of Higher Ed's plan to submit a free speech statement was on the correct trajectory.

## **B. Vote to approve or amend minutes**

J. Rasmussen moved to approve the minutes with the stated amendment. Seconded by W. Jamison. Approved by all senators present except two abstentions (T. Fawcett and A. Larsen).

## **III. Informational Items**

### **A. Updates from the Senate President & VP**

**1. UCSFL Meeting (M. Gowans).** M. Gowans attended the UCSFL meeting on May 23. Senate leadership from around the state discussed five concerns: (1) the potential closure of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) offices in state colleges; (2) ensuring compensation and tenure protection for faculty; (3) promoting academic freedom; (4) keeping campuses safe from violence; and (5) maintaining shared governance.

W. Jamison, who serves on the DIG committee, asked for further clarification on the first point, i.e. the potential loss of DEI support from the state. M. Gowans responded that most of the senate leaders were in favor of DEI initiatives. The potential challenge comes from the state, which had brought forward a bill in this year's legislative session to end DEI, echoing similar laws passed in Florida, Texas, and others. That bill was tabled and legislators sought feedback from stakeholders. The subject may or may not reappear in the future. M. Gowans suggested that there seems to be a lack of trust between college faculty and state legislators nationwide regarding this divisive issue.

### **2. Deans Council (J. Rasmussen)**

J. Rasmussen attended the most recent Deans Council and reported on the principal topics of conversation. Of foremost importance was the effort by the budget office to streamline department and program funding. The central idea is to eliminate account rollover from year to year, and put the surplus in a shared "pot" to distribute on a rotating basis. (The Budget Office presented their ideas on this subject to the Senate on [Mar. 22—see the minutes here, sec. III.D.](#))

Several senators expressed hesitation at such measures. Some departments and programs require rollover money to save up for larger expenses such as equipment or software. Similar to the previous discussion on this issue on Mar. 22, others were concerned that faculty may be removed from the decision-making process about what gets funded and when.

Dean Bodrero added that one way the Budget Office is seeking faculty input is through the Budget Taskforce, on which she serves. Seven subcommittees have been created to work through these and other questions, and faculty are invited to serve—two on each subcommittee. Dean Bodrero invited all concerned faculty to contact their deans if they are interested in serving on these subcommittees. She also invited faculty to bring their concerns, questions, ideas, and expertise in the various areas to these subcommittees so they can be discussed.

R. Keller stressed the importance of faculty getting involved in these discussions. She suggested that the senators go to the members of their divisions and help them feel empowered and energized to contribute. M. Gowans concurred, and invited the senators to follow through.

#### **IV. Senate-Administered Elections (J. Thomas)**

J. Thomas reported that the Senate will conduct two elections in the coming weeks for the following positions. He noted that if only one nominee puts themselves forward for either seat, then that respective election would not be necessary.

**A. Adjunct Representative.** A. Burningham's term as adjunct representative to the Senate is up. He is eligible to serve another term and willing to do so, though he suggested that other personal concerns may prevent him from being as effective as the role deserves. If other adjuncts are better able to assume the role, he is happy to pass on the torch.

Nominations for this seat will be open Aug. 28 to Sept. 1. The election will be held Sept. 4 to Sept. 8, administered by J. Thomas on behalf of the Senate.

**B. College Council At-Large.** Kyle Rowley's departure from the institution has left a vacancy on the faculty representation on College Council. A by-election is

necessary to fill this seat before the first CC meeting on Sept. 11. Nominations are open Aug. 28 to Sept. 1. The election will be held Sept. 4 to Sept. 8, administered by J. Thomas on behalf of the Senate.

**C. Election Bylaws.** J. Thomas also raised particular questions regarding Senate bylaws concerning elections, such as stating specifically what the Senate should do in the case of a vacancy or a lack of nominations, etc. M. Gowans suggested that the bylaws in these instances had been deliberately designed to give the Senate latitude in these matters so as not to be tied-down by precedent. J. Thomas indicated that this being so, that he was satisfied with the status quo.

## V. Senate Committee Assignments

Senators discussed the committees on which each shall serve for the 2023-2024 school year. The following table shows the final assignments.

<b>Faculty Senate President</b>	Matthew Gowans
<b>Faculty Senate Vice-President</b>	Jed Rasmussen
<b>Advancement &amp; Tenure</b>	Dennis Schugk
<b>Curriculum</b>	Sandra Cox
<b>Academic Standards</b>	Rachel Keller
<b>General Education</b>	Trent Fawcett (voting)
<b>Diversity, Inclusion &amp; Global (DIG)</b>	Wes Jamison
<b>Honors Committee</b>	Alan Christensen
<b>Library Committee</b>	Jed Rasmussen
<b>Professional Track Committee</b>	Karen Carter
<b>Service Learning Committee</b>	Rachel Keller
<b>Teaching &amp; Learning Center</b>	Adam Larsen
<b>Adjunct Faculty</b>	TBA

## VI. Policy Discussions

- A. Policies Passed.** Senators reviewed the policies that were passed by the Senate during the previous school term. College Council has approved amendments to **Policy #402: Academic Freedom Procedure**, the new **Policy #319: Reduction in Force**, and the new **Policy #391: Whistleblower Protection Policy**.
- B. The Generative AI Syllabus Statement** was also approved and has been posted on the faculty policies Canvas page for faculty to copy to their syllabi: <https://snow.instructure.com/courses/474797>.
- C. Policy Concerning the Administration of Grant Funds.** M. Gowans reported a discussion with VPFA Carson Howell on the administration of grant funds. At most institutions, when personnel or programs receive grant money, the institution receives a part of that money. This is not currently so at Snow College. Federal grant law allows institutions to take up to 35% maximum.

Senators discussed the implications of developing a new policy regarding this matter. The general feeling seemed to be in support of such a measure so long as faculty were involved in the policy's development. T. Fawcett stated that most grants require awardees to return any unspent money; at Snow College, a portion of the grant money is often returned. Thus it would be beneficial to all parties if the college received a portion, thereby limiting the likelihood of any grant money being returned.

A. Larsen added that the institution taking some money is appropriate, but since Snow is not an R1 school, 35% may be too much; he mentioned 20% as an example. Senators agreed that regardless of what the number is, it should remain consistent across both campuses.

R. Keller noted that this policy presents a great opportunity to build trust between administration and faculty. The fact that the Senate, on behalf of the faculty, would review the policy too adds to its trust-building nature.

## VII. Concerns Raised by Faculty

Senators discussed concerns raised by faculty members on the following subjects.

**A. Student \$10 Wage.** Last year the wage for student employees was increased to \$10 per hour. Senators agreed that this was a good thing, as the wage had stagnated at the federal minimum level for years. However, even this increased wage has difficulty competing against wages in private industry, which are often much higher. T. Fawcett indicated that some departments, especially for technically skilled jobs, are facing difficulties hiring qualified students *because* the wage is comparatively low.

T. Fawcett continued by reporting that a department recently tried to raise its wages for certain positions, but that this was denied by the administration. Faculty wondered whether administration had the power to do this, given that wage money comes from department funds, and whether departments should have more autonomy in this area.

Senators concurred that giving students employment opportunities on campus can provide a critical part of their learning: they develop marketable skills and gain real-world experience. Being able to attract student employees to campus jobs by raising wages thus helps the college in its mission.

Some senators added that if wages reach a certain point, then the students could earn more money than some adjunct instructors if they work the full allowed 10 hours per week. R. Keller reminded everyone that this discussion isn't just about numbers, but about ethics. This very issue, she said, allows faculty to open a conversation with administration about low adjunct pay *in addition to* student wages.

**B. Two-Factor Authentication Requirement.** Snow College now requires all of its technology users to log-in to computers using two-factor authentication with their mobile phones. Senators reported that some faculty were concerned about a potential double-standard of not being allowed to conduct personal business on a work computer, but then being required to use their personal phones for authentication. Some also preferred not to have to bring their phones with them to every class. T. Fawcett reminded everyone that two-factor authentication is much more secure and follows best industry practices.

**C. Academic Freedom, Student Emails & FERPA.** Recently too, faculty have been required to only communicate with students via their Snow College email (firstname.lastname@students.snow.edu). This strengthens FERPA compliance as other personal email addresses may be shared by a parent or others; thus any communication between faculty and students in these venues could potentially breach FERPA law. J. Thomas indicated that this has been frustrating given that many concurrent enrollment students use Google Chromebooks with Google Docs, and that being unable to share gmail addresses makes things more complicated. Like two-factor authentication, this action was taken without Senate or faculty input, and may challenge to some extent the principles of academic freedom.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

**Motion to Adjourn:** T. Fawcett; **2nd:** W. Jamison

**Approved** by all senators present.

The Senate adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

The next Senate meeting will be held on either **Wednesday, September 13** from 3:30-5:00 p.m. in the Academy Room, Noyes Building.

Remote connections in the future for Senate meetings will be conducted via Microsoft Teams, not Zoom. More information to follow before the next meeting.

## **Attachments**

Meeting Minutes, April 26, 2023

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Minutes taken by Jacob L. Thomas

Minutes approved September 13, 2023