

Meeting Minutes

January 22, 2025 @ 3:30pm

I. Call to Order & Meeting Minutes

The Senate was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

Senators Present: Sandra Cox (Pres), Trent Fawcett (VP), Karen Carter, Alan Christensen, Steve Hart, Wes Jamison, Rachel Keller, Adam Larsen, Charley Roetting, Dennis Schugk, Jeff Wallace, Hilary Withers

Senators Absent: None

Guests: Jacob Thomas (Parliamentarian), Mike Brenchley (Deans), Mike Austin (Provost), Stacey McIlff (College President), Kristi Stevens (Assoc Provost)

Minutes from 11/13 + 12/4 Addendum

Motion to Approve: S. Hart; **2nd:** C. Roetting

Approval: unanimous of all present

II. Senate Organization

A. Spring 2025 Meetings: January 22, February 12, February 26, March 12, March 26, April 9, April 23

B. Senator Terms Ending. The following senators' terms are ending; senators eligible for reelection are indicated with an asterisk (*): Alan Christensen*, Trent Fawcett*, Wes Jamison, Rachel Keller*, Charley Roetting*, and Jeff Wallace.

(The Faculty Association leadership's three-year term is ending this year. The newly selected FA Vice-President will replace J. Wallace.)

C. Senate Leadership Elections: The positions of Senate President and Senate Vice-President for the 2025-2026 academic year need to be filled. Candidates must be tenured and have at least one year of prior Senate service. The eligibility of some candidates will depend on their reelection to the Senate.

Eligible senators include the following (asterisks [*] indicate eligibility pending reelection to the Senate): Alan Christensen*, Trent Fawcett*, Steve Hart, Rachel Keller*, Adam Larsen, Dennis Schugk, Tony Smith.

Method: Senators decided that all eligible candidates for these officers will be placed on the ballot unless they withdraw their names from consideration.

D. Committee Elections: Elections need to be held for the following at-large committee seats:

- **College Council—Ephraim Seat:** Jessica Jones eligible for reelection.
- **General Education Committee—Ephraim A Seat:** Sannali Dittli eligible for reelection.
- **General Education Committee—Richfield Seat:** Senators discussed reserving the seat for Crystal Stott, who could begin her service in the Fall once her first year of teaching has concluded.

E. Thank-You Gesture for Committees. S. Cox proposed providing pizza to each of the committees represented by the Faculty Senate as a gesture of appreciation. The cost would be covered by Academic Affairs. Cox emphasized that this was a minimal yet meaningful gesture and invited alternative suggestions. The senators present expressed general support for the proposal. Cox requested that senators coordinate suitable times for distributing the pizzas, reaffirming that this initiative would serve as a token of gratitude from the Senate.

III. Remarks from the College President

Snow College President Stacey McIlff provided an update on legislative developments, emphasizing the importance of staying informed. Provost Austin had sent a faculty-wide update earlier in the day, and McIlff shared additional insights from meetings. The Commissioner's Office will present at the first meeting of the Higher

Education Appropriations Subcommittee, which will be publicly streamed. The subcommittee has new members, and its impact remains to be seen.

- A. Statewide Program Evaluation.** The state is implementing a system-wide program evaluation every five years, expanding beyond the traditional division-level reviews. Programs will be assessed on factors such as enrollment, completions, employment outcomes, and wage data. Pres. McIff emphasized the need to ensure that two-year colleges are evaluated appropriately, as current state dashboards classify Snow College with four-year institutions. She noted that this misclassification does not reflect the college's high transfer rate and must be addressed.
- B. Internal Program Performance and Budget Reallocation.** The college must reallocate \$1.67 million over 2-3 years, including \$500,000 by June. A taskforce of faculty and staff will analyze data to determine where efficiencies can be made without abrupt program reductions. Pres. McIff assured the Senate that most Year 1 changes will occur through natural attrition. She encouraged faculty to provide ideas for optimizing resources, such as adjusting course offerings and reallocating funds to high-growth areas.
- C. General Education and Humanities Program Concerns.** A senator raised concerns about evaluating Humanities and General Education programs, which support multiple disciplines but do not necessarily lead directly to high-wage jobs. The Provost clarified that efficiency data has already separated GE and non-GE costs, showing that GE programs are not incurring significant expenses. McIff emphasized that GE itself is a program and that Snow College must advocate for metrics that accurately reflect its role in preparing students for transfer to four-year institutions.
- D. Financial Challenges and Institutional Costs.** Snow College's instructional costs per FTE are among the highest in Utah, despite having the state's lowest tuition. Tuition has increased 95% since 2014, with last year's 2.5% increase being the highest percentage-wise. Pres. McIff explained that the legislative fiscal analysts—not the colleges—will present financial reports, though Snow College will have a chance to respond. The college met most of its performance funding metrics except for "High Yield," but she expressed confidence that this can be addressed next year.

- E. Scholarships, Job Placement, and Internships.** Scholarship funding remains uncertain, and the state is requesting more data on job placements, internships, and apprenticeships. Pres. McIff urged faculty to formalize resume-building opportunities within their departments to strengthen reporting. While students already benefit from internships and apprenticeships, these experiences need to be better documented to meet state requirements.
- F. Faculty Representation on Strategic Task Force.** A senator asked about faculty involvement in the internal strategic taskforce. Pres. McIff stated that discussions are ongoing and that Deans and Department Chairs will be consulted in the selection process. She encouraged faculty to recommend individuals who can think broadly about institutional priorities. The taskforce must be in place soon, as the college must submit a structured evaluation plan by June.
- G. Long-Term Strategic Planning and Natural Attrition.** Pres. McIff and administrators emphasized that reallocating resources through natural attrition is key to avoiding future layoffs. A senator noted that failing to reassess positions over time could lead to forced reductions. Strategic evaluation will ensure that staffing and resources align with evolving institutional needs.
- H. Institutional Identity and Efficiency Considerations.** A senator warned against prioritizing efficiency at the expense of Snow College's unique strengths. Pres. McIff agreed, stating that while efficiency is important, the college's identity must be preserved. A committee led by Matthew Gowans (Humanities) is reviewing the mission statement for the first time in 13 years to help align priorities with state expectations while maintaining the institution's core values. She concluded by reaffirming that Snow College is committed to serving students effectively and making thoughtful financial decisions.

IV. Senate Business

- A. Deans Council Report.** S. Cox and Dean Brenchley reported on key discussions from the Deans Council. A primary concern is financial aid fraud involving fake students, typically nontraditional and online-only, who enroll in courses but do not attend in order to fraudulently receive federal aid money. Faculty are encouraged to monitor Canvas engagement and report students

who never participate. If a student is dropped in error, they can contact the college to resolve the issue. While only 15 such cases have been identified at Snow College, similar scams have affected other open-enrollment institutions, with Salt Lake Community College reporting over 100 cases.

- B. Academic Affairs Report.** Associate Provost K. Stevens announced that the college has secured federal approval and funding to expand its prison education program. Starting in the fall, eight courses will be offered instead of four, increasing enrollment to approximately 200 students. Faculty members interested in teaching are encouraged to participate, with both in-load and adjunct positions available. Many incarcerated students are deeply invested in their education. The college continues to assess high-demand courses and welcomes creative approaches to instruction within the prison system.
- C. Curriculum Committee: Master Syllabi Revisions.** T. Fawcett reported that the Curriculum Committee has voted to stop reviewing certain sections of the master syllabi, delegating those back to divisions. Faculty have requested a clear timeline for the reduced syllabus plan, and T. Fawcett will ensure this information is widely distributed. Deans and chairs received an updated syllabus template in November.
- D. Calendaring Committee.** S. Hart indicated that this item can be removed from future agendas. While the committee has finalized decisions for Fall 2025, discussions for Spring 2026 have not yet begun. Associate Provost David Allred will oversee scheduling but has not yet provided updates.
- E. Stipends & Course Releases Ad Hoc Committee.** T. Fawcett and D. Schugk noted that the most recent meeting was canceled due to illness. The committee is scheduled to meet again on Monday, and Provost Austin expects to present a finalized chair stipend proposal at the next Senate meeting.
- F. Academic Integrity Policy Update Subcommittee.** Chair R. Keller and A. Christensen confirmed that all necessary materials, including a faculty-accessible template and flowchart, will soon be in place. The remaining work is outside the Senate's scope, so this item will be removed from future agendas. However, when the Academic Standards Committee updates its bylaws, they will come before the Senate.

G. Institutional Review Board Committee. Chair T. Smith and W. Jamison are finalizing procedures to streamline IRB approvals. A Quali form will be placed on the website, and updates will be completed by the end of the semester. Some outdated procedures remain online, causing confusion, but the committee is working to resolve inconsistencies.

Draft Bylaws Review. W. Jamison recommended reviewing the IRB draft bylaws over the next three weeks. After discussion, the revised version will be sent to Provost Austin, who will forward it to legal counsel. The bylaws require broader corrections beyond the initially noted changes.

H. Supporting Adjunct Faculty Subcommittee. Chair H. Withers and W. Jamison reported that the adjunct onboarding Canvas course is live, with ongoing adjustments. An adjunct faculty luncheon is scheduled for February 19, from 12:00-2:30 p.m., as an open-house event. The possibility of offering Health Savings Account (HSA) support, a more flexible option than traditional health insurance, was suggested as a potential goodwill gesture.

I. Teaching & Learning Committee. A. Larsen reminded the Senate that adjunct faculty are eligible for a \$150 UQI allowance, while full-time faculty can apply for \$300. The TLC is actively developing professional development opportunities.

V. Senate Initiatives

A. Five-Year Review and Senate Oversight. The Senate discussed the new five-year faculty review process and its governance. Provost Austin clarified that Deans will report to a committee for each division, with policies largely set by legislation. Senators debated whether the process should be formally outlined in the Senate bylaws to ensure consistency over time. Some expressed concern that without clear documentation, future administrations could shift control away from faculty, while others emphasized that the review process remains faculty-driven through divisional committees before reaching the Deans.

To ensure transparency and faculty oversight, the Senate voted unanimously to begin drafting a bylaws revision. A subcommittee was formed to draft language specifying the Senate's role in the process. The members are Wes Jamison, Adam Larsen, Charley Roetting, and Dennis Schugk, with M. Brenchley invited to participate. The revision will be minimal, consisting of a few sentences

clarifying the delegation of authority without introducing new policy or procedural changes.

B. Senate Leadership Training. The Senate discussed the possibility of providing additional training for department and Senate committee chairs, building on existing HR leadership programs. Suggestions included offering faculty governance training or committee leadership workshops to better equip faculty in administrative and governance roles. Senators considered whether such training should be formalized and what its structure might look like.

C. Encouraging Faculty Participation in Governance. The discussion expanded to ways of encouraging broader faculty participation in Senate elections and leadership roles. Departments were encouraged to consider ways to mentor and motivate faculty who may be interested but have not previously pursued governance roles.

V. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: A. Larsen; **2nd:** W. Jamison

Approval: unanimous of all senators present

The Senate adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

The next Senate meeting will be held on **Wednesday, February 12, 2025 from 3:30-5:00 p.m.** in the Academy Room, Noyes Building.

Minutes by Jacob L. Thomas

Approved: February 12, 2025