

Meeting Minutes

April 9, 2025 @ 3:30pm

I. Call to Order & Meeting Minutes

A. 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, Tony Smith, Jeff Wallace, Hilary Withers

Guests: Jacob L. Thomas (Parliamentarian), Stacey McIff (College President), Tim Tingey (new VP for Finance), Mike Austin (Provost), Mike Brenchley (Deans)

B. Minutes from March 26

Motion: S. Hart, 2nd: A. Larsen

Approval: unanimous of all present

II. Senate Organization

A. Remaining Spring 2025 Mtgs: April 23

B. Feed Your Senate Committees! S. Cox reminded senators to feed their committees as a small thank-you from the Senate.

C. Updates from Division Elections

1. *Fine Arts* - no updates at this time.
2. *Faculty Association* - nominations are underway.

D. At-Large Committee Elections

1. **College Council Election—Ephraim Seat.** Wes Jamison has been elected to serve as the At-Large Ephraim College Council representative for the 2025-2027 term beginning July 1.
2. **Richfield GE** — Crystal Stott is moving to the Ephraim campus, so is no longer eligible to serve from Richfield. The GE Committee changed its bylaws to accommodate for this absence.

E. Senate Leadership Elections. All recent election winners have been publicly announced to all faculty via email.

III. Administrative Updates

A. Updates from the Office of the President

1. *Intro to the New VP of Finance.* Tim Tingey introduced himself to the Senate as the new Vice-President of Finance and Administrative Services. He brings a diverse background in educational finance, with experience ranging from information technology and budgeting to classroom teaching. He expressed enthusiasm about joining the Snow College community.
2. *Leadership Acknowledgements and Institutional Direction.* Pres. McIff opened with words of appreciation for current Faculty Senate leadership and expressed confidence in the incoming team. She reiterated the administration's commitment to navigating institutional change collaboratively and with sensitivity, especially regarding ongoing budget reallocation efforts. While acknowledging the need to improve efficiencies, she emphasized that the overarching goal remains avoiding involuntary job losses.
3. *Efficiency, Data-Driven Planning, and Course Delivery.* Pres. McIff reported on discussions with Deans about identifying efficiencies in course scheduling and instructional delivery, particularly where there is natural attrition through retirements or resignations. Thanks to improved institutional data, department chairs and deans now have greater access to tools such as enrollment trends and cost-per-student breakdowns, allowing for more localized and nuanced analysis. While department diversity prevents uniform

metrics, internal benchmarking can help guide sustainable improvements.

4. *General Education Outcomes and Board Feedback.* Pres. McIff highlighted the importance of articulating the value of General Education (GE) through skill-based outcomes such as critical thinking, communication, and reasoning. She noted that GE at Snow is faculty-led and demonstrably aligned with workforce needs. Recent questions from the Board of Higher Education compared the number of GE options across institutions, with one Board member suggesting that fewer, more strategic course offerings could lead to better student experiences and instructional load balance. These conversations reaffirm that curriculum decisions must remain data-informed and faculty-driven.
5. *Student Emergency Resources and Support.* A significant portion of the update focused on student success and retention, particularly related to financial barriers. Pres. McIff noted that Snow College has dedicated emergency funds available to assist students facing crises such as housing insecurity or urgent financial need. These resources are flexible, confidential, and not tied to financial aid eligibility. Faculty were encouraged to connect struggling students with Dean of Students Mike Daniels, who oversees distribution. Provost Austin noted that financial hardship is often the most addressable factor behind student withdrawals, ahead of academic and social challenges.
6. *Mission Statement and Strategic Planning.* An updated institutional mission statement is nearing completion following extensive input and review by a cross-functional task force of faculty and staff. A final version has been submitted to the Board of Trustees for consideration at the May meeting. Pres. McIff anticipates the statement will serve as a guiding vision for forthcoming strategic planning efforts. Faculty participation will be invited in upcoming focus groups to further define strategic priorities over the next several years.
7. *International Students and Federal Policy Impacts.* Pres. McIff shared emerging concerns about visa revocations for international students. While only two Snow students have been affected thus

far, the process has occurred with little notice, and institutional leaders were not informed in advance. The college is committed to supporting affected students and is monitoring the situation closely. A protocol is in place to manage federal inquiries, with Security Chief Derek Walk as the designated point of contact.

8. *Clarifying Institutional Role and Performance Metrics.* Discussion turned to how Snow College is evaluated by state-level performance metrics. Pres. McIff and Provost Austin underscored the limitations of comparing two-year institutions to research universities, particularly when Snow's primary mission includes GE and transfer preparation. Because GE students often lack declared majors, many of their achievements go unrecognized under current reporting models. Several senators raised concerns about the disconnect between assigned institutional missions and assessment criteria, calling for more appropriate, mission-aligned metrics. Pres. McIff will continue to address these concerns with the legislature and USHE.
9. *Efforts to Improve Major Declarations.* Faculty and administrators discussed ongoing strategies to encourage students to declare a major earlier in their academic journey. Provost Austin reported notable success with "meta-majors" and targeted advising, which have reduced the undeclared rate from 80% to 50%. Suggestions included incorporating a soft-declaration activity into orientation and increasing outreach to students who have met requirements for specific programs. Pres. McIff affirmed that such efforts can be implemented ethically and in students' best interests.

B. Updates from the Office of Academic Affairs

1. *Stipends & Course Release Revision Ad Hoc Committee.* T. Fawcett reported that an updated draft of the stipend and course release document—containing only minor revisions—will be circulated prior to the next meeting for Senate review and vote. Academic Affairs has been reviewing various stipend allocations for faculty responsibilities beyond regular contracts, aiming to formalize longstanding practices and consider areas for adjustment. Key proposals include the following.

- a) *Faculty Fellows.* Current structure—6 credit-hour instruction (CHI) plus a stipend—remains largely unchanged, though adjustments may be made to increase participation.
 - b) *Honors Program.* A proposed increase in course release for each of the two Co-Directors from 3 to 6 credits annually, in recognition of their teaching oversight, student engagement, and administrative duties.
 - c) *Standardizing Roles.* The committee aims to formally codify course release/stipend expectations for several ongoing positions including Faculty Senate President (3 CHI), A&T Chair (6 CHI), Curriculum Committee Chair (3 CHI), and GE Chair (3 CHI). A stipend is also being considered for the Professional Track Representative.
 - d) *Teaching & Learning Committee.* This committee, which has adopted a co-chair model, will receive a 6-credit per year release.
 - e) *Reporting and Documentation Expectations.* T. Fawcett emphasized the importance of documentation for stipend and course release positions. A proposal is under development requiring annual standardized reports from recipients to their supervisors, ensuring transparency and accountability for workload and institutional contribution.
2. *Committee Consolidation Conversations.* Senators discussed possible consolidation of the Teaching & Learning Committee (TLC), the Online Excellence Committee, and a potential Undergraduate Research (UGR) committee. Suggestions were made to organize a new “Teaching and Excellence” umbrella committee. It was noted that UGR is currently unaffiliated with a governance body, and its activities may be more naturally aligned with the Institutional Review Board (IRB) than TLC. This remains an open topic for further discussion and input, particularly from IRB leadership.
 3. *Service Learning and Convocation Programs.* The future of certain programs, including Service Learning and Convocation, was discussed in light of budget constraints. While both programs offer

valuable experiences, their institutional footprint has remained limited, and the current faculty leads are stepping down. With a combined budget equivalent to one faculty position, reallocation of these funds is being considered as a less disruptive alternative to faculty involuntary job loss. Faculty reiterated the pedagogical value of service learning, but acknowledged the program has lacked growth and sustained coordination. Similarly, Convocation's impact and student reception were seen as more limited in recent years, whereas before enrollment had been robust. As such, ideas were raised for departments to collaborate in hosting guest speakers internally, helping maintain access to outside perspectives even if the Convocation program is paused or restructured.

4. *Tutoring Center Reorganization.* Plans are underway to consolidate the writing, math, and speech tutoring centers into a single, centralized location in the library basement. This shift is expected to improve accessibility, space usage, and visibility. A full-time director position is being considered to ensure consistent hours and unified management. While initial concerns existed about private spaces and identity among the centers, consensus has emerged in support of the transition. Online tutoring via Tutor.com will continue to be available.
5. *Reallocation Plan Timeline and Process.* The college must submit a comprehensive three-year reallocation plan to USHE by May 9. This plan, which was announced on March 26, requires approval from multiple oversight bodies, including the Higher Ed and Executive Appropriations Committees in August and September. The administration is working under a tight timeline, with early retirement data expected to be finalized by April 15. Faculty leadership and relevant committees have been meeting frequently to gather necessary information and propose strategic reallocations that minimize harm to instructional personnel.

C. Updates from Deans Council

No further updates beyond what had already been discussed.

D. Updates from College Council

In their most recent meeting, the College Council deliberated on the revisions of Policy 382, which senators discussed below.

IV. Senate Business

A. Proposed Policy #382 Discussion

Faculty Senate continued its discussion of Proposed Policy #382, which remains under active revision. S. Cox noted that the 30-day review period generated substantial feedback and that the current draft reflects a compilation of submitted suggestions. While not finalized, this working document will eventually be forwarded to HR as a set of Senate-endorsed recommendations.

Senators reiterated key concerns, particularly around language regarding external employment. There was broad agreement that while faculty should be required to inform the college of outside work, any requirement for prior approval—particularly for common activities like adjunct teaching—was viewed as problematic. Clarifying language distinctions such as “must” versus “should” was also discussed as an area in need of refinement.

Some senators raised concerns that certain prior comments or unresolved issues, including specific references (e.g., Section 4.4.1–3), did not appear in the shared draft. Members were encouraged to use the collaborative document to add comments rather than deleting content, to preserve transparency in the revision process.

A digital vote may be conducted once the Senate’s version of the recommendations is finalized. However, this vote pertains only to endorsing the Senate’s suggestions—not to ratifying the policy itself. The policy will be revised again following this phase and reissued for another 30-day review period.

B. Senate Committee Reports

1. *Supporting Adjunct Faculty Subcommittee.* H. Withers reported two key items. First, she reminded new College Council representative W. Jamison that adjunct faculty—numbering 116 this

semester – currently have no direct representation on the Council. As such, she emphasized the importance of advocating for adjunct concerns and encouraged open communication regarding their needs. Second, she expressed interest in another senator being appointed as another subcommittee member, to replace W. Jamison, who is leaving the Senate. W. Jamison offered to continue to help in whatever capacity.

2. *Curriculum Committee.* T. Fawcett reported ongoing faculty concerns regarding recent mandates tied to state legislation requiring syllabi to be uploaded to a searchable database. While efforts such as the recent Lunch Bunch session were appreciated, there remains frustration over what some view as a top-down implementation – particularly the use of Simple Syllabus – without sufficient faculty input. Fawcett noted perceptions that the policy’s scope is being expanded through interpretation rather than legislative directive.

Provost Austin responded by saying faculty concerns have been heard and understood. However, he emphasized that compliance is mandatory. USHE has reassigned two of its eight academic officers to compliance roles and is actively auditing institutional materials – including job postings – for noncompliance. Any deviation may result in the institution being flagged as noncompliant in reports to the state legislature. While Snow College is taking care to avoid overreach, the institution is bound to follow USHE's interpretation of the law, as authorized by the state.

V. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn: T. Fawcett; 2nd: H. Withers

Approval: unanimous of all present

The Senate adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

The final Senate meeting of the academic year will be held on **Wednesday, April 23, 2025 from 3:30-5:00 p.m.** in the Academy Room, Noyes Building.

Minutes by Jacob L. Thomas

Approved: April 23, 2025