

Faculty Senate Minutes

March 31st, 2026: CB 104 & Teams, 2:30-4:30 PM

Call to Order; Silent Roll Call (0 min.)

[session start time 2:30]

Present:

Senator (S), ExCo (E), Other Non-Voting Member (O), Designee (D)

Abbie Fisher (E)	Doug Czajka (S)	Jordan Allen (E)	Noelle Taylor (E)
Abdennour Seibi (S)	Douglas Gardner (E)	Joshua Fagan (S)	Paul Morrey (S)
Ahmed Alsharif (S)	Erin Jones (S)	Karen Arteaga (E)	Rich Paustenbaugh (E)
Alma Laney (S)	Evelyn Porter (E)	Laurie Toro (E)	Richard Cho (S)
Brett Breton (S)	Frank Jones (S)	Maria Blevins (S)	Sean Crossland (S)
Carolyn Howard (S)	Heather Thiesset (S)	Matthew Duffin (S)	Sean Tolman (E)
Chris Lindquist (S)	Howard Fullmer (S) (E)	Matti Smith (S)	Shelton Weech (S) (E)
Colleen Hough (S)	James Cox (S)	Max Aeschbacher (S)	Summer Karafiath (S)
Craig Thulin (S)	Jeff Packer (S)	Michaela Giesenkirchen Sawyer (S)	Tom Smith (S)
Dan Perry (S)	Jennifer Shubert (E)	Nate Jeppson (S)	Tracy Sermon (S)
Darin Eckton (S)	Jim Oldham (S)	Nicolas Clark (S)	Tyler Schnese (S)
David Connelly (E)	John Cornell (S)	Nicole Gearing (E)	Vince Rossi (S)
Deb Dowd (S)	John Newman (S)	Nizhone Meza (E)	Wayne Vaught (E)
Diego Alvarado Karste (S)			

Absent/Excused:

Amin Zollanvari (S)	Laura Ricaldi (S)	Matt Flint (S)	Nyree-Dawn Nichols (S)
Kat Brown (E)	Machiel Van Frankenhuijsen (S)	Mel Gurr (S)	Ron Miller (S)
Kevin Smith (S)			

Welcome & Updates, Evelyn Porter, Faculty Senate President

[2:30-2:30]

Approval of Previous Minutes (available in Faculty Senate Teams/[website](#))

- Minutes stand approved

Academic Affairs, Wayne Vaught, Provost

[2:30-3:30]

- **Tenure & Rank Advancement Updates**
 - All 26 tenure applicants were approved
 - Kat Brown was deputized, due to the presidential change, and she will manage the recommendations while the appeals will be handled by Wayne
- **Provost Office Reorganization & Communication**
 - Discussed changes made in portfolio assignments, ongoing hiring for key positions, and efforts to improve clarity and communication with faculty, including updates to the [organizational chart](#) and interim support roles
 - Committed to increasing transparency and communication and more frequent updates and engagement with faculty
- **Budgeting & Strategic Reallocation**

- Explained university's budgeting model, the strategic reallocation process from the previous year, and the prioritization of funding for engineering, healthcare, and workforce development, emphasizing faculty input and transparency in future allocation decisions
- **Security Measures & Event Management Post-September 10th**
 - Faculty concerns were addressed regarding security protocols following the September 10th shooting, including the use of metal detectors, changes due to new concealed carry laws, event risk assessments, and the financial impact on academic programming and speaker events
- **Emergency Communication System Updates**
 - Responded to questions about changes to the emergency communication system, noting improvements in contact data
 - You can test the alert system on your [own](#)
- **Shared Governance & Faculty Senate Engagement**
 - Discussed steps to strengthen shared governance, including regular meetings with Faculty Senate President, ensuring faculty voice in major decisions, and advocating for Senate participation in policy and presidential cabinet processes

Policy

- **Comment/Discuss**
 - [131 - Survey Distribution](#) (*Taylor Lovell*) [3:30-3:40]
 - Comments highlighted concerns about centralized survey control, academic freedom, IRB governance, and the need for less restrictive alternatives, with input from
 - [608 - Internship Program Requirements & Implementation](#) (*Kat Brown*) [3:40]
 - No comments to discuss
- **Vote**
 - [653 - Non-Tenure Track Faculty Employment Matters](#) (*Kat Brown*) [4:00-4:10]

VOTING RESULTS:

Policy 653: 31 agree, 0 disagree, 2 abstain

Non-Policy Items

- **Legislative Updates** [3:45-4:00]
 - Compensation increases- a 2.5% COLA increase was approved for all employees, with health and dental premium increases
 - Higher education largely avoided proposed budget cuts retaining carry forward funds
 - Funding was secured for the Utah Fire & Rescue Academy, workforce initiatives, the Herbert Institute, and a law school feasibility study; the Utah Lake Research Center was not prioritized
 - Bills passed included amendments to dangerous weapons policies, student belief accommodation, and performance funding, with changes to concealed carry laws affecting campus security protocols
- **UVUSA Optional Syllabi Statement Proposal** [4:10-4:15]
 - Draft versions of an optional syllabi statement to increase student awareness of UVUSA's role and resources was presented, seeking Faculty Senate feedback and approval for inclusion in the list of optional syllabi statements.
- **Post Tenure Review Rubric Proposal Intro** [4:15-4:25]
 - A draft was introduced of post-tenure review rubric, explaining its alignment with policy requirements, the evidence-based evaluation approach, and plans for faculty and dean feedback before final approval

Good of the Order

[4:25-4:30]

- The Senate will continue in-person meetings, but chat will be muted to comply with bylaws and minimize side conversations, with scheduling details pending
- All Senate members will receive a service letter this year, a change from previous practice where only those finishing their term received documentation
- Questions were raised about new requirements for submitting grading criteria and interview questions before advertising faculty positions; Faculty Senate President to investigate and provide guidance

Adjourn

[session end time 4:30]

- Meeting ended at 4:30pm

Next Meeting: April 14th, 2026

Announcements

No time allocated. Please review and send to your departments, as applicable.



Thank Everyone for an inspiring Symposium this year. We enjoyed a wonderful two days hearing of the amazing work from our UVU faculty. If you missed any of the presentations, including the keynote, you can still access the recordings in the Teams Space until April 24th. [VIEW SYMPOSIUM RECORDINGS](#)
[2026 SYMPOSIUM WEBSITE](#)

Faculty Senate Email: Faculty Senate has a generic Faculty Senate email address: facultysenate@uvu.edu.

Provost Questions: If you would like to submit questions for the Provost to address at the next Senate meeting, please email facultysenate@uvu.edu.