

WCU Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

Date: Friday, January 30, 2026

Facilitator: Kurt Kolasinski, President

Time: 3:00pm-5:00pm

Note Taker: Dan Forbes, Recording Secretary

Location: SECC 101A

Type of Meeting: Scheduled meeting

Attendees

Senators

❖ Amiruzzaman, Stefanie	Present	❖ Lawton, Bessie	Present
❖ Benedict, Kristopher	Present	❖ Lightner, Sarah	Present
❖ Brown, Ashlee	Present	❖ McInnis, Daris	Present
❖ Campillo-Fenoll, Marcos	Absent	❖ Mishra, Vipanchi	Absent
❖ Chen, Tianran	Present	❖ Mohajeri, Orkideh	Proxy
❖ Cherry, Dan	Present	❖ Panagiotidou, Eirini	Present
❖ Childs, Gary	Present	❖ Panichelli, Meg	Absent
❖ Daltry, Rachel	Proxy	❖ Park, Innhwa	Present
❖ Dasilva, Michelle	Present	❖ Razon, Selen	Present
❖ Du, Wei	Absent	❖ Ruchti, Simon	Present
❖ Forbes, Dan	Present	❖ Saboe, Matt	Present
❖ Garthwait, Clayton	Present	❖ Sanz-Sánchez, Israel	Present
❖ Grassetti, Stevie	Proxy	❖ Schugar, Heather	Present
❖ Guerriero, Tara	Present	❖ Smidt, Esther	Proxy
❖ Hill, Erin	Present	❖ Stokes, Jordan	Absent
❖ Houser, Mary	Present	❖ Tennille, Julie	Absent
❖ Howard, Rick	Present	❖ Wade, Michelle	Present
❖ Junius, Premalatha	Absent	❖ Waymouth, Heather	Present
❖ Kolasinski, Kurt	Present	❖ Wiest, Julie	Present

Representatives

❖ Adjunct Faculty Representative: Chrissy Cuozzo	Present
❖ Adjunct Faculty Representative: Bill Sawyer	Present
❖ APSCUF Representative: Julie Wiest	Present
❖ Student Government Association Representative: Avery McKnight	Absent
❖ Graduate Student Association Representative: (Vacant)	
❖ ROTC Representative: (Vacant)	

Senate Proxies

❖ Asempapa, Bridget	Absent
❖ Brenner, Jim	Absent
❖ Jussaume, Timothy	Absent

❖ O'Brien, Lia	Present (proxy for Rachel Daltry, Stevie Grassetti, Orkideh Mohajeri, Esther Smidt)
❖ Owens, Jackie	Absent
❖ Patriarca, Ashley	Absent
❖ Tully, Greg	Absent
❖ Whidden, Melissa	Absent
❖ Vealey, Kyle	Absent
❖ Wolff, Dominik	Absent

Guests In Attendance

Tom Kwiatkowski, Shari Cunningham, Chris Stangl, Tashell Jenkins, Naomie Nyanungo, Rodney Mader, B. K. Taylor

Agenda

Welcome to Senators, Proxies, and Guests

Introductions of Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Senators.

Senate Business and Announcements

1. Approval of minutes from Faculty Senate meeting on December 5, 2025. Julie motions to approve the minutes. Israel seconds. The minutes are approved by all Senators present.
2. Meeting updates and related discussions
 - a. Meeting with President Bernotsky on December 9, 2025 (attended by Senators Dan Forbes, Orkideh Mohajeri, and Kurt W. Kolasinski)
 - i. Kurt: Jeff Osgood has been invited to be sole candidate for president at Commonwealth; he has been effective and they'd like to retain him. We will know by April 1.
 - ii. Kurt: We asked about the rebranding and action plan. There has been positive reaction; the president prizes teamwork, and encourages us to work with them. There is a conversation around the planning projection. Laurie is interested in expanding experiential learning opportunities, and this may be a way of promoting fund raising. There might be other ways that graduate assistants can be involved in experiential learning.
 - iii. Kurt: We asked about the Philadelphia campus. Cheyney was awarded \$5M to work with Community College of Philadelphia, though this would not get in the way of WCU efforts. There is discussion of a new lease for a location in spring.
 - iv. Kurt: We asked about faculty tracks and opening up research opportunities. Laurie is excited about this, though the deans have different reactions. Josh Auld is talking with the deans about developing models for doing this. Faculty are equal but there there should be different ways of fulfilling contractual requirements.
 - v. Kurt: We asked about the facilities master plan. This is set. Housing is locked in and Sturzebecker is up next. The facilities master plan is now online. Information sessions in the spring are planned. There is demolition of three houses, paid for by the state—they were incurring costs just to be maintained. The result will be green space. Laurie likes the idea of closing part of Church

Street, though the Borough does not want to lose parking. We noted that there are ways of opening up parking elsewhere.

- b. Meeting with Acting Provost Josh Auld (attended by Senators Israel Sanz-Sánchez and Kurt W. Kolasinski)
 - i. Kurt: We asked about ICE. The administration is starting to look at this, as things have changed since last semester and it is time to update the guidance. All law enforcement interactions are supposed to be channeled through Public Safety, so call them first. Eirini: Are Public Safety getting any training about this? Kurt: This is an evolving conversation. Q: How are faculty members going to be protected? Kurt: I don't know of anything that has changed, but there are discussions going on. Israel: We discussed how there are legal matters of what is supposed to happen, but we've seen there's a broader question about how the campus community should react if ICE shows up anywhere near campus. They need to be ready from an administrative standpoint, because panic could spread across campus in minutes. It sounds like they recognize this is an important question. Kurt: They need to be prepared in advance. We tried to emphasize that. Q: International student population has not decreased at WCU; can we communicate plans for protecting students and staff? Kurt: We communicated to administration that we wanted to hear more.
 - ii. Kurt: We asked about enrollment. Spring numbers were a matter of students waiting very late to register, and then we hit targets. There may have been financial reasons (register later, bill comes later); some students wait until they are notified that they will lose their registration if they don't pay. So there was a greater lag than usual concerning enrollment; they are looking into the details. Grad seems a little low, but not too far out.
 - iii. Kurt: We asked about accommodations. The report on OEA was in, delayed by the consultants, and Josh will be reviewing it.
 - iv. Kurt: We asked about reduction of section count. Josh noted "heterogeneity" among the colleges, and wants to work for more consistency. More transparency about how choices about cancellations are made.
 - v. Kurt: We asked about accessibility; Josh said he wants to hear from faculty. We still need more clarification on what constitutes compliance, and we haven't heard answers. Simon: The tools don't know how to fix some of these problems. This is effectively free labor from us. Julie W.: We are going to ask what happens if a faculty member won't or can't meet the standards? Will someone fix things for them? Heather W.: There are differences between accessibility and what YuJa standards are. For some standards a paywall is something that makes something not accessible. YuJa indicates that if a document that is not accessible it must be removed. Bill Sawyer: The deans are not clear on this either. Kurt: IS&T wouldn't answer the question of what the standard is. Israel: There is a high goal—95-100% accessible—but is that for the whole course, or each component? YuJa Panorama can generate a report for the whole course. Heather W.: I thought that the ADA Committee would talk about this; it is really in IS&T.

- c. Meeting with President Bernotsky on January 28, 2026 (attended by Senators Dan Forbes, Julie Wiest, and Kurt W. Kolasinski)
 - i. Kurt: There was positive response to early notice of snow cancellations. There was no damage to buildings from the snowfall.
 - ii. Kurt: We asked about federal accountability standards. Laurie says we are not anywhere near cutoffs where we might be targeted. Our tuition is actually lower than a number of community colleges in the commonwealth. Heather: That neglects that our fees are very high!
 - iii. Kurt: We got more information on the Philadelphia campus. Laurie wanted about 500 students, and thirty faculty in Philadelphia. There will be a field trip to the new space, which is across the street from Community College of Philadelphia; faculty who are interested could go. Consider notifying the president's office and your dean if you are interested. Gary: Did Laurie address questions about income taxes that would impact faculty working in Philadelphia? Kurt: There are tax implications to working in Philadelphia. Julie W.: But we work for PASSHE, which is not in Philadelphia. Michele Dasilva: You can apply to get money back.
 - iv. Kurt: We asked about state and federal funding. The impact of loan restrictions is not on current students, but it may affect recruitment. There are loan levels based on classification of professional programs. The Psy.D. program will not be impacted. There was a discussion in Harrisburg about which doctoral programs are exclusive to IUP but that has been resolved.
 - v. Kurt: We asked about allocation. Some of the rural campuses get more allocation as economic development funding. But Laurie noted we have 21% of the student population and have greater need to access these funds.
- 3. Additional announcements and items
 - a. Other announcements
 - i. Accessibility – please share experiences with process of compliance for discussion at Faculty Senate meeting in March.
 - ii. Volunteer to serve on search committee for director of pre-med?
 - 1. Kurt: Please contact me if you are interested in doing this.

Guest: Chris Stangl, Chair, Political Science Department and WCU President, APSCUF

- 1. Chris: Thank you for the invitation. I'll treat this as open-ended, but there are some topics that have been subjects of conversation. There were late course cancellations that were not equally distributed; we'll be looking into this. There is contract language concerning cancellation of adjunct courses; if you know things about this we want to know about it. There are also concerns about class size. Ken Mash will be here Feb. 10, and he can be asked questions.
- 2. Julie W.: Can you talk about chair elections and what is required? Chris: Elections are completed by April 15, and slates must be settled before then. There are a lot of things not stated in the contract. Candidates are not required to meet with their dean, though management would like that (if you are interested in being chair, you should be interested in what the job entails). It is an optional meeting because it is not in the contract. Different departments have different approaches, but elections are held for the department. There's nothing wrong with contested

elections; they are not positions to be handed down. Julie W.: The slate has to be approved by the President.

3. Heather Schugar: We have had conversations about enrollment; I have not seen any proactive attempts to get ahead of the next cycle in the fall. Is there anything we can do to work better with administration? We have a loan change coming for graduate education, and it is very expensive because of fees and reimbursements, and applications are very slow. Chris: The spring numbers were not what was expected. We'd like to know more about the details in the data. Laurie says there's no excuse for grad to be where it is at; if applications are lagging for fall for undergrad that would not be good, but I don't know much about the situation right now. We need concrete information to act. Heather S.: And we need that information now.
4. Q: In the ripple effect of admissions going down, what do we need to know? Chris: They try to cut adjunct work load, and then take away overloads for regular faculty. You can move underenrolled course students into other sections. Every college has class targets, and different departments have different targets set by their deans.
5. Eirini: In English we typically have 25 students in writing courses, and right before the semester our dean asked us to add an additional two students per section. It's already a lot of grading; the ideal number is 18. How can we have some protection of standards, where the standards of our professional organizations are considered? Chris: There has been some acknowledgment of best practices. There is some conversation about these decisions not being made so abruptly. We'd like to be able to dictate class sizes according to best practice, but management focuses on financial concerns. Some faculty have put statements into their syllabus indicating that they cannot teach according to best practices because of the size of the course. Eirini: We do have to be aware of financial concerns. But how can we arrive at an understanding about what we will do in cases of financial disruptions, a policy about what steps are taken? Chris: We can have good faith conversations about that. Management can ask what departments and faculty would do to meet targets—they are open to different ways of managing the targets, not to changing the targets themselves.
6. Q: Class sizes are too big, and makes it hard for new faculty. I tell others our numbers and they are surprised. Could we bring an admin into the classrooms? Just to give them an idea of why we need to reduce class sizes. Chris: Administrators have taught FYE sections, so they know some of this. They can point to other institutions that are cutting programs when we are not. It is still an early conversation, and it's becoming clearer how the new administration will approach these things. I think they are aware that large class sizes are difficult. Not every college has the same target. But for the administrator it is a matter of numbers on a sheet. We have to keep at this. Writing emphasis recommended enrollments have climbed above their original limits.
7. Q: How does the increase in class size affect faculty evaluation—office hours, responding to emails, etc.? These impact us in matters of tenure and promotion; we can explain this in our narratives, but that may not be enough. Chris: They are not supposed to interpret evaluation scores the way they have been in the past. There is a committee working on a new student evaluation tool. We want to get away from the number of students being an anchor for evaluating teaching effectiveness. Your chair and evaluation committee should be advocates for faculty. Faculty take on more service than they should, and they should self-advocate, but chairs need to look out for their faculty as well.

8. Heather W.: How are these late enrollment decisions affecting other units? Chris: We don't know. The different unions are cooperating better now; management has been focused on changing policies.
9. Erin Hill: When we increase class sizes that affects student experiences, and that might change interest in the institution. AI requires us to strategize; letters of accommodation are increasing and have specific accommodations that require a lot more labor. The supports faculty need should be at the forefront of the conversation. Chris: Laurie has heard this; administration is not taking this lightly. Faculty can't be simply asked to do more and more.
10. Q: I find the lack of use of TAs is part of this. Is APSCUF not allowing this? I have to offer fewer exams and teaching quality goes down. Chris: We won't allow TAs across the board in ways that impact faculty jobs. There's a lot of ways this could go sideways. I encourage you to bring this up when Ken Mash visits, since it concerns the state system as a whole. Eirini: What about the other side of this—having doctoral students who cannot enter the workplace because they have never taught? This is unethical to not prepare them so they can be competitive. Chris: It's not impossible to find language to do this, but it will be a cumbersome process. We have to approach this carefully so we can be sure management does not exploit it.

Guests: Tashell Jenkins, Assistant Vice President for Equal Opportunity and Compliance; Rodney Mader, Professor, English Department; Naomie Nyanungo, Associate Provost for Learning and Teaching Innovation; B. K. Taylor, Assistant Vice President for Health and Wellness

1. B. K.: Thanks for inviting us. We found an issue impacting faculty and students concerning classroom disruption. We have a policy; we were having conversations about how to engage with this. This is going to be a clarification of existing policy. We've consulted with many including lawyers and autism experts among others. Disruptive behavior affects both faculty and student experience. I am the chair of the CARE team and we were encountering these cases over and over. How do we not feel alone, find help with these situations? We want to share information about partners and how to use the policy effectively.
2. Rodney: I am presently chair of CAPC. Here I'm speaking to the history of the policy. We needed to clean it up after COVID. We got feedback about how the policy was not used appropriately. We formed a group to discuss this with an eye to revising this policy in the future, since it is not working well as-is. If you are interested and want to talk about it, you can join our working group. We want the policy to represent our good ideas. Kurt: Must you be on CAPC to join the committee? Rodney: No; I'd like to have other voices sharing ideas.
3. Naomie: Our group is a cross-unit group because the policy and what happens in the classroom affects all of us. We know that this happening and there is a policy that is not clear and can sometimes cause harm. We want to explain the policy better so faculty can use it well. We have created [some resources](#). We'd like some feedback on them as they are still in draft form; we'd also like you to share what we are doing with your constituencies and continue the conversation. And if you have had any experiences with this policy we would like to know about them.
4. Naomie: We want to define what constitutes disruption and develop some strategies for faculty to use when they encounter disruption in the classroom. Disruption intersects free speech and

student conduct. How do we understand it and how do we address it? We want everyone to know the resources and support available.

5. Tashell: The current policy talks about “disrespect,” but this is very subjective as a concept. So what is genuinely actionable disruption? It is something that is a threat; ideological differences, moving around the classroom due to neurodivergence, are not disruptions, nor are cultural presentations or behaviors that may make someone feel uncomfortable—such as speaking loudly. There are steps that need to be taken before someone is removed from educational access for disruption. If I am uncomfortable that does not mean there is a disruption in the classroom environment. Wearing red might make a bull feel uncomfortable, but a color choice is not a disruption. A tone of voice of active advocacy of a view in a discussion is not in itself disruptive. If something is “off,” perhaps we should check ourselves first.
6. Gary: I’ve heard from others cases of professors being regarded in a derogatory fashion, or students addressing others in a derogatory fashion. I’d consider that disruptive. B.K.: We’d agree. Everything is nuanced, what our words mean. Tashell: If these kinds of behaviors are happening—if they are persistent interference and doesn’t respond to redirection, then it is disruptive in line with the policy. Naomie: We can talk about these cases in smaller format.
7. Israel: One of your slides showed the steps of the policy—one said three steps, another four. Are these different processes? Tashell: It’s a visual representation of the policy that represents its wording. There are four levels of the process. If there is a physical safety issue, a physical threat, that immediately goes to public safety. Otherwise there are different steps. Rodney: Historically these steps are not working. There’s no way to see this as a universal policy because different faculty can handle it differently. Chairs have different approaches to other faculty. Some things are clearly not working.
8. Heather Waymouth: In the College of Education and Social Work we have a disposition process that intersects with this in ways that work and ways that don’t. I’d love to see this process look at these intersections. It can disproportionately affect students with certain identities. Rodney: Anything presumptively punitive is going to be problematic. Naomie: We’d like to talk more about this.
9. Bessie: What is the goal—helping navigate current policy, or changing it? B.K.: The existing policy is where we are, and we have to engage with it as it is currently. Changing it is beyond the scope of some of us working on this. Naomie: We want to facilitate the conversations; people are talking with colleagues, but we need a broader conversation.
10. Michelle Dasilva: How does this translate to online teaching? Rodney: The policy doesn’t really address this. We should do something about that. Michelle: We have “keyboard warriors.” Tashell: Text messages can be read differently, and not as one intended them. Profanity and refusing to be redirected, that would fit face-to-face and online. B.K.: The name implies “classroom disruption.”
11. Mary: Students on the autism spectrum can present in ways that can be perceived as disruptive, but they are not intending to. How do we educate faculty about this, and how to respond appropriately and respectfully? Tashell: We don’t have a unified response on this. We do offer trainings. Mary: D-CAP is growing on campus; we need more attention to this. B.K.: I’ve seen cases of this. We are conscious of this. Naomie: When we hear about the policy being used, two main groups of students: neurodivergent students, and Black male students. We will be delving

into this in our conversations. Thank you for this time—please contact us if you have other things to ask and share.

Liaison Reports

1. ADA Committee – Senator Heather Waymouth – No report.
2. Alumni Association – Adjunct Faculty Representative Bill Sawyer – No report.
3. APSCUF Exec Representative – Senator Julie Wiest
 - a. The APSCUF-WCU Executive Committee met on Jan. 20, 2026. Highlights include:
 - i. Discussion of late changes to spring class schedules, including cancellations and increased enrollment caps. Leadership is checking on the number of adjuncts affected (CBA Article 11–I requires management to pay \$1,000 into an adjunct PD fund for each adjunct-assigned class cancelled less than 7 business days before the semester start) and wants to hear from departments about any other scheduling issues experienced this term (including any apparent workarounds to avoid the 11–I requirement).
 - ii. Ongoing discussion about increasing department rep engagement and related issues (e.g., not all departments have a rep, some departments with multiple reps only send one to DRC meetings, etc.).
 - iii. A couple of reminders about chair elections, including that interim chairs should be elected by the departments (not appointed by the dean) and that chair candidates in regular elections are *not* required to meet with their dean; the CBA only requires that a candidate slate is sent to the president for her approval before the department election, which must be resolved by April 15.
 - iv. Forming an ad hoc committee to update the chapter bylaws (composed of Margaret Ervin, Erin Hipple, Michael Malcolm, and me).
4. Budget Review Committee – Senator Kurt Kolasinski – No report; no meeting.
5. Campus Climate Intervention Team –Senator Simon Ruchti – No report; no meeting yet this term.
6. Council for Diversity, Inclusion, and Academic Excellence – Senator Daris McInnis
 - a. We met on 12/3/2025. We primarily discussed the MLK Commemoration event that just passed. Tracey also shared the PASSHE Statewide DEI Strategic Framework (2021-2025); I'll report any changes that we discuss in the next meeting.
7. External Relations – Senator Michelle Wade – No report.
8. Faculty Mentoring Committee – Senator Innhwa Park
 - a. The FMC are organizing the following two events for February: 1) Faculty Mentoring Reconnect, Feb. 3 and 4, 9:30 am to 2 pm in FHG 252. 2) FMP Promotion Panel, Feb. 12, 12:30-1:30 pm on Zoom.
9. Institutional Effectiveness Committee – Senator Sarah Lightner, alternate Senator Tara Guerriero
 - a. We have been working on identifying evidence to use for each of the standards in the Middle States Self-Study.
10. IS&T Faculty Advisory Committee – Senator Dan Forbes; alternate Senator Simon Ruchti
 - a. No report. In conversation with folks from IS&T I learned that the committee may be reenvisioned, since it was originally founded as a means of communication about technology between IS&T and faculty to cope with online instruction during the

pandemic. Also, the cybersecurity training modules for employees and students that were originally supposed to be rolled out last October will evidently go live on February 10. Information about how to complete the training will come in an email from the WCU Office of Information Security.

11. LGBTQIA+ University Caucus – Meg Panichelli – No report.
12. Military Veterans Coordinating Committee – Daris McInnis – No report.
13. Multicultural Faculty Commission – Senator Orkideh Mohajeri – No report.
14. Office of Research and Sponsored Programs Research Advisory Board – Senator Israel Sanz-Sánchez
 - a. No update since our last meeting. Cheryl Neal-McFall will be meeting with Israel as Senate Liaison and with Kurt as Senate President to discuss strategies to celebrate faculty research and creative activity accomplishments.
15. Philadelphia Campus – Senator Meg Panichelli – No report.
16. President’s Commission on the Status of Women – Senator Michelle Wade
17. Sustainability Advisory Council – Senator Rick Howard – No report.
18. Search committees:
 - a. Dean of College of Arts and Humanities – Senator Israel Sanz-Sánchez
 - i. The committee met on Jan 26 to discuss applications. There was strong interest in this position. Round 1 interviews will take place in downtown West Chester on Feb. 9 and 10. On-campus visits (round 2 interviews) will take place during the week of Feb. 23 - typically 4-5 candidates are invited to the on-campus visits. There will be candidate surveys shared with faculty after campus meetings, before committee deliberation and a final candidate is recommended.
19. Student Liaisons:
 - a. Student Government Association – Avery McKnight – No report.
 - b. Graduate Student Association – (Vacant)
 - c. ROTC – Vacant

Committee Reports

1. Faculty Welfare/Ethics – Senators Eirini Panagiotidou (chair), Marcos Campillo-Fenoll, Tara Guerriero, Erin Hill, Mary Houser, Michelle Kaulback, Simon Ruchti, Michelle Wade
 - a. The committee is developing a faculty-facing resource on service. This involves examining how other institutions balance service with other faculty responsibilities. We are compiling a document with relevant policies, examples, and best practices to inform discussions of equity, workload, and recognition at our institution.
2. Student Welfare – Senators Dan Cherry (co-chair), Daris McInnis (co-chair), Rachel Daltry, Heather Waymouth – No report.
3. Membership & Elections – Senator Kurt Kolasinski (chair) – No report.
4. Communications – Senator Gary Childs (chair) – No report.
5. Research and Creative Activities – Senators Sarah Lightner (co-chair), Tianran Chen (co-chair), Kris Benedict, Tienran Chen, Gary Childs, Wei Du, Prema Junius, Kurt Kolasinski, Sarah Lightner, Vipanchi Mishra, Orkideh Mohajeri, Innhwa Park, Selen Razon, Bill Sawyer, Heather Schugar, Esther Smidt

- a. Based on the discussion with the Deans at a previous Faculty Senate meeting, the committee has been identifying “levers” to pull in order to support faculty in finding time to conduct research since WCU is an R2 institution. We will be sharing a list of ideas with the Executive Committee.

Faculty Senate Executive Committee

- ❖ President – Senator Kurt Kolasinski
- ❖ Vice President – Senator Julie Tennille
- ❖ Recording Secretary – Senator Dan Forbes
- ❖ Corresponding Secretary – Senator Gary Childs
- ❖ At-Large Members – Senators Rachel Daltry and Orkideh Mohajeri
- ❖ Immediate Past President – Senator Israel Sanz-Sánchez
- ❖ Past Presidents – Senators Bessie Lawton, Heather Schugar, and Julie Wiest

Senate Meetings 2025-26

Fall 2025

(First meeting of semester in-person; all other meetings via Zoom)

- ❖ Friday, September 5, 3-5pm, SECC 101A
- ❖ Friday, October 17, 3-5pm
- ❖ (Open Forum) Monday, October 27, 10-11am
- ❖ Friday, December 5, 3-5pm

Spring 2026

(First meeting of semester in-person; all other meetings via Zoom)

- ❖ Friday, January 30, 3-5pm, SECC 101A
- ❖ (Open Forum) Tuesday, February 24, 3-4pm
- ❖ Friday, March 27, 3-5pm
- ❖ Friday, April 24, 3-5pm