Sent for Senate Approval: 12/1/2025

Senate Approved: Click or tap to enter a date.

Official Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting
11/24/2025

Not Approval

Call To Order and Approval of Minutes

Call to Order: Senate President Erika McPhee-Shaw called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: The following minutes were approved by consent:

- November 4, 2025 ACC Minutes
- November 6, 2025 ATC Minutes
- November 10, 2025 Faculty Senate Minutes

Reports and Announcements

Erika McPhee-Shaw, Senate President

- It is the last Senate meeting of the Fall Quarter. Senators were thanked for their service, and Senator Maria Timmons-Flores (WCE) was recognized in honor of her retirement from WWU.
- Senate Executive Council discussed the Provost's planned AI Task Force with him at the November 17 Exec meeting. President McPhee-Shaw had a follow-up meeting with the Provost before meeting with faculty members who have reached out to her regarding the Provost. It was reported to senators that deans are requesting institutional guidance on AI and that the Provost is considering naming a dean and a faculty member as Task Force co-leads.

Brad Johnson, Provost and Executive Vice President

- The Provost reported that he has been having conversations regarding the AI Task Force with different groups on campus. He has been thinking about trying to construct a broad institutional response on AI, including best practices and issues such as academic honesty and AI literacy. He is concerned about having broad representation serving on the Task Force. He is seeking external funding which

will inform scope and scale of the work, but believes it is time to move forward regardless of funding status.

Tesla Moson, Faculty Senate Budget Representative

- There was not a lot of new information provided at the University Budget Forum on November 12 (presentation slides). She is available to follow-up with University administration on constituent questions. There will be an end-of-quarter written report for senators to circulate.

Cathy Wineinger, AAUP Support Task Force Chair

- The AAUP Support Task Force TF continued to meet weekly this quarter and recently met with the Provost to receive updates and follow up on the TF's three main priorities.
- The Provost provided an update to the Faculty Senate recently, and the Task Force will continue to monitor this issue. In addition, support for higher education exemptions from state public records request laws is on the Council of Faculty legislative priority list for the upcoming session in Olympia.
- For legal support for students, the Task Force is recommending that the AS Senate continues to make this a priority. For legal support for faculty, the TF has reached out to the Foundation to request a meeting before the end of the quarter to discuss next steps, including disbursement criteria. Currently, WEA has an Immigration Legal Assistance Program through August 31, 2026 that is available to faculty. Questions on this fund can be directed to UFWW.
- With respect to mitigations, the Task Force views finalizing an Emergency Modality policy as an urgent issue.
- The Task Force will be meeting with UPD and Emergency Management on December 12 to discuss use of Western Alert and the Western Safe App.
- Academic Freedom "green cards" were provided to senators, who were urged to convey concerns about pressure to self-censor to the Task Force or to UFWW.a

John Hardgrove, ASWWU Senate

- WTA is proposing a bus fare increase from $1 to $2 and have decided to not enter into WWU contract negotiations to provide bus passes. ASWWU is mobilizing students on this, including 60 students who attended a virtual public comment period today. Written comments can be submitted online, and there is a December 4 public hearing. This is a grave concern for students, who pay a quarterly transportation fee. There are possible issues involving how to allocate the fee if this goes through.
- There is continued work on the Faculty Senate-ASWWU Senate partnership. Student organizers will be reaching out to faculty to organize Winter Quarter meetings.
- ASWWU Senate intends to discuss AAUP Support Task Force issues in Winter Quarter.

Discussion Items

- **Canvas Course Accessibility**: President McPhee-Shaw provided an introduction and background regarding communications and perception issues between faculty and the Center for Instruction Innovation (CII) regarding Canvas course accessibility compliance. She stated that her intention for the discussion is for senators to use the interdisciplinary-intercollege forum to communicate among themselves about what their colleges are doing and to have an honest conversation.

  Following the opening remarks, Justina Brown, Senior Instructional Designer and Director, and AJ Barse, Instructional Designer & Technologist, gave a presentation about accessibility at Western and the final DOJ rule on web accessibility.

  It was reported that the Winter workshop is ¾ full (enrollment deadline 12/5) and that additional workshop funding can be sought if there is a need.

  During discussion, senators raised questions and concerns, including:

  - Are faculty who are nervous making a mountain out of a molehill? If it is a mountain, the burden should not fall on CII alone. CII reported that, for some disciplines, such as mathematics, it is a mountain and that the big issue for all is .pdf remediation. CII is also working to build habits for accessible content. Provost Johnson state that it is different for different faculty, and that WWU can make a big step forward by the deadline and show a pathway for moving forward from there.

  - It was clarified that the rule applies only to active published Canvas content.

  - A concern was raised regarding the amount of time it would take to create accessible lecture notes from digital notes that were built using a variety of sources that include different types of materials and technical/mathematical content, with an senator estimating that it would take 20% of a full-time quarter's work due to the amount of content. To address this issue, the senator who raised the issue recommended looking at purchasing and using an AI tool specifically tailored to science and mathematics content. Senators discussed concerns about AI use and intellectual property.

  - There were requests that the university fund additional labor to address the workload issue for instructional design, but especially for faculty, which faculty feel has not yet been adequately considered.

  - A senator raised the issue that this is a student inclusion and ethical issue in addition to a legal issue. It was stated that there needs to be support for faculty and that there is a need to think about the learning curve involved.

For Approval

- A concern was raised about course materials in which accessibility may not align with learning outcomes, such as a language listening exercise that has captions),

- There was a question about whether this is anti-pdf. CII stated that .pdfs can be made accessible but that it can be difficult.

- A philosophical issue was raised that if accessibility becomes too difficult, people may pull materials and, by so doing, decrease access.

- Academic freedom implications were raised, such as if a faculty member has to remove an link to an important journal article from a course because its accessibility cannot be ascertained.

- There was a point raised that such resources – important new publications – simply may not be considered replaceable to achieve a course learning outcome.

- In response to a question from a senator to senators about whether anyone has been able to successfully work with the accessibility compliance tools and can thus offer advice to the group, there was one report of some success with tools used so far and advice to focus on addressing errors before alerts.

- **Usage of AI/LLMs for evaluating applications for probationary review, tenure, post-tenure review, promotion, or professional leave:** President McPhee-Shaw reported that the Senate Executive Council discussed this issue on Monday, November 17, after it was raised by several CHSS senators during Items from the Floor. Most recently, there was a request that the Senate discuss the following CHSS FAC policy, approved on October 28:

  > *No member of CHSS faculty, departments, or committees is permitted to use artificial intelligence, generative AI, or LLMs for any step in the process of evaluating applications for probationary review, tenure, post-tenure review, promotion, or professional leave.*

  President McPhee-Shaw stated that Senate Executive Council would like guidance on what CHSS would like the Senate to do. Johann Neem, who raised the issue from the floor on November 10 as a constituent concern, stated that the main issue is determining whether there is a widespread enough concern to request that the policy be applied at the University level because colleges cannot control what happens at that level of administration.

  At the request of the Senate President, there was a motion by Johann Neem (and seconded) for the Senate to consider the following language:

Not Approved

No member of faculty, departments, or committees is permitted to use artificial intelligence, generative AI, or LLMs for any step in the process of evaluating applications for probationary review, tenure, post-tenure review, promotion, professional leave, or teaching & research grants.

Upon parliamentary clarification, the motion was withdrawn as being unnecessary to proceeding with the discussion item.

The following issues and concerns were raised during discussion:

- The language could be interpreted as broad, such as requesting an explanation through AI about something in a dossier or asking for proofreading assistance.
- The policy is not clear in its definition of AI.
- While public information already is being scraped by AI, there is a concern about non-published information being provided to AI from a dossier.
- The main concern is that people are going to rely on AI to do summaries, rather than doing the evaluation work themselves.
- There should be norms and guidance at administration level, and it would be good for administration to say that they do not use AI to read dossiers.
- Including a purpose statement with a rationale would be helpful.
- A point was raised about trusting faculty colleagues under academic honesty. Looking forward, might this be a goal of a new AI Task Force?
- The idea came up at Senate Executive Council that the Senate might not want to create policies every time a new issue arises if there are existing policies that might cover the issue already. The Code of Faculty Ethics (Section IV) has language on AI, so there could be a motion to amend that language instead.

Items from the Floor

There were no items from the floor.

Adjournment

The Senate adjourned at 5:36 p.m.

For Approval

Faculty Senate Attendance Senate
11/24/2025

Voting Members			Non-Voting Members		
Brianna Delker	CHSS-SBS-Psychology	x	John Hardgrove	ASWWU Senate	x
Camilo Ponton	CSE-Geology	x	Sabah Randhawa	President	--
Catherine Clark	CSE-Chemistry	x	Brad Johnson	Provost	x
David Yang	WCE-ELIT	--	Christopher Bianco	Council of Deans	x
Dawna Drum	CBE-Accounting	--	Theresa Warburton	UFWW President	--
Dennis Whitcomb	CHSS-HUM-Philosophy	x			
Erika McPhee-Shaw	President (At-Large)	x			
Ernest Hartwell	CHSS-HUM-LLC/Linguistics	x	**Committee Chairs and Senate Representatives**		
Gabe Gossett	Libraries	x	Bidisha Biswas	Legislative Rep	--
Greg Youmans	CHSS-HUM-English	x	Tesla Monson	Budget Rep	--
Heather Moore	CHSS-SBS-SLHS/HHD	x	Michael Slouber	Past President	x
James Ray	CFPA-Music	x	Melissa D'Eloia	ACC	x
Jane Wong	CHSS-HUM-Ethnic Studies	x	George Zhao	ATC	--
Jason Query	CBE-Economics	x	Kendra Dupuy	SLC	--
Jim Cooper	CSE-Biology	x	Shawn Knabb	SOCEC	--
Johann Neem	CHSS-HUM-History	x			
John Gialanella	CFPA-Design	x			
Junaid Khan	EECE, Physics & Astronomy	x	**Recorder**		
Kameron Harris	CSE-Computer Science	x	Becky Johnston	Faculty Senate	x
Maria Timmons Flores	WCE-ECE	x			
Maura O'Leary	CHSS-SBS-Linguistics	x	**Guests**		
Patrick Buckley	CENV	--	Cathy Wineinger	AAUP Support Task Force Chair	x
Ramadha Piyadi Gamage	CSE-Math	x	Justina Brown	CII Director & Senior Instructional Designer	x
Ron Helms	CHSS-SBS-Sociology	--	Justina	CII Instructional Designer & Technologist	x
Sondra Cuban	WCE-HCS	--			
Stephanie Gomez	CHSS-HUM-Jou/Com	x			
Tarek Algeddawy	CSE-Engineering & Design	x			
Tesla Monson	CHSS-SBS-Anthro	x			
Tim Bruce	Graduate School	x			
Yanara Friedland	Fairhaven	x			

Voting Attendees	25	**Non-Voting Attendees**	9	**Total Attendees**	**34**

FOR APPROVAL