Faculty Senate Notes
November 10th, 2026

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Senate President was in the chair. Also attending were the FS Vice President, FS Secretary, President Lepre, and Interim Provost Clark.

Senators Attending: Amit Poddar, Angela Freeman, Beth Towel, Brian Flores, Brooke Rogers, David Yoon, Deneen Long-White, Elizabeth Emmert, Ellen Shaefer-Salins, Matthew Bailey, Natasha Finegan, Nicole Kulp, Simbarashe Pasirayi, Thomas Laney, Victor Muriel, Yuki Okubo

Meeting begins at 3:30 pm

Announcements from President Lepre

- Fences will be coming down around Blackwell just before Thanksgiving
- Parking lot won't open until January. Building will be turned over to the University in December.
- Provost's search committee – narrowed candidate pool to 24 individuals for zoom interview, then narrowed it down to 12 candidates for airport interviews (on November 5 and 6). The committee then narrowed it down to 4 candidates, 3 of which have accepted the invitation for campus visits. Currently, the plan is that they will visit on November 17, 18, and 20. Their visits will include a 90-minute session to meet with faculty, meetings with the Dean's council, meetings with the Chairs and directors, and an open session.

Questions that were asked/responses.

- With regards to Blackwell Hall, when will departments be moving in? How is this going to be communicated to the campus community? Timelines are somewhat reliant on furniture delivery and installation. There is a hope that some organizations will move in over winter break, but this is still to be determined. The Admissions department will almost assuredly be moved in over the break, but the administration understands that communication will be key to letting the campus community know when people are moving in.
- When can we expect to see names and CVs of Provost Candidates: Michelle Hirsch is putting documents up behind password protected website, and an email will go out this week to faculty about how to access.
- Do we know when the sculpture in front of Blackwell will be put up? Next week.

Approval of minutes from meeting on October 27, 2026

Announcements from Interim Associate Provost Chrys Egan

- Immigration – the Previous law firm Fragomen is no longer authorized by the USM, although they will complete the visa portion of current cases. Permanent residency (green card process) will be handled by the new immigration firm. SU's general counsel is selecting the new counsel and will do so soon. Angela Lookabill is the contact for immigration issues within the provost's office. April McLaughlin will start on November 11 in Human Resources.
- Course Evaluations – Will be transitioning student evaluations from one platform to another. This transition will take place slowly. One pilot course is using Watermark to do student evaluations for fall. Communications is planning to use Watermark for student evaluations in the winter semester. For spring 2027, Watermark will be used for evaluations in all FSY and perhaps Perdue courses. Watermark will be used for evaluations in all courses for summer and fall 2027. A technical team and faculty senate selected committee consisting of: 3 faculty - David Emerson (Acct & Legal, Nicole Hall (Nursing) & Cara Wade (Art) 2 Gen Ed – Jenn Nyland & Michelle Schlehofer, 2 Office of Provost – Angela Lookabill & Chrys Egan, & 2 ID&D – Melissa Thomas & Janice Orcutt. This committee will report to FS on Dec. 8. Draft version of Perdue school evaluation questions has been given to the committee. Committee also has sample from the UMD university-wide evaluation – total of 19 questions. The committee is preparing a draft questionnaire for departments. They are also preparing a draft statement on bias and student instructions.
- Strategic Plan – The Strategic Planning Committee has put together departmental worksheets with strategies and divisional worksheets with goals. Departmental worksheets are due to the Dean's by December 4. The Deans then incorporate departmental perspectives into the school/college work underway and complete a divisional worksheet. Divisional worksheets are due to Chrys Egan by December 14. The provost's office will synthesize the school/college submissions into an initial academic affairs' divisional worksheet and present to President Lepre, ideally before the holiday break.

Questions that were asked/responses.

- With regards to the Strategic Plan – Does very department needs to come up with 3 to 5 priorities? Yes

- Regarding Immigration and faculty members experiencing immigration issues- Fragomen is not helping in certain aspects, and faculty are left in limbo. What should we be telling faculty? We need to make sure to convey that SU is taking this seriously, but we don't know who the new representatives will be. SU's General Counsel is requesting information to find where each faculty member is in terms of the immigration process, so that SU can transfer the process to the new representatives once they are chosen. However, currently we are in a holding pattern. We should convey to faculty them to forward concerns/questions to IP Clark or A&F VP Edenhart-Pepe.
- How do we differentiate between Full-Time Non-Tenure Track and Visiting Assistant Professors in terms of new recruitment? Technically, a VAP is a FTNTT, and the university has a process to convert a VAP to a tenure track line. To differentiate, the department needs to determine whether they hope to convert this position to a tenure track position or if the position will remain temporary. Note: Some faculty expressed concern about the expectation of turning VAP positions into tenure track positions. It was asked if there could be language given to departments to use if they are recruiting VAPs looking to eventually turn to tenure track positions. IP Clark said she would work on that.

Announcements from Senate President

- Thanked the Faculty Senate Officers for hosting Faculty Friday on November 6.
- Next Faculty Friday will be February 5, joint TLC Faculty Friday event – in Holloway Hall
- One motion returned from IP Clark, the 2nd motion on merit pay and training. The FS President displayed the motion for review (From Feb 2026). IP Clark is on board with many aspects of motion, but not regarding decoupling training from OIE (every other year) to merit pay. Is this being communicated to faculty and staff? The IP is working with HR and the graduate council to make sure this is articulated precisely. Concerns were expressed about faculty doing field work without internet while on sabbatical and would not be able to complete training. The question was asked if it would be possible to give 6 months' head up about the training? Or push back training deadline? IP Clark believes there can be exceptions made when someone comes back from sabbatical.

The Academic Integrity Policy amendment (was being discussed when meeting ended on Oct. 27) was brought back to table and discussed seriatim.

Regarding page 5, section B, paragraph 3:

The amendment suggested deleting “Reach out to the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Student Success for advice”, changing “if” to “If”, and adding “the reporting person should contact the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Student Success to develop plans for future communication and process”. This amendment was debated and voted on. The amendment passed.

Regarding page 5, section C, subsection 1.b

The amendment suggested deleting “b”, adding “Note”, deleting “The Reporting Person may choose to inform the”, deleting “is informed”, and adding “but”. This amendment was debated and voted on. The amendment passed.

Regarding page 5, section C, paragraph 2

The amendment suggested deleting “consider the student’s response to the allegations or”, adding “after informing the student of the accusation”, adding “and they must consider a student’s response to the allegation, if a response is received”, and in last sentence deleting “time” and adding “the five days”.

> Victor Muriel proposed an amendment to the amendment to change “five” to “three” in first and last sentence on page 5, section C, paragraph 2, and in the last sentence on page 5, section 1.b. This amendment to the amendment was debated and voted on. The amendment to the amendment did not pass.
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> Amit Poddar proposed an amendment to the amendment to change “must” to “may” in the first sentence of paragraph 2. This was passed by unanimous consent.

The amendment was voted on. The amendment passed.

A motion was made by Amit Poddar to extend FS meeting by 5 minutes. A vote was held and passed.

Regarding page 6, section C, subsection 2, paragraph 5

The amendment suggested adding “allegation of misconduct occurs”, deleting “Incident Report is submitted”, deleting “and the student appeals the charge, adding “report may be filed or before the”, adding ”the final grade should not include the sanction prior to the submission of the Incident Report”, adding “the student appeals the charge”, deleting “Alternatively”, adding

"In these situations", deleting "and", deleting "is", deleting "once", and deleting "after the Incident Report is filed and/or".

Angela Freeman proposed an amendment to the amendment to add "If Final grades are required after the accusation and before reporting, an Incomplete should be given." The amendment to the amendment was voted on and passed.

The amendment was voted on. The amendment passed

The Academic Integrity Policy amendment was still on the table when the FS meeting adjourned.

The FS meeting ended at 5:05 pm.