

NWOSU Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes September 20, 2024

Dr. Riegel called the Faculty Senate meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Those in attendance: Dr. Jennifer Mahieu, Dr. Mary Riegel, Dr. Piper Robida, Dr. Roxie James, Dr. Garret Lahr, Dr. Steven Mackie, Dr. Christie Riley, Dr. Jennifer Sattler (Absent: Dr. Taylor Randolph, Ms. Dana Roark and Prof. Kimberly Weast)

Voting to approve previous meeting minutes happened via email.

New Business

- Student Engagement Vision Statement:
 - All faculty worked on developing draft vision statements during the 2024 Faculty Development Day on Friday, August 16th. These drafts were used as a place to begin the Senate's discussion.
 - Draft statements were evaluated and senate members worked on a final draft to submit to administration.
 - A proposed statement **"Northwestern cultivates an environment where students demonstrate active learning, curiosity, and engagement in the classroom, campus, and community."** was accepted by the members present.
 - The proposed statement was sent to senate members who were absent so they could provide additional input prior to sending to administration.
- Faculty request for meal reimbursements:
 - Faculty seek to ask administration for permission for certain meal expenses to be reimbursed from departmental funds. These would include meals purchased during departmental interviews or required field trips or conferences that keep faculty away from Alva for more than 4 hours. This would not include per diem meals granted for overnight travel.
 - Concerns:
 - Currently, several chairs are paying out-of-pocket for meal expenses during on-campus interviews. Typically, departments plan a meal with the interviewee, which chairs habitually cover out of pocket. Depending on the number of interviews and vacant positions within a department, these expenses can quickly add up.
 - Other faculty have voiced concern that they are not allowed reimbursement for meals on days of department required travel greater than 4 hours, but less than an overnight stay.

Next faculty senate meeting is planned for mid-November, unless need arises to meet sooner.

Seeing no further new business, Dr. Riegel called the Faculty Senate meeting to an end at 12:19 pm.

NWOSU Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes November 19, 2024

Dr. Riegel called the Faculty Senate meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom.

Those in attendance: Dr. Jennifer Mahieu, Dr. Mary Riegel, Dr. Piper Robida, Dr. Roxie James, Dr. Garret Lahr, Dr. Steven Mackie, Dr. Christie Riley, Dr. Jennifer Sattler, Dr. Taylor Randolph, and Ms. Dana Roark (Absent: Prof. Kimberly Weast)

Voting to approve previous meeting minutes happened via email.

Old/Continuing Business

- At our September 20th meeting, the faculty senate worked on a draft student engagement vision statement to submit to administration for final approval. After some minor revisions, the final vision statement for student engagement will read:
“Northwestern cultivates an environment where students demonstrate active learning, curiosity, and engagement in the classroom, on campus, and within their communities.”
- Regarding faculty request for meal reimbursements for interviews and during short-term faculty travel:
 - Meals reimbursement for interviews: University budgets cannot be used for this, but Dr. Pecha’s office will provide passes so that department members and candidates can eat as a group at no cost in Coronado Café.
 - Meals during faculty travel: The university cannot reimburse meals for travel that doesn’t require an overnight stay. This is both State and Federal policy.
 - These policies will be reiterated at Chairs meeting.

New Business

- Holiday schedule and Academic Calendar for 2025-2026 was emailed to senate members prior to this meeting – no concerns were raised.
- Call for senate elections will be made in the next few days with voting happening after Thanksgiving Break. We will be electing our 5 designated members this year:
 - 2 members from School of Arts & Sciences stationed on Alva campus,
 - 2 members from School of Professional Studies stationed on the Alva campus, and
 - 1 member from the extended campuses
 - As always, only those members of the faculty eligible to be elected can vote in each of these elections, so we are having three separate elections. The election is to be administered by an ad-hoc committee formed by Dr. Riegel, Dr. James, Dr. Mackie and Dr. Sattler.
- Faculty/Staff Recognition: members of the faculty senate will receive certificates and gather for a group picture at the Faculty/Staff recognition ceremony.
- Should Ranger Connection curriculum be revamped to better prepare students for degree programs? Should there be discipline-specific Ranger Connection sections or should the revised curriculum be more skill-based based, e.g. should students learn things like email etiquette, accessing Blackboard, learning about course rotations and prerequisites relevant to their degree program? Some departments have implemented their own credit-bearing courses within their degree programs to help better prepare students. Faculty senate members agreed that some revisions to Ranger Connection’s curriculum would be good. We will meet with Dean Mosburg to discuss options. Included were requests that specific skills be addressed including but not limited to navigating Blackboard, understanding course rotations, and using self-service. Mentioned was the desire to see Ranger Connection become a more “professional development” style course where students would learn life-skill such as time management, writing professional/appropriate emails, and making good decisions with issues such as social media. The Senate also discussed the possibility of reconsidering the format of the course: ideas included increasing the credit hours as students don’t seem to take a one-hour course seriously, nor are they coming out prepared, considering an 8 week format that meets multiple times per

week rather than the current 16 week format, including more immersive experiences like multi-day camp-style events that would get the students prepared before the semester even begins. The Senate agreed that this topic would take some more work, and collaboration with Student Services to implement, and they would like to revisit this as a project in the spring semester.

Next faculty senate meeting will be in January 2025 when the new members will join and officer elections will take place, unless need arises to meet sooner.

Seeing no further new business, Dr. Riegel called the Faculty Senate meeting to an end at 3:32 pm.

NWOSU Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes February 7, 2025

Dr. James called the Faculty Senate meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. via Zoom.

Those in Attendance: Dr. Roxie James, Dr. Garret Lahr, Dr. Steven Mackie, Dr. Christie Riley, Dr. Jenny Sattler, Dr. Jennifer Mahieu, Dr. Eduardo Moreira, Mrs. Heidi Ritchie, Dr. Mark Zadorozny (**Absent:** Prof. Kimberly Weast, Dr. Mary Riegel)

✓ Voting to approve previous meeting minutes happened via email.

Old/Continuing Business

✓ Officer Elections

- Vice-President/President-Elect: Dr. Jenny Sattler nominated Dr. Mary Riegel. Dr. Garret Lahr seconded the nomination. Dr. Riegel received unanimous approval from the Senate.
- Secretary: Dr. Jenny Sattler nominated herself. Dr. Garret Lahr seconded the nomination. Dr. Sattler received unanimous approval from the Senate.

✓ Admin Update

- **Senate Election:** There was a brief discussion on procedures for filling a position left vacant mid-year (solicitations of nominations, vote)
- **Student Engagement Vision Statement:** Dr. Bell and Dr. Hannaford reviewed the poster and expressed their appreciation for the work done by the senators to create it.
- **Meal Reimbursement Follow-Up:** Dr. Bell noted that he would ask Dr. Maier to mention the meal policy at the next chairs' meeting and to add the policy to the document provided to chairs to guide their search. (Follow up: Dr. Maier confirmed that information about the tickets is already on the document, but he added the underlined portion to the note to emphasize that they could be used for candidates and committee members: "Free passes for the Coronado Café 'Ranger Perk' can be obtained from Dr. Pecha by the search committee chair to cover meal expenses for the interviewing candidate and members of the division/department attending as part of the faculty search process.")
- **Calendar for 2025-2026:** Regarding the option for a week at Thanksgiving to match public schools and help alleviate the issues we have with student attendance.
 - There was a discussion with Dr. Hannaford and Dr. Bell about the need to satisfy OSRHE class meeting time requirements, and Dr. Bell followed up with an email attachment of the relevant OSRHE policy (3.19.2.A—see below).
 - The Senate will continue to explore options that would allow a full week at Thanksgiving (earlier start to the semester, changes to fall break, etc.). As part of that exploration, they will consider sending a spring survey to faculty to solicit feedback on various options.

3.19 ACADEMIC CALENDARS

3.19.1 Purpose

This policy establishes a uniform academic calendar for the State System.

3.19.2 Academic Calendar Standards

The traditional academic calendar for institutions in the State System consists of the fall, spring, and summer terms. Additional sessions like winter and summer mini sessions are also encouraged; however, reporting on these alternative sessions should roll into a traditional term.

- A. If semester-credit-hour is used by institutions in evaluating a student's educational attainment and progress it should be calculated as follows:

1. One semester-hour of credit is normally awarded for completion of a course meeting for 800 instructional minutes, reference clock hours and credit hours 34 CFR 600.2 (i.e., 50 minutes per week for sixteen weeks), exclusive of enrollment, orientation, and scheduled breaks. Organized examination days may be counted as instructional days.

→ After further discussion, the senators did not want to propose an earlier start to the semester or changes to fall break.

- **Ranger Connection Review:** We discussed the evolution of this class over time (instructor-taught, SS-taught, taught by SS/faculty pair, changes in emphasis over time). Dr. Bell will facilitate a meeting of the GE Committee Chair (Dr. Clark), Faculty Senate representatives, Student Services personnel, and

Academic Affairs administration (Dr. Bell and Dr. Maier) in the spring to dialogue about concerns and possibilities.

- **Additional Comments:** Dr. Bell and Dr. Hannaford shared a discussion from the executive team about strategies for improving and standardizing communication about upcoming events and their impacts (e.g., parking, roof repair) through a weekly email. The senators suggested that standardizing the timing and subject line of the email would likely keep it from being lost in the glut of emails received by us all. All acknowledged that last-minute communication will still happen when timing decisions are out of university control, but we'll work to minimize this by including an "on the horizon" section in the email.
- **Additional Comments:** Dr. Bell and Dr. Hannaford expressed their gratitude for the Faculty Senate's consistent service and collegiality, noting that NWOSU is unique in the degree to which we work together and cordially.
- **Additional Comments:** Dr. Hannaford shared comparative data on salaries and demographics that included numbers for NWOSU, Oklahoma, and adjacent states. We celebrated the ways in which the university continues to build a diverse student body and faculty.

New Business

- ✓ **FEAD/Portfolio Training:** Senators had a brief discussion on additional training for faculty portfolios that would be more focused on what goes into the portfolio, rather than the technical aspects.
 - Dr. Lahr noted that because it varies by department, it's usually up to department chairs to discuss with their faculty the particulars of what types of artifacts to include in the portfolio.
 - There was discussion of creating a sort of "best practices" document instead of having additional trainings.
 - Dr. Riley noted that ALCA is wanting suggestions for how to improve and expressed that she would prefer to have a template or guide of some sort built into ALCA so that faculty could input information and ALCA would automatically populate certain sections of the portfolio.
- ✓ **Gun Resolution:** Dr. James mentioned that every spring, admin asks the Faculty Senate to draft a firearms resolution requesting that the current policy be upheld. She asked if Senators were ok with preemptively voting to pass the resolution. Senators unanimously agreed.
- ✓ **Ranger Connection Review:** Dr. Lahr expressed that he would like the Ranger Connection review to be Faculty Senate's major project for AY25. Senators unanimously agreed.
- ✓ The next faculty meeting will be held after Dr. James and Dr. Riegel meet with admin to discuss the Ranger Connection Review.
- ✓ Seeing no further new business, Dr. James called the Faculty Senate meeting to an end at 10:26 am.

NWOSU Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

April 17th 2025

Meeting Called to Order: 2:01 PM

Those in Attendance: Dr. Roxie James, Dr. Garret Lahr, Dr. Steven Mackie, Dr. Christie Riley, Dr. Jenny Sattler, Dr. Jennifer Mahieu, Dr. Eduardo Moreira, Dr. Mary Riegel, Mrs. Heidi Ritchie, Prof. Kimberly Weast, Dr. Mark Zadorozny (Absent: Dr. Christie Riley)

Old/Continuing Business

- Admin Updates (Announcements)
 - Dr. James reviewed updates from administrations regarding Thanksgiving Break, the AY25-26 Holiday Schedule, the Gun Resolution, Cybersecurity, and Module 3.
 - **Thanksgiving:** Dr. Bell and Dr. Hannaford expressed appreciation for the senate's discussion of the implications of having a longer Thanksgiving.
 - **Holidays:** Dr. Hannaford noted that we will have an additional holiday (21) in the upcoming year to allow for a longer staff break over the Christmas holiday.
 - **Gun Resolution:** Dr. Hannaford expressed his appreciation to Faculty Senate for its proactive approach to getting a statement on guns on campus prepared.
 - **Cybersecurity:** Dr. Bell asked whether mandatory training for employees who fall prey to cybersecurity scams would be effective, but senate representatives felt that personal contact from IT would be a more effective approach (a phone call from C. Ricke that could lead to 1-on-1 counseling).
 - **Module 3:** Dr. Bell asked what might make Faculty Development Module 3 more effective. Senators suggested that framing the initiative by explaining its link to grant funding would be helpful, as would clearer communication (certificates of completion, a fillable reporting form online, etc.).
- Admin Updates (Discussion Needed)
 - **Accessibility:** Dr. Bell discussed the need to make all online content digitally accessible, which led to a lengthy discussion of the challenges this would pose. In addition to any strategies that may come out of the work of the Ad Hoc Accessibility Committee, administration and senators agreed that researching how producers of textbooks and software producers meet this challenge would be a productive approach.
 - Inform faculty about Adobe Acrobat
 - Math & Science Accessibility
 - What other "issues" do you foresee?
 - Dr. Zadorozny asked what should be accessible and when? Dr. James explained the law, and its expectations, and noted that the ad hoc accessibility committee is working on this issue, and faculty should begin receiving updates/guidelines by the end of this (Spring 2025) semester.
 - Dr. Lahr asked if NWOSU would be updating its LMS. He argued that accessibility could be better achieved with a better LMS. Dr. James noted that she thought Jake Boedecker mentioned that our Blackboard contract would be up for renewal, and that she would talk to him about what is on the horizon regarding our LMS.
 - Dr. Lahr also noted that beyond accessibility, an updated LMS could improve the online experience overall for students.
 - **FEAD:** Dr. Riegel explained that the committee proposed additional training on portfolio content (not simply construction process). Dr. Hannaford, Dr. Bell, and senate representatives discussed at length additional strategies for making the portfolio process more objective and

meaningful. Dr. Riegel indicated that the committee and Faculty Senate would discuss these strategies, which might include adding a neutral reviewer and reweighting scores of reviewers.

- Note: A best practices document is still on the table, and the faculty senate could begin work on that document.
 - One possibility would be three reviewers (one from department, one of your choice, one random/neutral from the opposite school)
 - How would weight be redistributed? What is defined as “peer”? Could non-faculty (so, say staff) also score?
 - Dr. Riegel noted that the FEAD committee is currently working on the best practices document. She explained that it wouldn’t cover everything, and that there will still be discipline specific issues, but that there would be some discussion particularly about the scholarship section. The document should be on the FEAD portion of the website soon.
 - Dr. Riegel also discussed that the possibility of a third reviewer (if implemented) would not go into effect until Fall 2026, and that FEAD wanted a second round of data before implementing this. She also noted that FEAD would be surveying faculty in the Fall to have input on potential trainings and the third reviewer.
- **Weather:** Dr. Hannaford asked senate representatives how they felt extended weather closure should be handled in terms of continuing with learning. Senators discussed the varied ways in which faculty handled this and suggested that a mandatory syllabus statement on what to do with weather closure (specific to the faculty member) be added to the syllabus template.
- What about a “School Closures” statement instead? That would encompass weather, emergencies, the science department ☺, etc.? Question to consider: what is the expectation of a faculty on a snow day/sudden school closure? Note: This is not just for one or two days, this is for *several* (less expected) closures.
 - After a brief discussion and some wordsmithing, Dr. James proposed the following:
Extended Closure Contingency Statement
In the event of multiple or extended university-wide closures due to weather, safety concerns, or other emergencies, this course will adapt to ensure continued progress toward learning outcomes. Instructors will communicate expectations and instructions via NWOSU email and Blackboard. Students are responsible for checking these platforms regularly during any extended closure period.
 - Senators agreed that a statement like this was necessary, and that it would great for use as a discussion point for faculty and students to discuss what might occur in case this becomes an issue.
 - The final notes from senators (to take to admin)—Can it be included on the syllabus template? Can admin explicitly state where it should be placed on the syllabus?
- **Ranger Connection:** Dr. Bell and the senate officers discussed at length senate’s desire to be part of a Ranger Connection curriculum review. The possibility of targeting a specific element of the curriculum for piloting in the spring seemed to be a promising approach. The senators indicated a willingness to participate in a meeting of Student Services and Academic Affairs personnel with the GE Committee Chair and senate representatives during early summer. Dr. Bell will facilitate that meeting.
- Meeting to Include: Dr. Bell, Dean Maier, Dean Mosburg, R/E Forum Representation (Dr. James), Ethan Sackett, Lisa Cline, Mindi Clark, Faculty Senate Representation (Dr. Lahr, Dr. Riegel, Dr. James)→others to include? (Alysa Rose--ASC)
 - Dr. Riegel and Dr. James—Informal “Meeting” with Dean Maier
 - Student Input? Pilot Study?

- Curriculum Planning should not be rushed
- Dean Maier to look at student evaluations
- Professor Weast made the argument that Ranger Connection go back to the departments. She further noted that if the course is 16 weeks long, perhaps we could have 8 weeks be with the larger group, and 8 weeks be within the department? She explained that one question her department had was about how to reach this new group of students?
- Dr. Zadorozny also explained that for education, students need to understand requirements earlier (specifically the requirement for getting into the education program)— and questioned when we would expose them to this and that perhaps ranger connection could do this?
- Dr. Sattler noted that it may be useful to have discussions about something unique to departments (specifically things like labs).
- Dr. Riegel wanted more college skills covered. Noting that something like how to read the catalog and how to understand degree/program requirements should be covered as well.
- Dr. James suggested bringing faculty from every department into the ranger connection classes.
- Dr. James also noted that the bigger issue was continuity and wanted to ensure that all Ranger Connection classes cover the same material.
- The discussion ended with two action plans:
 1. Dr. James asked all senators to reach out to their departments/other faculty to get some insight into what they would like to see covered in ranger connection.
 2. Dr. James will create a google doc and share it with senators so that we can begin gathering information/suggestions/insights about this topic.

New Business

- Mid-Year Election (Dr. Steven Mackie) At Large Member→so anyone can run. Tentative timeline:
 - April 21: Email Faculty
 - April 25: Nominations Due
 - April 28: Voting Opens
 - May 2: Voting Closes
 - May 5: Results Announced
- Professor Weast asked that we have the Syllabus Template (including Mosburg's ADA Statement) by June 1 to faculty
- Dr. Mackie took a moment to say goodbye to faculty senate and noted that his door was always open.

Dr. James adjourned the meeting at 3:02p.