

Washburn University
Meeting of the Faculty Senate
September 22nd, 2025 at 3 pm
Meeting in Kansas Room Hosted by FS Executive Committee

Present: Abebayo, Brooks, Buck, Camarda, Cook, Copeland, Dahl, Davies, Dickinson, Emry, Francis, Fritch, Gonzalez-Abellas, Graves, Harnowo, Hartman, Holt, Hu, Chris Jones, Tucker Jones, Lambing, Leisinger, Ostrom, Ricklefs, Rivera, Schmidt, Schnoebelen, Smith, White, Yapple

Absent: Bender, Burdick, Mosier, Perret, Williams

Guests: O'Neill, Grimmer, Stover, Erby, Wade, Holthaus, Broxterman, Worsley

I. Call to Order at 3:01 pm

II. Approve minutes of the September 8th Meeting – Moved to approve by Cook, seconded by Abebayo.

A revision was asked to be made and will be reflected in the minutes that will be posted on the website which is that Dixie Copeland was present at the meeting.

- Motion passes unanimously.

III. VPAA Update – Dr. John Fritch

- TRiO Update: We have received news from the Department of Education that our Upward Bound grant will be extended for the following year. This grant provides us with an important way to engage with USD 501 and other neighboring school districts. We have also applied for a Student Support Services grant through TriO. I am hopeful that we will receive funding.
- Good news: The enrollment at Washburn is going to be up again this year. The enrollment in majors that are not as focused on a specific career path is unexpectedly growing in general. For example, the enrollment in Art is growing more than expected.
- Projects that the VPAA is working on:
 - Shared Governance Committee will begin meeting soon.
 - Faculty Handbook: We will be looking at proposals to change the Senior Lecturer status as a goal to complete by the end of the semester.
 - Quality Improvement for the Higher Learning Commission: Again, President Mazachek and I accepted the proposal focused on developing a Literacy Center for Washburn University. Part of the rationale for this is

that the percentage of high school students that are not functionally literate is high.

- Digital accessibility project: all teaching content needs to be digitally accessible, according to the Department of Education. The deadline is looming, so we need to make this happen.
- Inara Scott is coming to campus this week to discuss AI. In particular, she will be discussing ways it can be used in the classroom, how it can be used administratively, how it can be used by faculty, and how it can be used by and for students.
 - Melanie Worsley gave us more updates on Scott: Monday and Wednesday she is going to be visiting classrooms. The keynote will be given on Wednesday at 3:30 pm in Washburn A. Scott will be meeting with CTCL on Friday in the morning and Academic Leaders on Thursday afternoon.
 - Question from Adebayo: are we able to record any of Scott's visit, especially student visits?
 - Answer: Worsley said that she will look into that possibility.
- State of Higher Education is in a real state of flux right now. I want to remind our faculty of our discussions from the spring: grant funding, the Dear Colleague letter, the dissolution of DEIB student life programming, etc. And I want to remind you of the status of HB1 visas—the changing nature of such status. My job is to continue to support you as faculty.
- Question from Schmidt: regarding the claim for increasing enrollment, can you provide details?
- Answer from Fritch: We will get an answer on October 1st.

IV. President's Opening Remarks – Jim Schnoebelen

- We are happy to have Inara Scott on campus. Please consider attending the keynote address.
- There is a new process for ordering texts in the bookstore starting this fall, so please be nice to your support staff as we all deal with these changes.
- I want to remind you all of the Gen Fac Meeting on October 1 in Hurd Recital Hall.
- Comments on the world: We have recently heard stories about KU clamping down on the use of pronouns in email signatures and faculty members getting terminated because of social media posts.
- Recommendations: be cautious, don't assume that all will be well. Perhaps use a personal email address rather than your university email address for sensitive

content. Perhaps limit who you friend on social media. We do have a right to feel nervous. Make the right decisions for you, personally and professionally. I opted not to teach Gender Communication in the spring, even though I am Faculty Senate president, a tenured professor, and a department chair, so I'm sure that others who do not have such privileges are feeling anxiety. Please pay attention to news and what is happening in the state and share information with colleagues.

V. WUBOR/KBOR Update – Jim Schnoebelen

- KBOR – this is the first KBOR meeting that I have attended. We discussed a new process of adopting GED scores for math and English placement. I was able to attend the Faculty of Senate Presidents meeting.

- At this meeting, I learned that certain things are being considered by KBOR like re-considering/assessing instructional workload. This might be needed looking ahead at potential restrictions on tenure that may be coming down the pipeline from the legislature. A “blue ribbon commission,” that may be focused on “right-sizing” was discussed. Remember that so-called “right-sizing” was related to the problems with Emporia State, for example. The mood in the room at the meeting was that Higher Education was under attack. But this presents opportunities for us to explain to and educate others on why tenure is important and why academic freedom is essential.
- Addition from Ricklefs: workload concern has been a KBOR concern for years. If a faculty member is getting a course release, why is that faculty member getting such a release? Is it justified, in KBOR's view?

- WUBOR – Met on 9/11. Eric McHenry discussed his sabbatical research. He was invited by Mazachek to talk to the Board about the value of sabbaticals. The indoor practice facility was named after an alumnus and late WUBOR member, Sneed.

VI. Consent Agenda – Moved to approve by Gonzalez-Abellas, seconded by Adebayo.

- University Committee Reports –
 - Assessment Committee Minutes (April 30, 2025)
Question from Schnoebelen: 5a: Can someone explain the “Heightened test has not gone well” comment?
Answer from Worsley: how we have assessed quantitative reasoning needs to be strengthened. Previously, we have struggled to have solid participation, for instance. This is what was intended by this comment in the minutes.

- International Education Committee Minutes (August 27, 2025)

- Motion passes unanimously.

VII. Old Business –

- 26-2 Approval of Modifications to Catalog Reflecting Kansas Math Pathways. This is the second reading, as the first reading was constituted by the AAC's approval of this document. Moved to approve by Cook, seconded by Hu.

- O'Neill: we have been working on the Kansas Math Pathways for a few years. We are in the final stages of implementing this Pathway; by fall of 2026, it will be fully implemented. There will be multiple gateways which will be system wide. If students don't meet the disjunctive criteria as laid out for the relevant Math Pathways course, then corequisites will be required. With this move to Kansas Math Pathways, there will be no prerequisites for our math courses in the Pathways framework, as in MA 116, 112, and MA 113. Students in an associate's program will not have to take a certain gateway course. Programs will still be able to do individual level course substitutions as necessary, handled by the individual unit-level leader. So there will still be some flexibility for students for these waivers; students can still meet with their advisor to determine what substitutions could be made.

- Sarah Cook: the individual waivers will come from the department in which the student is from, NOT from the math department chair. The math department can only transfer courses that are equivalent to courses that we have at Washburn. When we do this, we do NOT have to approve an individual degree change.

- Question from Smith: how will exploratory students be advised?

Answer from O'Neill: what are the general areas that the student is interested in? An advisor can help with that answer because certain areas will advise students to take the same class, e.g., MA 112 for Humanities disciplines.

- Question from Schmidt: what is the information in the document, 'Gateway Math Course for Washburn's Bachelors Programs', exactly? We are asking academic affairs to put that information in CourseLeaf. But we are faculty process driven.

Answer from O'Neill and Cook: individual courses will be added in CourseLeaf later. This document was just for our meeting here. The process for the integration of Math Pathways is not a governance issue.

- Clarification sought from Schmidt: What are approving here, precisely? We need to say in writing what we want from the Provost's office.

O'Neill: for certain programs, there has already been a change in the catalog.

Cook: reiterated that bullet point 3 under 'General Education Requirements' is sufficient for the catalog language.

- Schmidt then offered a **motion to amend** with the following language: The Provost's office will work with department chairs and deans to add this math requirement to applicable programs.

- Cook would accept this as a friendly amendment, so Cook seconded the amendment.

- Motion to amend passes unanimously.

- Next steps: Schnoebelen believes that this should go all the way through to Gen. Fac. We didn't clarify when this was passed in the AAC where it would go next, so we need to do that in this meeting.

O'Neill: you can send it to Gen. Fac., but I don't believe that it needs to go there.

- Motion to pass the Modifications to Catalog Reflecting Kansas Math Pathways passes unanimously.

- **A new motion from Schmidt was proposed** to pass these modifications to Gen. Fac. as a voting item rather than as a mere informational item. Gonzalez-Abellas seconded.

- Discussion—Adebayo: why should this not be an information item?

Schmidt: we are changing the curriculum, so it should go to Gen Fac as a voting item, not merely as an information item.

- Cook: what if we don't have quorum at the next Gen Fac meeting for the item as a voting item?

- Holt: can an information item be discussed?

Answer from Schnoebelen: yes, but it depends on who is running the meeting—they would need to allow discussion.

- Lambing: if there is no quorum at the next Gen Fac meeting, then does this move to the Gen Fac meeting after that one?

Answer from Schnoebelen: yes.

- Follow up question from Lambing: But then would this set us back?

- O'Neill: it would just delay CourseLeaf changes, but implementation of Kansas Math Pathways at Washburn should not be delayed.

- Fritch: 'What is the right process for the agenda item?' was a question that the Provost's office talked about at length. Washburn has entered into the Kansas Pathways program, so it is difficult to back out of this now.

Furthermore, all department chairs and deans/unit leaders participated in the selection of the gateway courses over the summer.

- To send the modifications on as an action item to the Gen Fac, the tally was: 5 yeas, but the opposed clearly had a higher vote tally, so it was not necessary to get a precise number on the nays. So the motion fails.

- **Schnoebelen then presented a motion** to pass the modifications to the Gen. Fac. as an information item and Ricklefs seconded. There was one abstention, but all other votes were yeas. So that motion passed.

VIII. New Business – None.

IX. Information Items – None.

X. Discussion Items – None.

XI. Kristen Grimmer and Maria Stover gave a presentation on Student Media (the slides from the presentation were in the agenda for this meeting).

- Question from Chris Jones: suppose a student published something that is libelous; in that case, who assumes legal liability?

Answer from Stover: This would go through University Counsel. I am not a lawyer, but I believe that if a university supports Student Media, the University would ultimately be liable.

- Question from Adebayo: when can students apply for Student Media?

Answer from Grimmer: anytime.

- Comment from Fritch: There are two ways of doing student media: one, as a student run organization or two, as embedded in a curriculum. In the latter, the administration has control of the organization, but in the former, the students have control.

- Comment from Chris Jones: I was at a former institution in which the student media was not independent, so we should be happy that we have that independence at Washburn University.

XII. Announcements

- Schnoebelen reiterated that the General Faculty meets October 1st, Faculty Senate meets October 6th and that any agenda items should be sent to Ian Smith, the Faculty Senate Secretary, by September 29th.

XIII. Adjournment of Meeting at 4:30 pm – Schmidt makes motion, and then Adebayo seconds.