

Washburn University
Meeting of the Faculty Senate
August 31st, 2026, at 3:00 pm
Meeting in Kansas Room Hosted by FS Executive Committee

Present: Bender, Brackey, Brooks, Buck, Burdick, Camarda, Cassell, Cook, Copeland, Emry, Frazier, Frank, Gonzalez-Abellas, Gordon, Grant, Harnowo, Hartman, Hurst, Chris Jones, Tucker Jones, Lassman, Lauren Yapple in place of Glen McBeth, McGuire, Morse, Montgomery, Ostrom, Reisinger, Ricklefs, Schmidt, Schnoebelen, Scott, Smith, Stewart, White, Williams

Absent: Graves, McBeth, Wagner

Guests: Erby, Broxterman, Holthaus, Lanning, O'Neill, Wade, Worsley, Hutchinson, Bailes

I. Call to Order at 3:02 pm

II. Approve minutes of the April 27, 2026 – Moved to approve by Morse, seconded by Gonzalez-Abellas.

- Motion passes unanimously, with one abstention.

III. President's Opening Remarks – Jim Schnoebelen

- **In the spirit of introductions, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome new members of our administrative team at Washburn who have a clear bearing on our work in Senate:**
 - Dr. Kim Chestnut, VP of Student Life
 - An area of focus for our office is to further nurture an enjoyment and appreciation of Washburn with its importance on faculty work.
 - Steven Bryant-Collier, Acting VP for Strategic Enrollment Management
 - Our goal is to always help students orient themselves to what our students are here for which is their education.
- **Long-Term Ideas—things I'd like to work on + Things we will need to address (probably) in the coming year:**
 - Reminder: please engage with your constituents! E-mail them, ask them if they have questions or concerns, report at department/unit meetings as appropriate, etc. Also encourage them to attend...
 - **Please plan on attending GENERAL FACULTY MEETINGS and bring your friends! Meetings on 10/14, 11/18, 2/3, 3/10, and 4/21—always 3:30 - 5 pm**
 - We have an Ad Hoc Faculty Workload committee that will be working this year to design and implement a survey to assess where we stand on our campus. This is us

taking a cue from other KBOR schools that did similar things last year. My thanks to Tonya Ricklefs in advance for heading up this committee.

- As many of you are aware, we have a new official KBOR definition for what constitutes a DEI-CRT course, which was necessary to help universities adapt to the new law that prohibits such courses from being required by Kansas universities for graduation (unless the course/program meets certain requirements). This will likely require some work on our part as well, given that we currently have a Gen Ed “bucket” of classes set aside for “Inclusion and Belonging.” More information about this as we get it and need to address it, but I am opposed to “anticipatory compliance,” so we will not approach such changes blindly or without clear purpose and direction.
 - Grant had a question about this: Will we have to reorganize and redo the Gen. Ed. buckets to address this definition?
 - Schnoebelen: That is something that we may have to address.
- We will also keep talking about the so-called “reduced credit baccalaureate degrees,” as KBOR is about to fully approve them (likely) in September. Zach might have a bit more to say about this, but possibly accommodating such programs will be a topic we’ll consider.
- Finally, I know that Dr. Mazachek will have some town halls coming up in October geared toward planning the refresh of our strategic framework. Please stay tuned for more information and plan on attending if you’re able to lend your voice and efforts.

IV. VPAA Update – Dr. Zach Frank

- First I would like to say thank you. The semester has gotten off to a great start. Students really seem to love being here this semester. Three of them unprompted have said to me that they believe that their faculty really seem to care about them. That says a lot about Washburn and our faculty.
- When we looked at classroom assignments, we didn’t have too many overlaps.
- Schnoebelen brought up a couple of topics. I would like to provide you with some updates about these topics.
- In regard to the DEI-CRT issue. Let me read how KBOR defines DEI-CRT:
For the purposes of Section 147 of 2026 HB 2513, “DEI-CRT” means diversity, equity, inclusion and critical race theory. “DEI-CRT course” means any course whose course title, course description or learning outcomes include DEI- CRT-related content. “DEI-CRT-related content” means, with respect to DEI, content that intentionally establishes and promotes the preferential treatment of groups based on race, color, gender, ethnicity or national origin. “DEI-CRT-related content” means, with respect to CRT, content that presents racism as systemic within laws,

policies, or institutions and promotes acceptance of that viewpoint rather than presenting it as a subject of scholarly, historical, or legal study. Discussions of race, racism or the history of the civil rights movement do not constitute DEI-CRT-related content for the purposes of this policy. This policy does not prohibit postsecondary educational institutions from complying with federal or state law, including antidiscrimination laws, or from taking action against a student, faculty member or employee for violations of federal or state law.

- There has been a group of chief academic officers working on this issue this summer. And there has been a diversity of interpretations of this definition. One group said that none of their classes promote DEI-CRT, so most or none of the classes will fall under the definition. Another group said that we need to reevaluate how we understand the definition. KBOR's general counsel will be at the next meeting to help the group understand how the definition should be interpreted.

- Grant had a question: is there any indication how this working group will define or interpret the definition?
- Frank answered: When I left this working group meeting, I realized that there really are several different reasonable ways of interpreting the definition. We should know more after September 18th once this next meeting occurs.
 - Morse had a question: So, let's suppose that hypothetically, counsel says that we need to make changes. I want to then know about the timeline.
 - Frank answered: By July 31st, 2028, we need to make changes because this definition applies to AY 29.
 - Chris Jones had a question: If we are teaching content that can be plausibly construed as DEI, what should I do now?
 - Frank answered: Talk with your Deans and your Chairs so that you can get legal opinion on that.
 - Williams had a question: Have there been thoughts or considerations about accreditation standards for programs that involve DEI-CRT: will such programs be protected?
 - Frank answered: Perhaps entire programs could be exempt from the law because of the accreditation standards. But let me ask the following question for us to think about: what if a social work class is also a Gen. Ed. class?
 - Smith had a question: Will the meeting on September 18th consider a revision of the definition, or will it just be meeting about interpretation, given the wide array of interpretations already?

- Frank answered: It will just be an interpretive meeting. The definition is set in stone. At this meeting perhaps a rubric could be developed to help administrators understand whether a class falls under the definition and to what extent. The rubric could thus help for compliance purposes. I am recommending that we don't get too far ahead of ourselves, though.
- Morse had a question: I am thinking about this in terms of what WUBOR's role is in this versus what KBOR's role in this is. And what about Gen. Ed. courses versus upper division courses in terms of what WUBOR can have jurisdiction over?
- Frank: A rubric may help here, but we don't know a whole lot here yet.
- Frank: Schnoebelen asked me to talk about reduced credit programs. One question that came up was how do we identify on a transcript or a diploma a reduced credit degree? One suggestion was a Bachelor of Specialized Studies (B.S.S.), as no other programs in the state have such a degree. This name has been agreed upon by KBOR. It has a minimum of 90 hours.
- We could not actually offer a B.S.S., because our current academic catalog language does not allow it due to the B.S.S. being less than 120 hours. Thus, we would have to look at amending the catalog if a unit wanted to come forward with a B.S.S. proposal. If we go this route, no programs are being mandated to offer a B.S.S. If we approved a B.S.S. program, this could be good for students in certain units. One unit on campus is already very interested in this degree, and other units are interested in a B.S.S. An amendment would have to go through the shared governance process, of course. 26 states already have something like a B.S.S. K-State has already submitted a proposal. KBOR will be voting on the B.S.S. on September 18th.
- Camarda had a question: What field is the K-State proposal in?
- Frank answered: Uncrewed aircraft systems, or flying drones. Wichita State has considered programs as well.
- Williams had a question: I was thinking about how WU Tech could collaborate with us on this, or how WU Tech would fit into this kind of program?
- Frank answered: The Technology Administration Program is a program that is interested in this.

V. WUBOR/KBOR Update – Jim Schnoebelen

- There is a KBOR AA sub-committee meeting next week, but there are no major meetings until September 16-17.

- Nothing from WUBOR—they meet on Thursday, September 10th (NOTE: there will be a special reception after this meeting that will include academic leadership, the regents, and the Senate Executive Committee, so if you end up chairing one of our committees and are thus on the Executive Committee, please plan on attending).

VI. Consent Agenda – Moved to approve by Cook, seconded by Hartman.

- Faculty Senate Committee Reports –
 - Faculty Affairs Committee Minutes (April 20, 2026)
- University Committee Reports –
 - Assessment Committee Minutes (February 18, 2026)
- Motion passes unanimously.

VII. Old Business –

- 27-1 Approval of Standing Rules for the Faculty Senate: Motion by Schmidt, seconded by Morse.
- Schnoebelen: The first reading was considered by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. This committee then passed these rules. We are here now for the second reading. [Schnoebelen then proceeded to review the standing rules.]
- One issue that came up prior to this meeting was accessibility: all Senate documents appear on the public-facing website. So anything that the Secretary receives from other units must be accessible. We may need to add a rule to the standing rules later about this accessibility requirement.
 - O'Neill had a question: Regarding 2.d.(iii), would this mean that the proposed change in question would come straight to FS or would it go to Faculty Affairs first?
 - Schmidt: The item would come from Faculty Affairs as a first read.
 - O'Neill had an addendum proposal: Can we put something about a second reading as Old Business?
 - Schmidt: After coming from Faculty Affairs under a first reading, it would come to us as a second reading in the consent agenda.
 - O'Neill had another addendum proposal: Can we excise “New Business” from iii.?
- Cook made a comment about a different section: 2.d.(ii): All agenda items classified as “business” need to have a designated end-point (Senate, Gen Fac, WUBOR, etc.) provided at the time the proposal is moved for approval.

Cook argued that discussion sometimes leads to a different end-point being recommended or necessary, so mandating it at the statement of the motion is cumbersome.

A motion by Cook was made to change the language for (ii) to the following:

(ii) All agenda items classified as “business” that are moving beyond the Senate for approval need to have a designated end-point (Gen Fac, WUBOR, etc.). This end-point is provided as part of the original motion, or as a separate motion immediately following approval of the business item.

- Motion seconded by Cassell.
- Schmidt: Instead of “can” can we use “should be” or “is”?
- Smith pointed out that “can” doesn’t work because it allows for other possibilities than the two disjuncts in the language of the new (ii).
- Cassell is fine with using “is”, along with Cook.
- **The motion to approve the amendment to (ii) passes unanimously.**
- Schmidt would like to amend (iii) to remove “New Business” and the second sentence of (iii).
 - **The motion to approve the amendment to (iii) passes unanimously.**
 - Friendly amendment by Schmidt: the ‘Proposed Effective Date’ needs to be specified as today.
- **As amended, the motion to approve 27-1 passes unanimously.**

VIII. New Business –

IX. Information Items –

- Faculty Handbook Updates (Melanie Worsley)
 - We now officially have a Faculty Handbook published. It is available on our Faculty Handbook page as a PDF version.
 - We also worked to develop a SharePoint site for the Faculty Handbook that tracks changes to the Faculty Handbook. There are various folders including a versions folder, archive materials, and a tracking document by year.
 - Schmidt: How often will versions of the handbook be published?
 - Worsley: We are discussing this. We haven’t yet made a decision on that.
 - Williams had two questions: I did see that there was a link from Student Code of Conduct to the Faculty Handbook, but it was dead. Has that been addressed? And when it comes to updating the Handbook and a faculty member whose actions are relevant to handbook policy, is the person held to the standards of the new handbook or the old handbook?

- Frank answered the second question: I looked at different policies around campus which are not consistent. But check with your unit for an answer to this question.
- Worsley answered the first question from Williams: Yes to the first.

• Schnoebelen then reminded the Senate about the following documents that are in our agenda:

- AY 2027 Faculty Senate Committee Assignments
- Faculty Senate Agenda Item Template
- CAS Workflow Summary from AY 2026
 - We included this to show you how Senate relates to a college/school workflow.
- 2026 – 2027 Committee Meeting Dates
 - A “school of fish” handout was also provided to diagram the flow of curricular items throughout the shared governance process.

X. Discussion Items – None.

XI. Announcements –

- Ricklefs: The ad hoc committee on faculty workload is scheduled to begin its work soon. If you know anyone who would like to volunteer on this committee, please contact me. The committee will meet monthly.
- Cassell: If you go on YouTube, please follow our Student Media page!

XII. Partial Adjournment of Meeting at 4:20 pm (But then Senate committees met to elect chairs before they left)

- Chair of Faculty Affairs Committee: Shaun Schmidt
- Chair of Academic Affairs Committee: Karen Camarda
- Chair of Electoral committee: Amanda Hartman