

## Minutes of the 2025-2026 Faculty Senate

<https://www.radford.edu/faculty-senate/minutes.html>

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**May 1, 2025**

MINUTES  
Faculty Senate Meeting  
May 1, 2025  
via Zoom videoconference

**Members present:**

Krystina Angelini, Alyssa Archer, Elliot Carhart, Tom Castor, Mike Chatham, Tara Chitwood, Eric Choate, Matthew Close, Darryl Corey, Thomas Duncan, Scott Dunn, Kevin Farrell, Jake Fox, Kurt Gingrich, Stephen Glass, Rhett Herman, Judy Jenks, Jae Jeong, Sarah Kennedy, Kim Lane, Michelle Lenhart, Luke Liska, Eric Mesmer, Garth Mills, Kereen Mullenbach, Roby Page, Tara Pelletier, Inessa Plekhanova, Jessica Prince, Sarah Rakes, Daniel Reed, Tara Riddle, Tammy Robinson, Rachel Rotert, David Sallee, Rachel Santos, Will Sawyer, Greg Sherman, Judy Smith, Eftila Tanellari, Carter Turner, Susan Van Patten, Laura Vernon, Courtney Watson, Brent Webb, Wesley Young

**Members absent:**

Ian Barland, Roofia Galeshi, Naveen Joseph, Liang Shao, Jake Stewart

- I. Meeting was called to order at 4:50 p.m. by Dr. Geoff Pollick, serving as Chairperson Pro Tem.
- II. Dr. Matthew Close, past president of the Faculty Senate, was invited to share remarks welcoming all senators.
- III. Elections were held for officers of the 2025-2026 Faculty Senate:
  - a. President
    - i. Matthew Close was nominated and seconded.
    - ii. Matthew Close was elected with 45 votes.
  - b. Vice President
    - i. Kevin Farrell was nominated and seconded.
    - ii. Kevin Farrell was elected with 45 votes.
  - c. Secretary
    - i. Kim Lane was nominated but declined nomination.
    - ii. Sarah Kennedy was nominated but declined nomination.
    - iii. Tara Chitwood was nominated but declined nomination.
    - iv. Laura Vernon was nominated but declined nomination.
    - v. Courtney Watson was nominated and seconded.
    - vi. Courtney Watson was elected with 40 votes.
  - d. At-large Member of the FSEC
    - i. Alyssa Archer was nominated and seconded but withdrew from nomination.
    - ii. Sarah Rakes was nominated and seconded.

- iii. Tara Chitwood was nominated and seconded.
- iv. Jake Fox was nominated and seconded.
- v. Sarah Rakes was elected in the first round with 29 votes.
- e. At-large Member of the FSEC
  - i. Tara Chitwood was nominated and seconded.
  - ii. Jake Fox was nominated and seconded
  - iii. Tara Chitwood was elected in the second round with 29 votes.
- f. Parliamentarian
  - i. Kurt Gingrich was nominated and seconded.
  - ii. Jake Fox was nominated but declined nomination
  - iii. Kurt Gingrich was elected with 38 votes.

IV. Announcements

V. The meeting was adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

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**August 12, 2025**

Minutes  
2025-2026 Faculty Senate Retreat & Special Meeting  
Roanoke Higher Education Center

Members Present: Matt Close, Kevin Farrell, Sarah Rakes, Tara Chitwood, Courtney Watson, Laura Vernon, Tammy Robinson, Rachel Rotert, Naveen Joseph, , Mike Chatham, Jayme Haynes, David Sallee, Susan Van Patten, Thomas Duncan, Eric Choate, Wesley Young, Daniel Reed, Kurt Gingrich, Jacob Stewart, Tom Castor, Sarah Kennedy, Darryl Corey, Judy Smith, Jaewan Jeong, Eric Mesmer, Shawn Huston (Rhett Herman filled in), Inessa Plekhanova, Michelle Lenhart, Kereen Mullenbach, Liang Shao, Stephen Glass, Jake Fox, Elliott Carhart, Nathaniel Lahn, Jessica Prince, Will Sawyer, Brent Webb, Roofia Galeshi, Tara Riddle, Carter Turner, Kim Lane, Roby Page, Krystina Angelini, Allyssa Archer, Garth Mills, Luke Liska

Members Absent: Judy Jenks, Rachel Santos

- I. Meeting was called to order at 10am by Dr. Matthew Close.
- II. The minutes of the May 1, 2025 meeting were approved by acclimation.
- III. President's Report
  - a. No report from the President.
- IV. Provost's Report
  - a. Provost Usher welcomed the Senate and reaffirmed her commitment to shared governance. From the Board of Visitors meeting, Provost User reported the Board will be focusing on what is happening at Radford, not at schools in the rest of the state.
  - b. Provost Usher is reviewing the results of the COACHE survey, which will be shared with faculty. Lots of great data and leading themes.
    - i. One goal is to maintain transparency and build trust.
    - ii. Workload. The administration is working to ease the administrative burden on faculty. Provost Usher is hoping for a better conversation about faculty workload.
    - iii. University Internal Governance Review Committee (UIGRC)- shared governance, committees, and task forces. Committee updates will come through Faculty Senate.
    - iv. The general education work continues, and committees will soon be filled.
    - v. There will be a Student Faculty Evaluation Committee with the goal of making faculty evaluations less biased and more equitable.
    - vi. For faculty review cycles, Provost Usher would love to be able to move to an automated system.
  - c. Questions for Provost User
    - i. Dr. Kurt Gingrich: Retention is up, the reported goal is 8,000 students, how is that divided? Provost Usher: 6,000 students in Radford, 2,000

students in Roanoke. 6,000 undergraduates students and 2,000 graduate students is the goal. Provost Usher would like to see our admission of transfer students go up. This year, the number is stable, mainly due to transfers from community colleges.

- ii. One thing to work on this year is state challenges, re: the SCHEV board, which is putting more stringent restrictions about what constitutes a viable academic program.
  1. The state is going to create a metric for evaluating programs. The only metric currently being used as guidance for measuring ROI is on <https://freopp.org/>. It does not list all programs at Radford, or any other university in Virginia, but it does list some. There are a few undergraduate programs at Radford that trigger a low/no/negative ROI warning on this site, such as teaching and social work.
  2. Provost Usher: If it looks like SCHEV is going to tell us what to do with programs, we will want to support and change the programs to get ahead of the possible (likely very small amount) program closure orders from SCHEV.
  3. Dr. Jessica Stowell is monitoring this closely.

- V. Update from Dr. Jessica Stowell, Assistant Provost for Faculty and Curriculum
  - a. Evaluating the faculty success software. Faculty have had issues with it, but since it is an internal tool built by Radford, her office can change it for the better. Psychology, History, and Nursing are currently participating in the pilot of a new program, which is promising but needs further refinement.
  - b. COACHE- The University did the COACHE survey last year. We are committed to collecting that data and using it to make recommendations. Faculty Senate's Campus Environment committee will be working on that.
- VI. Special Report to the Faculty Senate: Dr. David Beach
  - a. Topic: REAL 2025-2027. Dr. David Beach provided updates to the REAL transition model for the next two academic years. Changes will allow students who enroll at Radford before new General Education model is fully implemented to complete their REAL requirements.
  - b. Topic: General education implementation plan presentation. Dr. David Beach, Director of Undergraduate Education, presented slides and discussed the roles of the implementation committee and subcommittees.
  - c. Question by Dr. Jake Fox: Will everyone vote on these committees? Dr. Beach: We'll work that out as a committee.
- VII. President's Report
  - a. Dr. Matt Close, Faculty Senate President, reported on the most recent Board of Visitors meeting, saying the Board is very interested in making Radford the best place for students to get an education in Virginia. The Board is active and involved, and they are very interested in the COACHE data and making sure that Radford offers a good environment for everyone.

- VIII. Motions
- a. Motions approved over the summer by FSEC. Three items came up in the summer with hard deadlines that FSEC felt we could vote on.
    - i. Motion 25.25.01: Motion to Revise the Faulty Handbook to Include the New Membership Composition of the Faculty Appeals Committee
    - ii. Motion 25.26.02: Motion to Revise the Faulty Handbook to Include the New Membership Composition of the Faculty Grievance Committee
    - iii. Motion 25.26.03: Motion to Delete the Minor in Forensic Science (R)
- IX. New Business
- a. 25-26.04: Motion to Create the General Education Implementation Steering Committee
  - b. 25-26.05: Motion to Create the General Education Implementation Curriculum Subcommittee
  - c. 25-26.06: Motion to Create the General Education Implementation Assessment Subcommittee
  - d. 25-26.07: Motion to Create the General Education Implementation Technology Integration Subcommittee
  - e. 25-26.08: Motion to Create the General Education RADF 101/Find Your Place & Advising Subcommittee
- X. Announcements
- a. Accessibility rules: whose rules are we using for accessibility? In some instances, Microsoft says that documents meet the accessibility threshold, but then those documents are not accepted by D2L. We need to ask the Disability Office for Guidance on this.
  - b. Strategic plan Town Halls this week.
- XI. Special Meeting of the Faculty Senate was adjourned at 11:50am.
- XII. Committee Working Session
- a. Chair/secretary selection
    - i. Curriculum: Dr. Eric Choate, Chair; Dr. Tara Chitwood, Secretary
    - ii. Resource Allocation: Alyssa Archer, Chair; Dr. Tara Riddle, Secretary
    - iii. Faculty Issues: Dr. Kevin Farrell, Chair; Dr. Judy Smith, Secretary
    - iv. Governance: Dr. Kereen Mullenbach, Chair; Dr. Rachel Santos, Secretary
    - v. Campus Environment: Dr. Courtney Watson, Chair; Dr. Rachel Rotert, Secretary
  - b. Charge prioritization
  - c. Discussion: Generative AI Charges
- XIII. The retreat was adjourned at 2pm.



## August 28, 2025

### Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

August 28, 2025

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

**Members Present:** Courtney Watson, Matt Close, Sarah Rakes, Tara Chitwood, Rhett Herman, Rachel Rotert, Alyssa Archer, Carter Turner, Darryl Corey, David Sallee, Eric Choate, Inessa Plekhanova, Jake Fox, Jake Stewart, Jayme Haynes, Jessica Prince, Judy Smith, Kereen Mullenbach, Roofia Galeshi, Scott Dunn, Stephen Glass, Susan Van Patten, Tara Riddle, Timothy Furher, Tom Castor, Wesley Young, Will Sawyer, Luke Liska, Michelle Lenhart, Mike Chatham, Naveen Joseph, Rachel Santos, Kim Lane, Krystina Angelini, Kurt Gingrich, Laura Vernon, Jae Jeong, Nathaniel Lahn, Eric Mesmer, Garth Mills, Greg Sherman, Liang Shao, Brent Webb, Roby Page, Elliott Carhart

**Members Absent:** Judy Jenks, Daniel Reed, Tammy Robinson, Eftila Tanellari

- I. Approval of Minutes
  - i. August 12, 2024- minutes approved by acclimation.
  
- II. University President's Report: Dr. Bret Danilowicz
  - i. Radford University has two different six-year plans that are in the process of development.
    1. The first is the SCHEV plan, which is something we're required to report on to the state every year, though it resets every two years.
    2. Two weeks ago, President Danilowicz presented our six-year plan to SCHEV and a couple of the cabinet secretaries; the area they were most interested in (from all universities) is enrollment. The Radford U plan is concerned with enrollment, but also the bigger picture of retention, jobs for graduates, and university finances, which is what we are currently working on.
    3. The report from the institution was very well received; our last one, which was two years ago, showed seven years of declining enrollment, and now we've had two years' of increasing enrollment. Two years ago, our retention was down

to 68%; last year, it was up to 75%, so the response from SCHEV was very positive. They were very complimentary of the work of faculty and staff. This report will be shared through the Board of Visitors.

ii. Six-year university strategic plan

1. President Danilowicz addressed faculty concerns about getting/keeping the Strategic Plan Powerpoint Presentation on the site. There was an accessibility issue, but this should be fixed today.
2. Shared governance. This was not listed as a strategy on the plan, but the President affirmed that it is in a part of the strategic plan that hasn't been published yet, in a section called "Who We Are," which is about the background of the institution. There will be an explicit statement of shared governance that has been developed by the faculty, shared close to verbatim.
3. This plan should be on the site about a week before the Board of Visitors meeting. This will be the most updated version to date.

iii. Enrollment

1. Overall, we have about 190 more students this fall than last year. We're not at census yet, but the final number should be close to that. It might not sound like a lot, but it equates to about \$1.9 million coming into the institution.
2. Our goal is enrollment stability, and this is very positive news. Our enrollment is stable; retention started off very high this summer, but the closer we've gotten to term, it has ended up basically flat when compared to last year. This is an area that we're going to keep working on.

iv. State Senate and House

1. It will soon be in the news that there was an action taken today by the State Senate, or maybe the State Senate and the House, that they've rejected six board members at George Mason, four board members at UVA, and four board members at VMI.
2. Radford has a board that is supportive of what we are doing, and we seem to be out of the political loop for whatever is happening at other institutions. We have a good working relationship with our board, and the President does not feel they are trying to oversteer us in any particular direction.

v. Executive Order

1. Governor Youngkin issued an executive order that requires all institutions, through their Board of Visitors, to have an anti-Semitism statement in their student handbook. It was sent to rectors, and the expectation is that the rectors will implement

it, though not at the September meeting due to legal issues that are still being worked through.

2. President Danilowicz anticipates that it will likely be put in place in the December meeting. While the EO says anti-Semitism, it's basically the protection of all religions on campus.

### III. Provost's Report: Dr. Bethany Usher

#### 1. Strategic Plan

- i. The committee has listened to Academic Affairs about strengthening what they are doing.
- ii. It looks good, and the Provost appreciates the input that everybody gave.

#### 2. Enrollment and Retention

- i. The Provost is proud of our numbers, particularly those of first-time freshmen.
- ii. Her office is also looking at the numbers for juniors and seniors.
- iii. Overall, we are in a much better place than we were a few years ago, and the Provost appreciates everyone's support of student success.

#### 3. Speaker Series

- i. The Speaker series is being rebranded to the Faculty Speaker Series.
- ii. There will be four this year, in a public forum, to emphasize the value of the research that faculty do, and generate support for Radford and higher education in general.
- iii. The goal is to partner with the community; the Radford Chamber of Commerce and the Joint Commission have been supportive.
- iv. Locations may be at places like Bee & Butter. The selected faculty speakers will receive invitations. The Provost would like to see support for these speakers; invite your students, friends and neighbors.
- v. This series needs a name; please submit your ideas to Threads.

#### 4. Culture of Care

- i. Outbreaks of Covid and stomach bugs on campus; please be thoughtful about student absences and encourage them to stay isolated if they are sick.
- ii. A reminder that Student Health does not give sick notes for student absences, but the Dean of Students has a webpage for absence notification.

#### 5. Questions for the Provost

- i. Dr. Kurt Gingrich: When you say 75% retention, does that mean 75% of all students who were and could have returned in the fall have done so? Provost: No, 75% retention is fall-to-fall retention of students in their first year of college. We won't have a summary of everyone until after the census takes place.

- ii. Dr. Wes Young: When will we get detail about the Governor’s School coming to campus, and how it will impact our daily operations and workloads?

President Danilowicz: The intent is to start the school in Fall 2026. As part of the budget, those students will only be receiving courses taught by high school teachers in Kyle Hall. It will not directly impact our faculty that year, per se, though there may be opportunities where faculty want to get involved. Starting in 2027, some of those students will start populating our classes. CITL will offer some professional development training for working with gifted students.

For the budget, this is a budget-neutral or better program for the institution. We will be hiring a director.

Provost Usher: The director has to come as a qualified K-12 teacher, and they will be working closely with CVPA and CHBS. This will be for roughly 40 students per year.

IV. Faculty Senate President’s Report: Dr. Matt Close

- i. Dr. Close has been working with FSEC on developing motions for general education, curriculum and assessment, technology, and Radford 101 in conjunction with the steering committee.

V. Parliamentary Procedures: Dr. Kurt Gingrich

VI. Committee Reports

- Campus Environment- Dr. Courtney Watson, Chair and Dr. Rachel Rotert, Secretary.
- Curriculum- Dr. Eric Choate, Chair, and Dr. Tara Chitwood, Secretary.
- Faculty Issues- Dr. Kevin Farrell, Chair, and Dr. Judy Smith, Secretary.
- Governance- Dr. Kereen Mullenbach, Chair, and Dr. Rachel Santos, Secretary.
- Resource Allocation- Alyssa Archer, Chair, and Dr. Tara Riddle, Secretary.

VII. Old Business

1. 25-26.04: Motion to Create the General Education Implementation Steering Committee

Motion to amend to say, “as amended 8-28-2025.”

Motion to amend passes, 45 yea, 0 no, 0 abstain.

Motion passes, 44 yea, 2 no, 0 abstain.

2. 25-26.05: Motion to Create the General Education Implementation Curriculum Subcommittee

Motion to amend to say, “as amended 8-28-2025.”

Motion to amend passes, 46 yea, 0 no, 0 abstain.  
Motion passes, 41 yea, 3 no, 2 abstain.

3. 25-26.06: Motion to Create the General Education Implementation Assessment Subcommittee

Motion to amend to say, "as amended 8-28-2025."  
Amendment accepted by acclimation.  
Motion passes, 42 yea, 2 no, 2 abstain.

Motion to extend the meeting by 10 minutes.  
Motion fails, 18 yea, 23 no, 2 abstain.

4. 25-26.07: Motion to Create the General Education Implementation Technology Integration Subcommittee

5. 25-26.08: Motion to Create the General Education RADF 101/Find Your Place & Advising Subcommittee

Note: The two final motions, new business, and announcements were not discussed because the meeting timed out at 4:50pm.

VIII. New Business (none)

IX. Announcements

X. Adjournment

Adjourned at 4:50pm.



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

**September 11, 2025**

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

**Members Present:** Courtney Watson, Matt Close, Sarah Rakes, Tara Chitwood, Rhett Herman, Rachel Rotert, Alyssa Archer, Carter Turner, Darryl Corey, David Sallee, Eric Choate, Inessa Plekhanova, Jake Fox, Jake Stewart, Jayme Haynes, Jessica Prince, Judy Smith, Kereen Mullenbach, Roofia Galeshi, Scott Dunn, Stephen Glass, Susan Van Patten, Tara Riddle, Timothy Furher, Tom Castor, Wesley Young, Will Sawyer, Luke Liska, Michelle Lenhart, Mike Chatham, Naveen Joseph, Lori Elis (Rachel Santos), Timothy Fuhrer (Kim Lane), Krystina Angelini, Kurt Gingrich, Laura Vernon, Jae Jeong, Nathaniel Lahn, Eric Mesmer, Garth Mills, Greg Sherman, Liang Shao, Brent Webb, Roby Page, Elliott Carhart, Dan Farhat (Eftila Tanellari), Tammy Robinson, Judy Jenks, Daniel Reed

**Members Absent:** None.

- XI. Approval of Minutes
  - i. August 28, 2025- minutes approved by acclamation.
- XII. University President's Report: Dr. Bret Danilowicz
  - i. No report.
- XIII. Provost's Report: Dr. Bethany Usher
  - i. No report.
- XIV. Faculty Senate President's Report: Dr. Matt Close
  - 1. Census Headcount- Total: 7,837 students (6,207 undergraduate, 1,630 graduate students). Undergraduates are up slightly, and graduate students are down slightly. Good retention numbers, and we are hitting our targets for enrollment.
  - 2. Dr. Close met with the Board of Visitors on Wednesday to give an orientation to new Board members on the role of Faculty Senate and the roles and responsibilities of Senate with regards to our internal governance structure,

as well as our roles and responsibilities with university governance and ensuring that the faculty voice is heard at all levels of the institution.

- i. With Provost Usher, Dr. Close is on the Academic Excellence and Student Success Committee. Provost's Usher's report discussed the two-year strategic plan, goals that have been met, and initiatives that are currently underway and planned for growth in Roanoke and growing professional development opportunities for our students.
- ii. Dr. Close's report to this committee focused on general education implementation and the COACHE survey. The Rector of the Board of Visitors asked for ways to improve the relationship between the Board and the faculty. Dr. Close would like to have the COACHE data ready to present at the December Board of Visitors meeting to address this.
- iii. Dr. Close feels that, overall, the Board has a very good perception of the faculty, and they are very supportive of things that are happening within the faculty specifically, but also in Academic Affairs as a whole
- iv. The slides that were shown at the Board of Visitors meeting, as well as the orientation slides, are available to view on the Radford Board of Visitors website.

3. AI Core Team Update: Dr. Courtney Watson

- i. The AI Core Team (Dr. Courtney Watson, Dr. Laura Vernon, Charley Cosmoto, and Jennifer Resor-Whicker) has made recommendations to Dr. Mekolichick for the creation of several AI task forces to draft guidance and best practices for AI learning and use across the University.
- ii. The AI Core Team has just started the 2025-2026 AAC&U Institute on AI, Pedagogy, and the Curriculum (September 11, 2025-April 11, 2026). The goal of this institute to "help departments, programs, colleges, and universities respond effectively to the challenges and opportunities artificial intelligence (AI) presents for courses, curricula, and higher education in general."

4. Dr. Close read a statement about the respectful exchange of ideas in the context of current events: "We believe that our role as educators in facilitating constructive dialogue and respectful exchange of ideas on college campuses has never been more vital to our society. Please remember that we have, as an institution and as a faculty, committed to creating an inclusive learning environment where all perspectives are treated with respect and where we facilitate constructive dialogue between students, faculty, staff, and administration. When incorporating current events into your classes, please maintain academic objectivity by presenting multiple views and distinguishing between facts and opinions rather than advocating for particular positions. Please exercise professional judgment

about whether such discussions directly serve your course learning objectives and/or accreditation standards and be prepared to redirect conversations that become unproductive or divisive.

If you have questions about appropriate boundaries and/or if you need resources about how to have conversations with students inside and outside of your classrooms, please consult with your peers, mentors, department chairs and/or our faculty and staff in the Center for Integrative Teaching and Learning.”

XV. Committee Reports

- Campus Environment
  - i. Reviewed and prioritized charges. The first priority is the COACHE survey.
- Curriculum
  - i. Finalized charges.
- Faculty Issues
  - i. Reviewed, finalized, and prioritized charges.
- Governance
  - i. Referred Motion 25-26.09 to New Business.
  - ii. Prioritized charges, including implementing revisions to the T&R handbook.
- Resource Allocation
  - i. Finalized charges.
  - ii. Invited VP of Budget and Finance Rob Hoover to a meeting.

XVI. Old Business

1. 25-26.07: Motion to Create the General Education Implementation Technology Integration Subcommittee

Motion passed, 43 in favor, 2 opposed, 1 abstained.

2. 25-26.08: Motion to Create the General Education RADF 101/Find Your Place & Advising Subcommittee

Motion passed, 43 in favor, 2 opposed, no abstentions.

XVII. New Business (none)

1. 25-26.09: Motion to Add the Director of Advising (or Designee) as an Ex Officio, Non-Voting Member of the REAL Council

XVIII. Announcements

XIX. Adjournment

Adjourned at 4:31pm.



**September 25, 2025**

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

**Members Present:** Courtney Watson, Matt Close, Kevin Farrell, Sarah Rakes, Tara Chitwood, Shawn Huston, Rachel Rotert, Alyssa Archer, Carter Turner, David Sallee, Eric Choate, Inessa Plekhanova, Jake Stewart, Jayme Haynes, Jessica Prince, Judy Smith, Kereen Mullenbach, Roofia Galeshi, Scott Dunn, Stephen Glass, Susan Van Patten, Tara Riddle, Tom Castor, Wesley Young, Will Sawyer, Luke Liska, Michelle Lenhart, Mike Chatham, Naveen Joseph, Rachel Santos, Kim Lane, Krystina Angelini, Kurt Gingrich, Laura Vernon, Jae Jeong, Nathaniel Lahn, Eric Mesmer, Garth Mills, Greg Sherman, Liang Shao, Brent Webb, Roby Page, Eftila Tanellari, , Judy Jenks, Daniel Reed, Macie Rice, Sarah Kennedy, Elliott Carhart

**Members Absent:** Tammy Robinson, Darryl Corey, Jake Fox

- XX. Approval of Minutes
  - i. September 11, 2025 minutes approved by acclamation, as amended.
  
- XXI. University President's Report: Dr. Bret Danilowicz
  - i. No report.
  
- XXII. Provost's Report: Dr. Bethany Usher
  - 1. Virginia Western Community College
    - i. Provost Usher, President Danilowicz, and members of the leadership team met with VWCC leadership to talk about strengthening transfer pathways.
  - 2. Board of Visitors Meeting: Provost Usher shared slides from her report to the Board of Visitors, which are linked on the Radford University Board of Visitors website.
    - i. Grants for global education
      - 1. These will support free passports for Pell-eligible students.
    - ii. Budget
      - 1. Provost Usher shared with the Board that Academic Affairs has a total budget of \$98 million, and 90% goes into people. T&R faculty make up 65% of those people. The rest is

almost equally divided between administrative professional and classified staff. The budget for each of the college is fairly proportional, and our colleges are fairly proportional right now in terms of enrollment and in terms of faculty.

iii. Curriculum Lifecycle

1. Provost Usher also shared that the leadership team talked to the Board a lot about curriculum lifecycle and the newly approved Curriculum Lifecycle Committee, which the board has a vested interest in because they vote on approving new programs and discontinuing programs. Provost Usher also shared with the Board several new programs recently approved by SCHEV, and several that will be going to SCHEV for approval.

iv. ROI

1. Provost Usher talked with the Board about the current conversation at the state level about ROI, and how the current discussion about ROI is focused on a very individualistic notion of what it means in the context of a student who pays for tuition to go to a college or university (“Do they earn more over their lifetime to be able to make up the difference that would pay for that degree?”).
2. There’s also a larger sense of what’s the ROI to us as a state, and what’s the public value of having a degree, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond does a really nice job reporting that data. The data shows that last year, the median income for having a high school degree in Virginia was \$41,000, and it was \$74,000 for a bachelor’s degree. Holders of graduate degrees earned even more. This is agnostic of what your degree is, or whether or not the career degree holders are in is connected the name of their degree. The data also shows that people who have a bachelor’s degree or higher are much less likely to be unemployed and much more likely to participate in the workforce. Provost Usher felt that it was really important for the Board to hear this in light of current popular rhetoric about the value of a college degree.

v. Enrollment

1. Provost Usher also talked to the Board about how we continue to work on our two-year strategic plan goals as we look ahead to the next strategic plan, and she showed them supporting data about enrollment. The math isn’t as simple as it may seem with regards to how we count the number of students we have; there is an elaborate, multi-state model that we use to calculate this number, because students come to us in multiple ways, they progress in multiple ways, they leave in multiple ways, and our goal is to get them to

graduation. It's not always easy to look at those numbers in a straightforward way. That said, our total enrollment this semester is up again, though modestly so (somewhere between 25-50 total students). There has been a change in distribution of students by college and by level, but looking at the colleges in general, there is growth in almost every program (with some variance due to students who have not yet declared a major or a new major after switching out of a professional program). Our enrollment continues to go up, and, most importantly, there has been a shift of students from part-time to full-time. The shift has been towards more undergraduate students in person, which translates to more total credits, which is really good.

vi. Retention

1. Our retention numbers are not as strong as we would like them to be, but they're not bad, and they didn't go down. We've been steady in the total number of students. This year, we'll have added focus on juniors and seniors to make sure they have the number of credits they need to graduate. In 2024-2025, we crossed 2,000 degrees earned, which was exciting. It's an exceptional number.
2. Provost Usher also said that something she communicates to the Board is that our colleges are not all the same, and the mix of graduate and undergraduate and certificate and doctoral programs we give is different per college, and every college is a different mix and a different set of ways of doing things.

vii. Faculty

1. We've become more efficient through FERPs and attrition, reducing the number of faculty to align with the reduced number of students. Now that we've rebounded, the Provost's expectation is that we now have the right overall mix of faculty to students. Our crude ration is 18 to 1, but that varies by program.
2. We're not in a place where we're going to be holding back on filling positions, but every time there is an open position, we will be thinking about what the right number is, and possibly rewriting that position for the needs that we've got at the time, but we are not trying to save on faculty positions at this time.
3. The Provost also expressed her appreciation for the effort that has been made to reduce reliance on adjunct faculty. That number used to be very high, and she recognizes all of the hard work it took to ensure we've got full-time tenure-track or tenured faculty or SP faculty teaching our students.

She was also happy to tell the Board about the increase in pay for adjuncts.

viii. Grants

1. Fewer numbers of grant applications were submitted, but a higher proportion of grants won. Record success rate and a record amount of funding coming to campus, which supports our research mission to support scholarship that has a positive impact in our communities and involves our students as much as possible. We've increased the number of students being supported, partially because of some of the state grants that directly funded some student activities, but it's exactly the kind of grant work we should be doing.

ix. Questions

1. Dr. Kurt Gingrich: Going back to the pie chart, to the slide that reports that 90% of the AA budget goes to people, "What percentage of that 90% goes to people whose primary responsibility is teaching?"

Provost: "More than 65%. Classified staff and AP make less on average than T&R faculty do."

Two-thirds or more of the money spent on people is going to people who teach, Provost Usher affirmed, saying, "Teaching and supporting teaching are the two most important things the University does," which is something she has emphasized during strategic planning and to the Board.

2. Dr. Rachel Rotert: "You've mentioned in a past meeting your support for extending the credit limit from 16 to 18 credits for full-time students. Is there an update on whether that change is still in process, and when that expected change may take effect?"

The Provost responded that Finance VP Rob Hoover is creating this year's budget with 18 credits built in. What the Board approves is tuition, so they don't need to approve a separate motion for that. The Board will approve the budget at the March meeting, and there will be a workshop in February that everyone can attend. We're still looking at the budgetary implications, if we get to set it at 17 or 18, but the Provost's goal is 18.

3. Dr. Kim Lane: "Thinking about tuition, I've had some folks ask about the Tuition Promise. What is the plan for extending that? How long do we think we'll be able to maintain that?"

Provost Usher: "We are continuing to support that for the foreseeable future. The Board voted for that for the next three years...We have a pool of money for that, and we did not use all of that pot last year. It rolls forward, and we have it budgeted for at least three more years."

### XXIII. Faculty Senate President's Report: Dr. Matt Close

1. Dr. Close attended the Board of Visitor's meeting and presented at their orientation meeting.
  - i. The Board expects a report on the COACHE survey at their December meeting. They are very interested in what our COACHE survey data says.
  - ii. The Board is also very interested in action items and things they can do to help faculty and to help improve scores on the survey.
  - iii. The next Board of Visitors meeting will be December 4-6, 2025. Dr. Close will present the Senate's recommended edits to the handbook at this meeting, so please make sure that any proposed changes have time to come through Senate and get approved before that date.
2. Coffee with the President
  - i. To craft his questions, Dr. Close reported that he compiles questions from faculty that are very similar and of concern to the faculty at large.
  - ii. The two main questions he asked this time concerned the culture of care that was outlined in the Strategic Plan and the issues that are surrounding academic freedom.
  - iii. Both questions were answered in part by the President. Dr. Close also said that Staff Senate President Fallon Cry asked a really good question about DEI.
  - iv. Coffee with the President was recorded, and those who are interested in the details of the conversation are free to view it. The next one will be on November 6, 2025.
3. Socials at Selu
  - i. Last week, our first social at Selu was held. These are paid for by the President's office and open to all employees at the institution. There was not a great turnout from faculty.
  - ii. Please mark your calendar for the next one, which will be on October 23, 2025, from 4:30pm-6pm. There will also be one on November 20, 2025, from 4:30pm-6pm.
  - iii. This is a really good opportunity to talk to the President in an informal setting.

### XXIV. Committee Reports

- Campus Environment
  - i. The Committee is working on the COACHE survey. Dr. Jessica Stowell will be attending the Committee's next meeting to share a preliminary copy of the report and talk about what dissemination could look like and how it could be packaged.
- Curriculum
  - i. Dr. Choate reported that the committee is discussing the new general education models and considering possible motions.
- Faculty Issues

- i. Dr. Kevin Farrell reported that Faculty Issues met jointly with RAC to discuss issues surrounding travel funding. The committee decided that the best next step would be to arrange another joint meeting, this time inviting Provost Usher to join them. The chairs of both committees have reached out to Provost Usher, and they are making arrangements to meet, possibly next week.
- Governance
  - i. This committee is continuing to review the T&R handbook for accordance with internal governance documents.
- Resource Allocation
  - i. Same report as Faculty Issues.

XXV. Old Business

1. 25-26.09: Motion to Add the Director of Advising (or Designee) as an Ex Officio, Non-Voting Member of the REAL Council

The motion passed. 43 in favor, none opposed, one abstention.

XXVI. New Business

XXVII. Announcements

1. Reminder to committees: when you forward new motions to FSEC, please send them in motion format.
2. If you have questions about formatting, any member of FSCE will be happy to help.
3. Senators, please pass along that the draft of the Strategic Plan is now posted on the website. Please take a look at it yourself and make sure that your constituents are aware of it.
4. Professor Wesley Young: The theatre program's first production of the fall semester, Moon Over Buffalo, by Ken Ludwig, will open October 7<sup>th</sup>.
5. Provost Usher: We hosted our first Rad Talks at Arabica, and people enjoyed it. There were positive comments from members of the community who attended. There will be six more this year; please try to attend.

XXVIII. Adjournment

Adjourned at 4:17 pm.



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

**October 9, 2025**

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Angelini  Archer  Carhart  Castor  Chatham  Chitwood  Choate  Close  
 Corey  Dunn  Farrell  Fox  Galeshi  Gingrich  Glass  Huston  Haynes  
 Jenks  Jeong  Joseph  Kennedy  Lahn  Lane  Lenhart  Liska  Mesmer  
 Mills  Mullenbach  Joseph  Page  Van Patten  Plekhanova  Prince  Rakes  
 Reed  Rice  Riddle  Robinson  Rotert  Sallee  Santos  Sawyer  Shao  
 Sherman  Smith  Stewart  Tanellari  Turner (Pollick)  Vernon  Watson  
 Webb  Young

Absent: Corey, Rice, Sallee, Webb

XXIX. Approval of Minutes

- i. September 25, 2025 minutes approved by acclamation.

XXX. University President's Report: Dr. Bret Danilowicz

- i. No report.

XXXI. Provost's Report: Dr. Bethany Usher

- i. Excellent job reporting Week Four grades.
- ii. The Provost appreciates everyone's hard work. Lots of exciting stuff happening on campus, including Homecoming and the Moon Over Buffalo.
- iii. Graduate Affairs
  - a. Dr. Agida Manizade has been hired as the permanent Assistant Provost for Graduate Affairs.
- iv. Searches and Campus Visits
  - a. Very strong candidate pools for all positions.
  - b. Campus visits for AVP of Health Sciences candidates.
  - c. Candidates for the AVP of Radford Online will be doing campus visits soon.

- d. Final candidates have been selected for the Dean for the College of Humanities and Behavioral Sciences. They will probably be on campus in late October/early November.
  - e. Also on campus are candidates for the Director of Institutional Effectiveness.
  - f. Please participate in these interviews as you're able to and submit your feedback on these candidates.
- v. Census
- a. Final census numbers: 7,837 students. 25 more students than we had last year; even though we thought the number would be flat, we were a little bit higher, and more than 300 students than we had in 2023. Our enrollment goal that reported to SCHEV is 7,800 students, so we are exceeding that.
  - b. The Provost is pleased that we now have a higher proportion of full-time undergraduate students than we've had before. We've been steady in the total number of grad students, but the number of part-time and one-class-taking students has decreased in favor of full-time students. The Provost says she can feel the difference this makes in the vibe on campus.
  - c. There was a slight drop in our freshmen retention numbers; we retained about 75%. This can be attributed to accepting a group of students with a challenging academic background who were supposed to be admitted to a bridge program, but they got admitted as regular students and they struggled a bit. Taking those students out of the mix, our retention numbers would have been very similar to last year.
- vi. Quadrennial Review
- a. Provost Usher is also supporting the individuals like Dr. Close and the Senates as they work through our quadrennial review of university governance to make sure that what we are doing aligns with our documents and policies.
  - b. The Provost used ductwork as a metaphor for the work that is being done in this area: expensive, time-consuming work that doesn't make anything prettier, but does support the function of the University and makes it better.
- vii. General Education
- a. The Provost said she appreciates the work being done on general education. The Gen Ed committees have all been empaneled and are working to address

their charges. She acknowledges that launching a new Gen Ed is a big and complicated process, and she thinks everyone is doing a fantastic job.

viii. Academic Freedom

- a. Provost Usher spoke about academic freedom ahead of next week's panel discussion.
- b. She said: "I want to say, and continue to say, we value academic freedom, we value the work that you're doing in your classes and being able to teach what's appropriate for the work that you do, and I know this is a challenging time with the things that are coming down to UVA and Texas and all those universities. We know that this is hard. We support the work you're doing in your classroom to be able to talk about your subjects and work really hard. I just want to be able to say I care, I hear it, and I want to be able to support you in every way that I can. There's going to be a panel with [President Danilowicz and I, plus others] next Wednesday, and I'm looking forward to being there and helping answer questions. Some things we can answer, some things we can't change. We can't change the world right now on all of the things that are happening, but we can do our best to be able to support each other and to support our University, and I just want to make sure we're continuing to say that."

ix. Questions

- a. Advising
- b. Dr. Jake Fox: For advising, the degree audit is not reflecting the changes that were made for the interim gen ed phase that we're in right now. One of the problems I'm encountering is it's still showing minors as required, even for new students. Do we know where that is on workflow? Can we expect that [to be fixed]? Right now, the degree audit doesn't reflect the motions that were passed last year.
- c. Provost Usher deferred the question to Dr. Jerel Benton, Assistant Provost of Student Success, but said that we have a consultant who is working with University Registrar Katie Piper and her team, and we are also in the process of hiring a specialist in Degree Works to help with that.
- d. Dr. Benton affirmed that he and his team are working on it, and he will follow up with the Registrar to see where we are and ask when we can expect to see changes. He will follow up with Dr. Close and Dr. Watson when he has more information.

- e. Dr. Fox added further context, saying that faculty are heavily responsible for advising juniors and seniors, and the concern is that we have no margin for error with an advanced junior or a senior because they would be directly impacted if advised incorrectly. The Provost suggested bringing in Dr. David Beach to work on this problem as well.
- x. Presentation by Dr. Jerel Benton, Assistant Provost of Student Success
  - 1. Updates from the Student Success Council
    - a. The Council recently finished prioritizing their work for the next year and beyond based on the work done by their two working groups that got started last spring.
    - b. Academic Readiness & Support
      - i. This group is composed of faculty and academic support staff.
      - ii. It is looking at pathways where we can embed academic readiness into early engagement with our students.
      - iii. The group will do a study analysis and will come back with recommendations.
      - iv. The goal is to be very intentional in designing supports, interventions, and services to meet the needs of our students.
    - c. Student Transitions Working Group
      - i. This group is taking a much narrower approach and concentrating on the transfer experience, focusing on the infrastructure we have and things that we should be considering.
      - ii. This group will also come back to the Council with recommendations. Practice-based recommendations can potentially be rapidly enacted, while policy recommendations will be sent through the proper channels.
  - 2. Student Life Cycle
    - i. This year's focus has been on the student life cycle and journey mapping, or mapping out the end-to-end experience from the point of deposit to graduation to determine what is the "Radford" experience.
    - ii. This group will be soliciting feedback by engaging with students, faculty, and staff to determine what the experience is for different segments of our population. For example, what is the experience for an adult learner, and how do they want to engage?

- iii. Dr. Benton wants our practices to align with the tenets in the Strategic Plan, particularly with fostering a culture of care as well as student success and experiential learning.
  - iv. The group will be looking at our policies and think about everybody's roles and responsibilities and try to identify gaps where more support is needed.
- 3. Presentation by Susan Hudson, Director of Student Success on the Week Four Starfish Survey
  - a. The survey, which was sent to instructors for 100 and 200-level courses through Starfish, received an 84% submission rate for 539/639 courses.
  - b. CEHD and Waldron College had 100% submission rates.
  - c. A total of 8,990 items were raised for 3,865 students (these include both kudos and referral flags). More kudos were raised than flags, and 785 students received only one flag. Two students received a high of seven flags each.
  - d. This year, department has partnered with student success advocate who are with the Compass program to reach out to all students who were flagged (1,139 students total), mostly through phone calls.
  - e. She reported that 40% of students who were called were reached on the first attempt. The callers' approach was centered on care and talking about how to help the student get back on track by connecting them with resources and learning about what challenges they are experiencing, and many students were very open in the responses.
- 4. Questions
  - a. Wesley Young: What is the name of the program that is going to replace Starfish?
  - b. Navigate 360. The go-live goal is April.
- 5. Mid-Term Grades
  - a. Susan and her team will reach out to any student with multiple Fs, any student who is on any type of academic watch (if they've had a D or an F in a previous semester), and any student who is potentially more at risk.
  - b. Outreach consists of sending a postcard that lists resources, they send emails and text messages, and do a phone call campaign from now until the last day to withdraw (October 31).

- c. They also celebrate students who are getting kudos and doing well by inviting them to First Year Achievers Day, which is a fair-style event in the beginning of November.

XXXII. Faculty Senate President's Report: Dr. Matt Close

1. Academic Freedom Panel
  - i. Academic Freedom Panel- Wednesday, October 15 2-3pm in the Bonnie.
  - ii. Please send any questions that you would like panelists to be asked to Dr. Close or a member of FSEC.
2. University Internal Governance Review Committee (UIGRC)
  - i. Convened on Friday, October 3, for the 2025-2026 academic year.
  - ii. Faculty Senate representatives on that committee include Dr. Close, Dr. Mullenbach, chair of the Governance Committee, and Dr. Choate, chair of the Curriculum Committee.
  - iii. At large faculty representatives appointed last year are Dr. Katie Hilden Clouse and Dr. Nicole Hendrix. Dr. Bruce Maheen was appointed to serve this year to fill the seat vacated by Dr. Kim Gainer when she retired.
  - iv. The work of this committee will be focused on the shared governance documents (referred to as IG documents) for the quadrennial review. These documents outline our representatives bodies, their role at the University, processes for curriculum pathways, and the process for updating IG documents.
  - v. The quadrennial review is an opportunity or members of shared governance to bring proposed amendments to UIGRC. Normally, the representative bodies of Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and AP Senate can bring proposals, but the committee itself can generate proposals and reach out to various committees on campus to receive proposals from those committees for how they might see themselves being constituted and charged in the future. This is an opportunity to change IG documents, committee compositions/charges, and recommend new committees or councils to be formed. For instance, we do not currently have a council of chairs, which has been a recommendation in previous years.
  - vi. This review also provides Senate with an opportunity to review and make recommendations or review and comment on these proposals. Dr. Close plans to make sure that proposals get routed through the Senate committees, as appropriate, so committees may receive additional charges this year.
3. SELU Socials
  - i. The next one is on October 23, at SELU. We can all go after Senate.
4. Academic Freedom Panel

- i. The academic freedom panel will be live-streamed but not recorded.
- ii. We will have a way for you to ask questions virtually.

XXXIII. Committee Reports

- Campus Environment
  - i. Dr. Watson reported that Campus Environment met with Dr. Jessica Stowell about the COACHE Survey; currently working on the report.
- Curriculum
  - i. Dr. Choate reported that Curriculum met with Dr. Jessica Stowell about the curriculum timeline. Curriculog is open now. It is not going to close early. The committee is looking at ways to update the pathways for revising our Gen Ed curriculum. Their work will go to the Governance Committee, and then come to the full Senate.
- Faculty Issues
  - i. Dr. Kevin Farrell reported that Faculty Issues held two joint meetings with the Resource Allocation Committee. The first was a meeting with Provost Usher to talk about issues related to travel, specifically travel funding. The second meeting was to talk about next steps and how to address issues related to travel and travel funding. They are going to put together a survey to gather more information about issues and experiences faculty have with travel, both in terms of funding and in terms of the procedures we have to go through.
- Governance
  - i. Dr. Mullenbach reported that Governance referred a motion to review the T&R handbook to include the College of Nursing in college governance.
- Resource Allocation
  - i. Please see the above report from Faculty Issues.

XXXIV. Old Business

- i. No old business.

XXXV. New Business

- i. Motion 25-26.10: Motion to Revise the Faculty Handbook to Include the College of Nursing.

XXXVI. Announcements

- i. The next RAD Talk will be October 20 in Roanoke, featuring Dr. Jenny Hall's presentation "From Tick Bites to Better Care: Confronting Tick-Borne Diseases in Virginia. More information will be in the next Threads newsletter.
- ii. VIVA book orders are due by December 1.
  - 1. We have a grant from VIVA where they will look to see if your textbook is available digitally and they will make it

- available to all students for free. They will do this for every book we have access to, but December 1 is the cut-off date.
- iii. Moon Over Buffalo is playing this weekend. It is a great, funny show.

XXXVII. Adjournment

Adjourned at 4:35pm.



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

**October 23, 2025**

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Angelini Archer Carhart Castor Chatham Chitwood Choate Close  
Corey Dunn Farrell Fox Galeshi Gingrich Glass Huston Haynes  
Jenks Jeong Joseph Kennedy Lahn Lane Lenhart Liska Mesmer  
Mills Mullenbach Joseph Page Van Patten Plekhanova Prince Rakes  
Reed Rice Riddle Robinson Rotert Sallee Santos Sawyer Shao  
Sherman Smith Stewart Tanellari Turner Vernon Watson Webb Young

Absent: Jenks, Young

- I. Approval of minutes
  - a. Approved by acclamation
  
- II. University President's Report: President Bret Danilowicz
  - a. Tartan Transfer Summit
    - i. We formally started the program one year ago.
    - ii. This is a partnership we now have with our eight closest community colleges.
    - iii. Our goal is to make transfer to Radford as seamless as possible. Currently, with Transfer Virginia, we articulate 2+2 programs and what it looks like to come to Radford, but it does not guarantee all the classes students are taking actually transfer here.
    - iv. Our eight partners on campus today, plus Danville Community College as the ninth (likely to join the partnership). President Danilowicz met with their presidents and Provost Usher met with their equivalent leadership. There were four different breakout groups, and the President was excited to see their understanding

that this program helps to differentiate us as a region. For Radford, it is an opportunity for us to communicate, region-wide, about how people can get an associate's degree, have a career, and continue their education at Radford while staying in the region and their communities.

- v. This group has started talking about applying for grants together as a region. The new chancellor of the Virginia Community College System is in favor of regionalism. Exciting opportunities.
  - vi. When we launched last year, there were maybe 14 students in the program. Now we're up to 104 students that have declared at the community colleges that they're interested in this transfer program. We hope to grow it to a couple hundred students each year, and this is a great start.
  - vii. When a student completes their AA degree and transfers to a public institution in the Commonwealth, there's a \$1000 scholarship; if they happen to be in a STEM field, they get another \$1000. We match that as an institution, yet we've got fewer than 20 students that transfer here that fill out the one-page form to get this money, even though we have lots of students that transfer here each year from the VCCS with an AA (so they're leaving money on the table). This is just one example of students not being aware of what transferring looks like, which is why this program is building communication, building employment opportunities, and it's building the future for these students so they can do a 2+2 and be employed in the region. The President believes in this program because, long-term, it is a pathway that will help provide us with enrollment stability and help us and the region.
- b. The New River Valley Regional Commission's Economic Development Meeting (Hosted at Radford today.)
- i. It's significant that RU is now being invited to this meeting, because that wasn't the case a few years ago. We're now invited along with our larger counterparts, and sometimes in preference to them.
  - ii. In addition to Vice President Joyner, a lot of faculty have been helpful in reaching out to businesses and being proactive in communicating to them how Radford can help, and that's a new, very different positioning for us, one that has led to exciting opportunities for the University.
  - iii. Right now, it's still kind of siloed with individual programs, people reaching out for internships, and opportunities to bring real-world problems into the classroom—but it's growing. When the legislators

hear about these examples, it makes them much more interested in helping Radford with our budgetary requests. Now, we're building up champions that are positioning Radford as a very positive partner for businesses in the area.

- c. The Virginia Senate Finance Committee
    - i. Radford will be hosting the VA Senate Finance Committee on campus November 21-22.
    - ii. Exceptional opportunity because all 40 state senators will be on campus. It's expected that the Governor-elect may also be on campus that day.
    - iii. Building security for this event. Faculty and staff in Kyle Hall will have access to their offices, the dean will have access to the dean's office, but we will not be able to hold classes in that building on those days. The Registrar's office is working to relocate those classes. Security will be high because many senators on both sides of the aisle have been receiving threats. Kyle Hall will be closed; to access the building if your office is there you will need to show ID, and there will be metal detectors as added security.
  - d. Enrollment and Applications
    - i. Enrollment is stable. It has ticked up a little bit over the past year.
    - ii. Applications are up 25%.
    - iii. President Danilowicz credits communication, outreach, the way we're in the news; everything we're doing is making a difference. Things are looking promising for continued stable enrollment, which is fundamental to finances and strategic planning.
- III. University Provost's Report: Provost Bethany Usher
- a. Tartan Transfer Meeting
    - i. Great meeting The Provost said that in addition to the marketing effort, one thing that is really helping with transfers and enrollment is that our faculty and student experience have a great reputation. Word of mouth is making a difference. The students who transfer to us from Tech talk about being overwhelmed there and being happy as they're coming to Radford because they're getting to know their faculty and they feel like they're at home. "Find Your Place. Here," resonates.
    - ii. Everything that we've been doing with our transfer pathways is working well.
    - iii. Dual Enrollment: In this region, there are a lot more students earning credit through dual enrollment, rather than earning credit

through AP and other options. But there are a dearth of teachers who have enough graduate credit to teach those courses. It's an ecosystem, because the community college is who actually accredits them. We offer certificates in English and math, and we're working on a certificate with 18 credits in biology. They are asking for certificates in humanities, political and social sciences, and physics, among others. Dr. Manizade has helped lead this conversation with faculty, and it's really an opportunity for us to be able to grow the credits that we're offering and also create an ecosystem that brings students back to Radford. The Provost appreciates everybody who's working on those certificates and says we're going to continue to make that push because the community colleges are saying they need this, and we're in a great place to be able to do it.

iv. Candidate Searches

1. AVP for Health Sciences- all candidates have been to campus, and the search has entered the silent phase (background checks, conversations). The Provost expects to make an announcement within the next couple weeks.
2. CHBS Dean- Two candidates have been to campus, two more are coming. Please continue to give your feedback on all candidates; it has been valuable.
3. Radford Online AVP- The Provost anticipates having candidates visit campus in early November.

v. Academic Freedom Forum

1. The Provost thanked everyone who worked on making the forum happen. Great discussion.
2. One result of the forum will be a future tabletop exercise with the senior executive team and the response team. During these exercises, which happen every few months, they practice dealing with an emergency situation. For the next one, the emergency will be the doxxing of a faculty member. The Provost says that while they already know what resources they have in place to support the faculty member, in this scenario, they will be able to see things like how the police can help, how IT would be able to respond, etc. She wants the team to talk about that in a coordinated way to ensure that "your academic freedom is protected, and you know you've got resources from us to be able to do that."

vi. Roanoke Building

1. A firm was on-site to test the ground.
2. Vice President Hoover has been asked by the Provost to do a guest post on Monday's edition of Threads to give a timeline and an update.

vii. Questions

1. Dr. Judy Smith: Do we have a site for the Roanoke building?
  - a. Provost Usher: No, we have two sites for the Roanoke building, and they're testing the ground right now, which is something they must do before they release the rest of the money. The answer will depend on that testing, and we will hopefully get the results of that by the end of this week.
  - b. The sites under consideration are on top of the hill along Jefferson Street and below the parking garage on Williamson, which is a larger site but has more complications. Jefferson Street is a smaller site, but there might be easier access and some really cool architectural things that could be done. More to come!
2. Dr. Susan Van Patten: Could you speak about the transfer requirements for REAL during the transition, especially the legacy tiered model, and what we should be telling students and their parents on Saturday?
  - a. Provost Usher: The legacy model is still in place; nobody voted to take it down.
  - b. The Provost said she would like it if Senate would make a motion to go with a singular mapping of articulating course by course by letter, because right now it is harder to advise students. Right now, what's happening, because we have the option because we have the option to articulate by course or by major, the advisors are kind of piecing together "you've got this many credits, and your major has this letter, and you have this minor, and you've taken these three classes, so you need two more R's. So right now it's a bit complicated. Right now, the advisors are looking to optimize out of the two motions that came forward, whether it makes more sense to be able to do the tiered or the course-by-course to be able to find the smoothest pathway to transfer for a student. Right

now we're recognizing both and doing the best we can for the student."

3. General Education Update: Dr. David Beach
  - a. Subcommittees- 34 T&R faculty and 21 A&P faculty and four SGA reps are participating.
  - b. Curriculum and Radford 101 Find Your Place. Both include student officers as non-voting advisory members, including the SGA president and VP, and they have already provided valuable insights about things like Navigate Your Journey.
  - c. The Provost is fully supporting faculty service on these subcommittees and 12-month faculty have professional development funds designated for their work. The four faculty co-chairs will receive either a course release per year or a \$3,000 annual stipend, and they'll also receive support to attend the American Association of College and University's Spring Conference on Learning and Student Success.
  - d. This implementation structure ensures clear coordination across all the moving parts of the general education reform. At the top is the steering committee, which is co-chaired by the provost, or her designee, and the faculty senate president providing both administrative and faculty oversight.
  - e. Beneath the steering committees are four implementation subcommittees: Curriculum, Assessment, Technology Integration, and Find Your Place Advising, each with a project manager and a faculty co-chair representing shared leadership. Membership across these subcommittees, includes faculty from every college, along with representatives from the library, advising, Student Affairs, and SGA.
  - f. This design follows a shared governance model, broad representation, strong faculty leadership, and consistent communication with the Real Council and the Provost Office. It's a structure that's been built for transparency, collaboration, and forward momentum.
  - g. Dr. Beach: "Early on in the process, we had a joint meeting with the assessment subcommittee to focus on defining and refining learning objectives, and to

hear reflections from members who attended the Association for General and Liberal Studies Constitute and the AAC&U Assessment Workshops. Those conversations have been instrumental in shaping our shared understanding of outcomes and alignment. Our first major item of business has been Navigate Your Journey requirement. The group has spent the past two weeks discussing its purpose, structure, and placement within the overall curriculum, and from those discussions, we've drafted two concurrent motions. One, to move navigate your journey from the general education program to a university graduation requirement while refining its description and learning objectives, and two, to modify the general education model approved by Senate last April, removing the Navigate Your Journey and correcting some lingering language issues.

- h. The assessment committee is currently focused on refining data collection methods to ensure that the process of gathering assessment data is as efficient and low burden as possible for faculty. Their goal is to support meaningful assessment without adding unnecessary workload. And so, to that end, they're developing a set of example assignments that will align with our standardized rubrics. We always welcome broad participation in these sessions to ensure that the rubrics reflect the diverse instructional approaches across campus.
- i. Katie Piper anticipates pulling the Technology Integration Subcommittee together to begin meeting in early to mid-November. They hope to have the new associate registrar who will be overseeing curriculum and degree works, catalog, and graduation in place by that time.
- j. Radford 101 Find Your Place Advising Subcommittee will convene next week to select a faculty co-chair and review its charges. They plan to work from the sample meta-major design from the Gen Ed Improvement Task Force as a foundation.

k. Questions

- i. Dr. Michelle Lenhart: “Hey, so you were talking about the assessment committee and the rubrics that they were starting on, and I got that it was the written one, but I missed the second one. Can you repeat that?”

Dr. Beach: Written communication and quantitative reasoning.

IV. Faculty Senate President’s Report: Dr. Matt Close

- a. The final grade submission deadline has been moved from Monday at 10am to Monday at 5pm, which should help faculty out a little bit, especially those with busy commencement weekend.
- b. The University Internal Governance Review Committee (UIGRC) continues to meet, and they are parsing out some of the tasks associated with the committee work, particularly with getting proposals or suggested revisions out to committees.
- c. Dr. Close thanked the Academic Freedom Forum panelists and Ryan Bowyer for his help with the panel. The panel raised a lot of great questions, and Dr. Close encourages faculty to not let the conversation end there, but to continue to participate in discussions.

V. Committee Reports

- a. Campus Environment: Working on the COACHE survey.
- b. Governance: The committee has a motion in old business, and they are proposing a motion for new business to delete the College of Graduate Studies and research from the TNR handbook. In addition, they’re continuing to review the process for deans’ evaluations.
- c. Resource Allocation: Planning their next steps. A couple members of the committee are working on a survey to ask faculty about their experiences with travel funding, but they will need data from the Provost’s office before they move forward. The committee is also getting ready to invite Vice President Hoover for a meeting to learn more about his role and ask some questions.
- d. Curriculum: They are discussing the Navigate Your Journey piece of the new curriculum and working with the subcommittee on that. They are also talking about the new pathways that will be needed to get a motion to governance.
- e. Faculty Issues: They met with Jennifer Russer-Wicker, from the AI Working Group, to talk a little bit about their work, get an update on what they were, doing and to offer some faculty perspectives, both concerns

and some opportunities that faculty see with regards to AI. They also started some conversations about academic freedom to follow up on the Forum on Academic Freedom and started discussing what the committee could do in that arena.

VI. Old Business

- i. Motion 25-26.10: Motion to Revise the Faculty Handbook to Include the College of Nursing.  
The motion carried 45 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention.

VII. New Business

- i. Motion 25-26.11: Motion to Remove College of Graduate Studies and Research and Graduate Faculty Classification Language from the T & R Handbook

VIII. Announcements

- a. Dr. Susan Schoppelrey spoke about the RISE assessment survey. The 38% response rate (so far) is a significant improvement over last year's 24% response rate.
- b. Dr. Schoppelrey apologizes for the excessive emails some faculty members have received. The committee is working with Watermark to figure out what happened.

IX. Adjournment

- a. Adjourned at 4:37pm.



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

**November 6, 2025**

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Angelini Archer Carhart Castor Chatham Chitwood Choate Close  
Corey Dunn Farrell Fox Galeshi Gingrich Binks(Glass)Huston Haynes  
Jenks Jeong Joseph Kennedy Lahn Lane Lenhart Liska Mesmer  
Mills Mullenbach Joseph Page Van Patten Plekhanova Prince Rakes  
Reed Rice Riddle Robinson Rotert Sallee Santos Sawyer Shao  
ShermanSmithStewartTanellariTurnerVernon Watson Webb Young

Absent: Liska

- I. Approval of minutes
  - a. Minutes approved by acclamation.
  
- II. University President's Report: President Bret Danilowicz
  - a. Virginia Election
    - i. The President has been asked by many people about the implications of the election for Radford specifically. He said that it's too early to tell at this point, but there are two things he anticipates occurring. First, in general, the Democratic Party tends to be more hands-off when it comes to higher education, so he anticipates fewer directives coming from Richmond or the executive branch towards universities in general, based on past trends. He considers this to be positive news from the perspective of university operations.
    - ii. The President also said that his perspective is that there may be more of a detriment to Radford University in that the Democratic Party tends to be consolidated in the population centers of the state. In the past, when there's a heavy Democratic representation, rural Virginia and its universities tend to be less on the radar of Richmond, and resources tend to fall off the map. Again, according to past tendencies. The President said that means it's going to be a little harder of a fight for trying to advocate for resources for Radford and potentially a little bit more challenging.

- iii. With this in mind, the President sees it as a great opportunity that the entire Virginia Senate is coming to Radford in a couple weeks. Having them on campus means that we get an opportunity to put Radford University on their radar prior to the new session; great opportunity since many new legislators will be joining the legislative branch.
- b. Strategic Plan
  - i. The President said the university is getting close to being completed with our outward-facing strategic plan. It will be sent to the Board of Visitors in about two weeks, and he is anticipating its approval at their meeting.
  - ii. The strategic plan is outward-facing, and how we accomplish it is the internal part. Right now, all the divisions are working on what their tactics are, and the specific opportunities of what they're going to do and how they're going to measure it. The President anticipates seeing drafts from the divisions by February when they have their internal-facing plans completed.
- c. Enrollment
  - i. For this coming fall, the President said he thinks we're in a really good spot, comparatively speaking, and our numbers are looking better than they have at any point over the past three years, not just in terms of applications, but the students that have fully completed their applications (up 20% from this time last year).
  - ii. The University has already received about 45% of the number of applications we typically expect, which is a good, solid number. Our goal is not to grow, but to have enrollment stability, so to be where we are right now is fantastic; it's a great spot to be in. If we happen to grow, that's exciting, but we don't need to grow to work with our budget.
- d. AAUP Academic Freedom Proposal
  - i. Referencing Motion 25-26.12 that is in New Business, the President pointed out that, so far, all signers are from private institutions, independent nonprofits that support higher ed, three community colleges, and one interim president at a four year university. No [four year public university] with a sitting president has signed it.
  - ii. "That's the politics of the environment that we're in. Don't get me wrong, we're supportive of it. I read it. I agree with the statement. Talked with the Provost about it. We're supportive of the statement. I think it's very healthy for you all to discuss it and support it. I think it's hard to envision a spot where faculty don't support academic freedom."
  - iii. The President then said that being the first leader or public university to sign this document would create unnecessary exposure and potentially harm the university. It is his view that now is not the time for Radford to be on the radar for external advocacy. He is supportive, the board is supportive, "but nobody is going to be

externally promoting Radford's position on that. It's just not a great place for us as an institution, because that could be, frankly, quite harmful to the institution. We want to be supportive of academic freedom. We want to defend it should matters arise, but we don't want to be defending the Academy. That is not our place as Radford University."

### III. University Provost's Report: Provost Bethany Usher

#### a. Election

- i. The Provost reported that she has also been asked about the election and whether it changes anything about what we know about the enforcement of the program productivity matrix with the SCHEV board. The answer is no, and SCHEV does not yet know how the composition of that board may change. Provost Usher will be attending a meeting of the SCHEV provost group next Friday, and she hopes for more updates at that point, but she's not expecting any updates until the SCHEV board meets in January.
- ii. The Provost has been impressed with the way faculty are thinking creatively about their program offerings, and she wanted to reiterate that the administration is committed to faculty in those programs. It is not the administration's position that cuts will be made to our programs that are similar to programs at other schools that have been cut in states that have mandates on productivity.
- iii. "That is not our position, and that is not what we're planning on doing. So, with that, I'm really pleased with the thoughtfulness that programs that might or might not be at risk have been putting into thinking about being student-centered academic programs, and I want to thank you and look forward to seeing more of what we're doing there."

#### b. Searches

- i. Nearing the end of the CHBS dean search.
- ii. Nearing the end of the AVP for Health Science search.
- iii. The candidates for the AVP of Radford Online are on campus this week.
- iv. The Director of Assessment has been hired and will be starting in early January.

#### c. Strategic Plan

- i. Academic Affairs spent a lot of time going through all the comments that were made about the strategic plan draft, which spanned about seven major areas for Academic Affairs that cross-cut many of the categories in the strategic plan. Many of the comments were incorporated into the Strategic Plan.
- ii. The first area was student success and making it relevant, equitable, and accessible, which underlies all the other areas. This has led to a lot of conversation about how to increase experiential learning appropriate to disciplines we all teach in and increasing

funding to help support it at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

- iii. We also want to foster multidisciplinary research, which is categorized under the strategic plan as being all the scholarship that we do that involves students and has an impact in our communities. The more interdisciplinary ways that we can find to do that, the better off we are, and if that means having more interdisciplinary academic programs, that would also be terrific for addressing issues prevalent in our region and in the world.
- iv. In discussing the strategic plan, Provost Usher also talked about Radford's investment in healthcare and, in a larger sense, increasing the health and wellbeing of southwest Virginia and the western part of the state. This investment includes everything from the new AVP of Health Sciences to the new building in Roanoke, which is an edifice that embodies that larger perspective and increasing the number of students we graduate and programs to meet the workforce needs.
- v. The next piece of the strategic plan is Radford Online. The Provost said that we want to have a strategy for online learning, making it appropriate to our academic portfolio, and to the students and regions that we serve.
- vi. Intersecting with all these pieces is developing and continuing an intentional portfolio of academic programs that is sustainable over a long period of time that intersects with all of our colleges and our programs. There will also be emphasis on teacher education and the value of connecting to K-12 and then lifetime education as a part of that, and so we want to make sure that we are thinking in terms of academic programs that we build modularly so that students who graduate can have a major and a minor and a high-impact practice that gives them work-based skills by the time they graduate that are based on the liberal arts general education curriculum. The intentional curriculum portfolio is really important to this.
- vii. The final piece that underlies all of this is supporting faculty work life, the importance of which came through in so many kinds of ways.
  1. "We want to make sure that we've got clear faculty workload policies. We want to make sure that we've got the tools you need to be successful, and that we're removing barriers."
  2. The Provost said that she got a lot of feedback about administrative things that need to get out of the way for faculty to get needed data and support, and the administration wants to make sure that faculty are getting travel and professional development support, as well as clear guideline and clear review processes and annual

reviews. Simplifying the FAR and putting that online is another thing that falls into that.

3. “One of the things we talk about is a culture of care, and for faculty in particular, a culture of care means helping you be the best you can be at doing the things that you do. [You can’t talk about] a culture of care without saying all of these things that you brought up as elements to be able to make your lives better and to recognize you better, so those are the areas we’re owning out of the strategic plan that are specifically Academic Affairs.”

d. Wicked Fest

- i. The Provost is excited to attend Wicked Fest and she hopes to see everyone there.

IV. Faculty Senate President’s Report: Dr. Matt Close

a. Faculty Senate of Virginia Meeting

- i. Our at-large senators Dr. Tara Chitwood and Dr. Sarah Rakes represented Radford at the virtual meeting over the weekend. Many important issues were discussed.
- ii. Virginia Higher Education Advocacy Day will be on January 15th at the Library of Virginia at 9am, and they encourage faculty from all over the Commonwealth to attend on behalf of and representing faculty, though not necessarily representing your institution.
- iii. We have our own Radford Higher Education Advocacy Day that we send students to for that. But on January 15th, faculty meet, and in past, they have provided legislative talking points.
- iv. They have also offered a small amount of travel funding from the FSVa for people who might want to attend. If you are interested in attending the event, please reach out to Dr. Close or any of the members of FSEC.
- v. HBCU Safety Concerns
  1. There have been bomb threats and safety concerns at HBCUs, including Virginia State, Hampton, Norfolk State, and Virginia Union.
  2. FSVa is working on a letter to follow up on the lack of safety measures and to plan on basically asking for more support for faculty and student safety. The letter is to be sent to the Governor, Attorney General, and Secretary of Public Safety.
- vi. Mutual Defense Compact and Federal Oversight
  1. A compact was drafted in response to the UVA and Department of Justice compact agreement. This raises concerns about federal overreach, academic freedom, and shared governance.
  2. A letter is being drafted from FSVa to support UVA Faculty Senate's resolution and to urge transparency and faculty

input before signing agreements with federal agencies that affect institutional governance and Academic Freedom.

3. This letter will go to UVA Board of Visitors and UVA Presidents. This letter is not from Radford specifically, as Radford's Faculty Senate, but we participate in FSVA.
- vii. SCHEV Criteria and General Education Program Cuts
    1. There was discussion at FSVA about concern expressed over SHEV's productivity standards that determine academic program viability. Departments that fall below this number risk merger or program elimination, and there was concern about the cuts to foreign language and religion majors specifically.
    2. FSVA has formed a task force to look at SHEV's criteria and request transparency on how metrics are created and how qualified SHEV staff are to make these decisions. FSVA is working on a letter to push back against some of the news that has come out of SHEV about those types of practices for identifying programs that are below viability metrics.
- b. VIVO Grant
    - i. Don't forget the December 1st deadline for our participation in curriculum-driven acquisition through the library and through the VIVO grant. If we get our textbook requests into the bookstore prior to December 1st, the library can, through this grant, purchase books that are available as an e-book with the grant money for access for our students, so that the students can get the textbook for free, if it is available.
    - ii. This is an important deadline; please put it on your calendar so we can make the best use of the money that has already been awarded.
  - c. Grade Submission Deadline
    - i. The grade submission deadline has been extended to 5pm on 12/15.
  - d. Wicked Fest
    - i. Please attend Wicked Fest, if you can.
  - e. Questions
    - i. Dr. Michelle Lenhart: "Is the deadline 2pm or 5pm?"  
Dr. Close: "It's 5pm."
  - f. AI Core Team Report: Dr. Courtney Watson
    - i. The AI Core Team convened their task forces on Wednesday. There are 12 members working across two task forces, research and scholarship and teaching and pedagogy.
    - ii. The work being done by those task forces includes best practices, technology, resources, and ethics in AI at Radford University.

- V. Committee Reports
  - a. Faculty Issues: The committee has a motion in New Business.
  - b. Governance: The committee has a motion in Old Business and they are continuing to review the process for the Dean's evaluations.
  - c. Campus Environment: The committee continues working on the COACHE survey, with the goal of having their report completed in time for the Board of Visitors meeting in December. The committee has also started working on their charge related to parking on campus.
  - d. Curriculum: The committee met with Dr. Jessica Stoll last week to talk about the tiered legacy model for transfer students, REAL, and also the revisions that need to come for the Academic Affairs Pathway approval.
  - e. Resource Allocation: No report.
  
- VI. Old Business
  - a. Motion 25-26.11: Motion to Remove the College of Graduate Studies and Research Graduate Faculty Classification Language from the T&R Faculty Handbook.
  - b. Questions
    - i. Dr. Kurt Gingrich: "Thanks to governance for doing this cleaning up, well done. I'm uncomfortable striking out the language referring to the classification of graduate faculty, and I'm uncomfortable with it because I don't like—I don't even know how—that faculty classification was gotten rid of. We here in Senate didn't get rid of it, so I wonder how it went away. And given that, why remove it from the handbook? We didn't say get rid of it, why not leave it in?...That was not a question. That was an opinion. The opinion is, leave it in."
    - ii. Dr. Eric Choate: I'd like to turn that into a question. I don't really have a good sense of where this designation is used. It seemed like it was important that it be included at some point. Has that reason gone away?
    - iii. Dr. Close: Does someone from Governance want to provide context?
    - iv. Dr. Santos offered to provide context, but then Dr. Fox had a question and a comment.
    - v. Dr. Fox: I have both a comment and can address the question. We were asked to clean up the handbook. The Faculty Senate voted to remove the graduate college as a structure last year; we voted for it, and it turns out then that when we went to the handbook there is no function remaining in the handbook for graduate faculty once you've done away with the college. The only place graduate faculty status has any meaning in the handbook is in college votes and things like that, and by eliminating the college, we sort of got rid of it and so we went ahead and, yeah, just, removed it...I was on the Senate last year, I don't remember how I voted on that college motion, because I'm not involved in graduate education, but I will

say, it is uncomfortable to me that we destroyed this status as sort of an unintended consequence. I'm not involved in graduate education, I don't fully understand how it's used. But right now, once we did away with the college, there is really no function standing for graduate faculty classification. It is now determined by program coordinators and chairs who gets to teach graduate classes, so it just isn't a meaningful status anymore, for better or for worse.

- vi. Dr. Mullenbach: I would like to just interject something. We did check, with, the chair of the Graduate Affairs Council, and were advised that the process for designating the graduate faculty classification was, as Jake just mentioned, a function of the College of Graduate Affairs and Research, and that when that was non-existent, that function did move to the Graduate Affairs Council. I was advised by Dr. Manizade that they didn't consider that that needed to be a function of the council anymore to provide that election and designation, and that it could be the responsibility and should be the responsibility of individual colleges to designate faculty as graduate faculty.

The motion carried, 30 in favor, eight opposed, five abstained.

VII. New Business

- a. Motion 25-26-12: Motion Concerning "Higher Education's Compact with America, Shared Principles for the Common Good," A Joint Statement from the AAC&U and the Phi Beta Kappa Society.

VIII. Announcements

- a. Dr. Close: Please consider coming over to Wicked Fest and the Artist Center from 5 to 8 today. It is a wild festival.

IX. Adjournment

- a. Adjourned at 4:22 pm.



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

**November 20, 2025**

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Angelini Archer Carhart Castor Chatham Chitwood Choate Close  
Corey Dunn Farrell Fox Galeshi Gingrich Glass Huston Haynes  
Jenks Jeong Joseph Kennedy Lahn Lane Lenhart Liska Mesmer  
Mills Mullenbach Joseph Page Van Patten Plekhanova Prince Rakes  
Reed Rice Riddle Robinson Rotert Sallee Santos Sawyer Shao  
Sherman Smith Stewart Tanellari Turner Vernon Watson Webb Young

Absent:

- I. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Minutes approved by acclamation.
  
- II. University President's Report: President Bret Danilowicz
  - a. The Virginia Senate Finance Committee is on campus today.
  - b. The President just returned from the Complete College America Conference
    - i. The purpose of the conference is to improve retention rates of students, graduation rates, time to graduation, cost of degree, and student success.
    - ii. There were a lot of presentations on AI and data trends. Executives from Handshake, the software that does our career opportunities with students, said that 2/3 of all employers in the country are already asking prospective employees how they are using AI to enhance their performance in their work. This is across all fields, not just business and tech, which gives us a sense of the urgency to prepare our students in how they integrate AI into what they're doing. The President emphasized how time-sensitive it has become to get students comfortable with how they can integrate AI in different ways in how they work, and he wants that to be on the faculty's radar.

- c. HR Issues on Campus: The President reported that we continue to have incidents (plural) where faculty members are having inappropriate relationships with undergraduate students in their own classes. This is inappropriate, not how faculty are expected to behave, and prohibited by state law. We must respect the students in our classes and not take advantage of the power we hold over them. The President asked the Senate to encourage their colleagues to end this behavior and support students.
- d. Enrollment for this coming fall appears to remain “quite strong.” Deposits are just starting, so it’s still early, but students that have completed their application and have completed the Pell continue to track much more strongly than even last year.
- e. Questions
  - i. Dr. Matt Close: Following up on the second item [HR issue], it was my understanding that a policy is in the works. On that topic, would you call it fraternization? Or inappropriate conduct or relationships? Are you looking for a Faculty Senate recommendation to come forward? Or is that policy close to being done?

President Danilowicz: There is going to be a policy committee that will receive suggestions for new policies. The President thinks that group will convene in January or February. The President isn’t sure if the policy committee is fully comprised yet, but he wants this group to work on a policy, though there are, again, already existing state laws. He stated that he would be very supportive of a university policy. He doesn’t think the Senate will have to recommend anything, though the policy will likely come through as something to consider. He would love to have the Senate’s reflection and support when the time comes for discussion.

- ii. Dr. Kurt Gingrich: “President Danilovich, thank you for being with us. This policy committee, this is the first I’ve heard of this, can you give us a sense of who might be on that?”

President Danilowicz: “I know it’s going through UIGRC. In terms of what it’s going to look like, I don’t have the membership. I know that group is starting to get a feel for it and suggestions. When I say it’ll get kind of seated in January or February, that’s about the timeline I expect with the group, but maybe it’s earlier, maybe it’s later, you know, because sometimes that takes a little while to get the details right before people have the confidence that the group will create a good policy.”

- iii. The President added that he just got some data from the Student Success Committee working with IR, and it looks like our retention of freshmen students is up 10% over last year. “While it’s difficult to make a true year-by-year comparison, don’t forget you are the most meaningful contact for those students, so it’s heartwarming to see those numbers going up. Yes, there’s a big team that works on this, but don’t forget that those positive numbers are a mirror of your work with students to engage them, to get them thinking, and to get them excited about their degrees. Thank you for your great work; I appreciate you all. Thank you.”

- III. University Provost's Report: Dr. Bethany Usher
  - a. No report.
  
- IV. Faculty Senate President's Report: Dr. Matt Close
  - a. University Internal Governance Review Committee (UIGRC)
    - i. Dr. Close currently sits on this committee, and he has reported updates on this committee a few times this semester. There have been some proposed changes to internal governance (IG), and Dr. Close has reached out to relevant committees (like the Academic Affairs Committee) regarding committee composition and charges and to determine whether changes need to be made. Should changes be needed, the committee is to bring those suggested changes back to Faculty Senate for our review and recommendation before moving up to UIGRC.
    - ii. There are some members of UIGRC that have made proposed changes to some internal governance committees and Dr. Close provided draft proposals to the committees for their review as well. The committees have the autonomy to decide whether they like the proposal or not, or whether they want to incorporate it or not into their own review of the committee. For transparency, that's the process. We haven't yet received any back through Faculty Senate, except for a proposal to generate a university curriculum committee. Dr. Close sent that proposal to the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee and the Governance Committee for their review, since the university curriculum does not exist.
  - b. Please make sure to get your textbook orders in before December.
  - c. Summer Classes and the Summer Schedule
    - i. There have been a lot of questions about both. We are in a transition phase. We haven't quite figured out final exams and the final exam schedule and the summer schedule. Courses have been designed as five-week courses, and we've expanded to seven-week terms during the summer. Summer 2026 will serve as a transitional semester in which some courses may still need to follow that five-week course format. If you are a faculty member who has developed your course for five weeks, you're not going to be expected, this summer, to teach it in seven weeks. We are encouraging you to work towards that, if you are one of those faculty that regularly teaches summer classes. Five-week sessions should be scheduled within the appropriate semester and should start on the first day of that term or semester. A memo was sent to chairs and deans with instructions for start/end dates for those terms.
    - ii. Starting with academic year 2026-2027 schedule entry, requests to offer a course in a duration different from the established semester and term lengths may be submitted for review and approval. If there is justification for you to teach an alternative schedule, those will be

done by request moving forward. A lot of programs in the health sciences, for instance have courses that must be taught within that five-week period, and those types of schedules will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis for approval. The Office of the Registrar will communicate the form to use for those requests when the time comes. No one will be required to do that this year; five weeks is still an option, and that seems to be a preference for a lot of people.

d. Questions

- i. Dr. Laura Vernon: Is there any talk about providing compensation for seven weeks, as opposed to five weeks?

Dr. Close: I believe the seven weeks is being viewed the same as a five-week term, spreading out your credit hours or contact hours over seven weeks instead of five weeks. They are not considering offering additional compensation. However, something that has been discussed at AALT when the contract model was being proposed about contracts is either renegotiating nine-month contracts to extend to 12-month contracts or being able to choose whether your nine months fall into a fall semester, spring semester, or whether you could choose to have a spring/summer or summer/fall schedule. That's currently being discussed, but no decisions have been made.

- ii. Dr. Kim Lane: Question about summer classes. My concern is that when you do the two seven-week sessions, there's no break in between. There is a week in between the end of spring semester, then we start summer, and then we go another 14 weeks, and then we go into fall semester. I'm afraid we're going to lose students, and they're going to see that they could take a class at a community college instead and have more of a break. And we're not going to have the number of students we would need to support those classes.

Dr. Close: That's a good point, Kim. I've raised that point with the Academic Affairs Leadership Team as well, and currently we don't have a policy that states that you can't take classes at community colleges. There was a discussion about potentially having a policy for students that basically says that if a class is offered at Radford and at a community college, if you're a student enrolled at Radford, you would need to take it here. I've raised concerns about that idea, that we might actually lose students or have trouble retaining students who need to take classes at home over the summer, or they do it for financial reasons. Also within the conversation is that point of justification for having a five-week alternate schedule for that seven-week term, so that you could continue to have your class in five weeks instead of seven moving forward. One of the things that's lacking there is data, so there's a lot of concern that we could have problems with retention, or we could lose faculty willing to teach classes in the summer because now we're forcing them to teach seven-week classes. We don't actually know, and so it's hard to make decisions without having collected information about what people are really thinking. We haven't asked that question yet.

Dr. Lane: I would say I do not like that idea of forcing students to take classes somewhere, like here, and I don't think that's a good precedent to set of requiring them

to take classes here if they're offered here versus at home. There's so many reasons that somebody might need to take a class somewhere else over the summer.

- iii. Dr. Tara Riddle: Do you know if this will also apply to classes that were traditionally taught as Summer Three classes that ran for the full 12 weeks originally? Will they also be able to apply, or be able to run originally as a 12-week instead of a 14-week semester?

Dr. Close: That's a great question. I can't remember offhand. I don't have my AALT notes in front of me specifically about Summer Three classes, but it seems like it would fall under that case-by-case basis; as long as you have good justification for it, you'd be able to do it in the abbreviated schedule. For this summer, I cannot answer that question. For this summer, the entire semester is there.

- iv. Dr. Jake Fox: That's the first I've ever heard of a policy restricting the ability to take community college classes. I don't know where that conversation is, you just alluded to it, but is that under serious consideration? Also, do you know of other schools in the Commonwealth that have such a policy? It almost strikes me as potentially illegal to specify that you can't do community college during the summer, but you can do study abroad, among other things, but not community college. That's a scary idea to me. How seriously is that being discussed, and do we know of such policies that exist that we could look at?

Dr. Close: That's a great question. I can't say that it's being seriously considered at this time, but it was an idea that came up when we had similar concerns about students leaving the University to take classes closer to home. I will let the Senate know if that is something that does come up and becomes more serious discussion, we'll go through proper channels to make sure we have our two cents.

## V. Committee Reports

- a. Campus Environment: The committee is working on finalizing the COACHE survey report in time for the Board of Visitors meeting and hopes to have the larger report ready for the Senate in January.
- b. Curriculum: The committee has four motions in New Business today.
- c. Faculty Issues: The committee has a motion in Old Business today. The committee has also had a conversation about issues and inconsistencies related to the way faculty are evaluated from department to department and college to college. The committee also discussed planning ahead for spring semester.
- d. Governance: The committee is considering the evaluation of the dean process. At this point, the committee has approved the survey tool, which will be the same as last year's, and the content of the email that will go out to faculty.
- e. Resource Allocation: The committee reviewed faculty travel data provided by the Provost's office, with big thanks to Adam Neal for his hard work researching this. The data helped the committee see how much support faculty are receiving when they travel, but then there were a lot of questions that arose, too, so they brainstormed questions that they would

like to put into a survey for faculty early spring. The questions include how much did people have to pay out of pocket and not be reimbursed, whether they felt like they were able to go to conference, obstacles like that. Thank you to Dr. Luke Liska for his work on developing that survey with members of the Faculty Issues committee. The committee also finalized questions for their meeting with Vice President Hoover on January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## VI. Old Business

- a. 25-26.12 Motion Concerning Higher Education's Compact with America: Share principles for the Common Good, a joint statement by the AACNU and the Phi Beta Kappa Society.
- b. Dr. Geoffrey Pollick: "I'm back as a substitute senator today for Carter Turner in the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, and we as a department support this motion...We agree with the statements, and they seem consistent with the university's mission and core values. So, Philosophy and Religious Studies supports the statement."
- c. Dr. Courtney Watson: I would like to cede my time to Dr. David Beach. Dr. David Beach: "Colleagues, I'd like to speak briefly as a faculty member in favor of this motion. First, I want to acknowledge President Danilowitz's position. He's been clear that whether to sign national statements is a presidential prerogative, and he has given a thoughtful reason for choosing not to attach his name to this particular one. I respect that. His stance is principled, and it reflects the broader set of considerations that university presidents must weigh. But we are here as faculty, and our role is different. We do not sign on behalf of the institution, we speak from our shared responsibility for academic life on this campus. The principles outlined in the AACU Phi Beta Kappa Statement, opportunity, affordability, excellence, freedom, security, partnership, prosperity, these are all principles that we already live by. They align directly with our mission and core values, they articulate what we teach, how we govern ourselves, and the kind of intellectual community we aspire to maintain. Passing this motion is not a referendum on the President's decision, but it's an affirmation of our own commitments. If we fail to support a statement that so closely matches the values we routinely defend in curriculum, scholarship, advising, and governance, we risk sending an unintended message that we're hesitant to publicly affirm the very foundations of academic freedom and educational opportunity. Supporting this motion signals confidence in our core principles and unity in our role as faculty. It says, simply, that these values matter to us, and that we are willing to say so. So, I urge the Senate to pass this motion. Thank you."
- d. Dr. Jake Fox: "I don't have anything substantive to add to what our colleagues have said. I am all in favor of the motion. I do have one question. Has the President made a statement about not signing on to national letters, is he on the record for that, or is that just something he verbally spoke of? I'm just curious if he's on the record for that anywhere,

but anyway, we are in favor of the motion in anthropology and urge others to vote for it. Thanks.”

Dr. Close: That is a good question. He mentioned it at Senate last time, I believe it appears in the minutes.

Dr. Fox: I guess that counts as on the record, yeah. I guess at the time, I wasn't sure what national things he was necessarily referring to. I mean, you could guess it was this one. I don't think he mentioned this one specifically, did he?

Dr. Close: He referred to the motion of new business.

- e. Dr. Kurt Gingrich: I'd like to ask a direct question, please. Just a point of clarification, Dr. Beach. You said he [President Danilowicz] has made a blanket statement about not signing on to national letters. What he said two weeks ago was specifically about this one. He didn't intend to sign this one. Can you tell me where you got that knowledge that he has said, blanket, that he won't sign such national letters?

Dr. David Beach: I'm sorry, I think I misspoke. I was referring to that letter.

The motion carried with 33 in favor, nine opposed, and five abstaining.

#### VII. New Business

- a. Dr. Courtney Watson: Motion to suspend the rules to take up New Business as Old Business.

The motion carried with 39 in favor, four against, and two abstaining.

- b. 25-26.13: Motion to Merge the B.S. and B.A. in Geology and the B.S. and B.A. in Geospatial Sciences into the B.S. in Geospatial and Earth Sciences

The motion carried, 44 in favor, three abstaining.

- c. 25-26.14: Motion to Delete the B.S. in Biomedical Sciences

The motion carried with 43 in favor, two opposed, two abstaining.

- d. 25-26.15: Motion to Revise the B.S. in Foods and Nutrition

The motion carried with 44 in favor, two abstaining.

- e. 25-26.16: Motion to Delete the Certificate in Accounting

The motion carried, 46 in favor, one abstention.

#### VIII. Announcements

- a. Social at SELU tonight.
- b. The December 4 meeting will probably be a committee meeting instead of a Senate meeting.

#### IX. Adjournment

- a. Adjourned at 4:41pm.



**Faculty Senate Meeting  
Minutes January 15,  
2026**

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Pelletier Archer Carhart Castor Chatham Chitwood Choate Close  
Corey Dunn Farrell Fox Galeshi Gingrich Glass Huston Haynes  
Jenks Jeong Joseph Kennedy Lahn Lane Lenhart Liska Mesmer   
Mills Mullenbach Joseph Page Van Patten Plekhanova Prince Rakes  
Reed Rice Riddle Robinson Rotert Sallee Santos Sawyer Shao  
Sherman Smith Stewart Tanellari Turner Vernon Watson Webb Young

Absent: Fox, Mills, Tanellari, and Vernon

- I. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Minutes approved by acclamation.
- II. University President's Report: President Bret Danilowicz
  - a. No report.
- III. University Provost's Report: Provost Bethany Usher
  - a. The Provost expressed her gratitude for a good start to spring semester.
  - b. SCHEV
    - i. The Provost and the President went to SCHEV on Tuesday to get the University's new mission statement supported by that body before it goes to the state legislature for their support. It will become effective 30 days after the end of the state legislative session.
    - ii. The Secretary of Education, Emmy Gedera, came to the President's presentation of the mission statement and the vote. Contrary to past events, Radford received really strong support, both for the President's leadership and the work we're doing as an institution. "Our turn towards making sure that we're supporting students and a culture of care and our responsibility to health and well-being for the region was something people really are excited about." Secretary Gedera told the Provost that one of her proudest accomplishments while serving in her role was the reemergence of Radford as a strong institution in the state. The Provost applauded

the work of the faculty to lead this effort.

- iii. SCHEV formally approved Radford's new mission statement right before the Faculty Senate meeting.
- c. D2L
  - i. Our D2L contract is up for renewal in June 2027.
  - ii. There will be a request for proposals and review so we can have an inclusive process for selecting a new LMS, either the new version of D2L or another platform, like Blackboard or Canvas.
  - iii. The ITAC committee will be the home base for sharing information about this, and they will form an RFP committee to collect information from faculty about what we need our new system to do.
- d. Watermark Pilot
  - i. Several departments participated in using Watermark for their faculty annual reports.
  - ii. Dr. Stowell collected feedback from those pilot users. It was positive, and one feature they really liked was being able to see immediate feedback from their chair, dean, etc. Watermark training and use will be expanded this year for FAR use in the fall.
  - iii. Dr. Stowell will do a demonstration for the Council of Chairs and get feedback and work with deans to make sure there is faculty development support available in the spring so faculty don't have to worry about it over the summer. There will also be support in the fall before FARs are due.
- e. Provost Usher ceded the rest of her time to Dr. Jerel Benton and Dr. David Beach for updates on enrollment/retention and general education.
- f. Enrollment/retention updates
  - i. Dr. Jerel Benton shared slides (attached).
  - ii. The undergraduate population (5,853 students) is up 131 students compared to last spring. Graduate enrollment has remained flat (up one student).
  - iii. Census is January 26.
  - iv. Retention is also pretty strong. We are exceeding our Freshmen retention target of 90%. New transfer students are up 1% and holding strong.
  - v. Dr. Benton has led new initiatives and strategic focus on new transfer populations and made changes to orientation. Susan Hudson and the Office of Student Success and Retention have done programming all throughout the fall semester to try to connect and engage and get those students connected.
  - vi. Sophomore retention is up 1% and junior/senior retention has remained flat.
  - vii. We are hitting the institution's stability goal with a 93% retention rate. Attrition between fall and spring is getting better.
  - viii. Provost Usher: Good numbers, good vibes, the students are happy.
- g. General Education
  - i. The General Education Implementation Steering Committee met on Friday. Dr. David Beach shared an update (slides attached). The

focus of the meeting was to take stock of subcommittees' progress and test whether a Fall 2027 launch remained realistic given current progress and known constraints.

1. Inquiry Development Committee: Just getting started.
2. Assessment Committee: Fact-finding.
3. Radford 101 Committee: Pathway stage.
4. Technology Committee: Their work is dependent on decisions that are still ahead.
5. Curriculum Committee: Completed foundational work on the Gen Ed Competency Framework, including refining learning outcomes and developing clear descriptors to guide course design and alignment.

ii. Launch Date Discussion

1. Thinking about the launch date, the steering committee considered the impact on faculty workload, governance, sequencing, summer labor, assessment readiness, and technology timing, and agreed to continue planning towards a Fall 27 launch, pending intentional summer support and compensation, acceptance of some compressed sequencing, and careful attention to faculty engagement and governance transparency.
2. Emphasis now is on tightening coordination across the subcommittees, identifying concrete spring milestones, and ensuring that acceleration does not mean cutting corners, especially around curriculum quality and faculty voice.
3. The Committee recommends removing Navigate Your Journey from the gen ed curriculum and making it a university graduation requirement. The proposal will be considered by the Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee next week.
4. Ellucian Consulting Support has been finalized to assist with system configuration, coding, and integration.
5. Radford 101 is being designed as a coordinated first-year experience rather than a standalone course, aligning academic exploration, advising, career-connected learning, and student support within a scalable, faculty-owned framework. The subcommittee has completed foundational discovery and infrastructure works, resulting in an integrated enrollment pathway model that supports academic coherence and operational feasibility.
6. Two complementary enrollment pathways anchor the model, a default meta-major pathway that supports guided exploration and early belonging, and a special population pathway that allows for tailored sections while preserving shared learning outcomes.

7. A program-specific integration option is being developed for majors with accreditation or sequencing constraints, with clear criteria to ensure consistency and academic integrity.
8. The next steps include campus-wide feedback on the draft pathway model, and transition to coordinated working groups focused on policy and logistics, and curriculum pedagogy to support phased implementation.
9. Provost Usher: We are implementing in the budget process the move to the 18-credit cap to make space so that the new gen ed does not penalize anybody and we're able to build in those experiential learning experiences and Radford 101.

IV. Faculty Senate President's Report: Dr. Matt Close

a. The Virginia Legislative Agenda

- i. The legislative agenda has started for this legislative session, and the bills have been loaded into the Virginia LIS system if you'd like to take a look. Two to take note of are back after being killed in previous sessions.
- ii. One of them concerns the boards of public institutions, the text of which has changed significantly to state that the faculty member appointed to the board would become a voting member of the board. Additionally, they would also add staff representatives to boards, which would represent a significant change for a lot of our institutions, especially community colleges.
- iii. The next bill, HBL 263 proposes to repeal the ban on collective bargaining, which we're currently not permitted to do as state employees.
- iv. The passage of either/both of these bills would bring significant changes/challenges to the institution. In the past, they came close to passing (passed by the general assembly, then vetoed by the governor), so they might make it through this time.

b. University Internal Governance Review Committee

- i. UIGRC will have a retreat on Friday to review the main version of the shared governance document and discuss possible edits. Motions for these revisions will come to Faculty Senate this spring.

c. The Board of Visitors

- i. The Board of Visitors will be meeting for a budget workshop on February 25. Dr. Close plans to attend. VP Rob Hoover will walk the Board through the budget.
- ii. The Board will meet again March 19-20, and they will vote on the budget then.
- iii. Prior to this meeting, Senate committee chairs should let Dr. Close know if there is anything from their committee's work that should be part of his presentation to the Board.

d. Academic Calendar

- i. Dr. Close has gotten a lot of emails regarding issues with the new academic calendar, the exam period, and grade submissions.

While he doesn't control any of these things, he is happy to advocate for faculty and will document concerns as they arise and then bring them to the appropriate place to resolve the issue if it's something that can be solved immediately.

- ii. Motions and recommendations will need to be brought through Senate. We'll need to work with the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee to examine some of these issues.
  - iii. Please document any issues that you have with the calendar and send them to Dr. Close or FSEC.
  - iv. The Registrar has been great about extending grade submission deadlines when we need that, keeping in mind that end-of-term processing and degree conferrals all get pushed back the longer we push grade submission back.
  - v. APPC is looking at how we use exam week and will work with Faculty Issues to come up with a way to gather feedback and see if there are possibilities for greater flexibility during that week and what recommendations need to be made. How can we be flexible while still meeting the needs of faculty who need that week for exams.
- e. Senate Representation
- i. Anthropology is a small department where, due to scheduling conflicts, Dr. Fox can no longer serve on Senate for the remainder of the year, and there's no other member of the Anthropology faculty who can fill that role.
  - ii. In discussion with the parliamentarian, FSEC decided to determine the position is vacant and Artis College of Science and Technology is going to run a college-wide election to fill the seat, which is intended to represent a constituency within the college. That was the best way we could find to make sure that voices were heard. There was no historical record for how this was handled in the past, and Anthropology will resume their seat in the fall.
- f. Senate Meeting Schedule
- i. March 12 is the first meeting in March, and it is the deadline for new business (must be submitted by Monday, March 9). All new business that is submitted after that date must be examined by FSEC and then we have to suspend the rules to take it up as business in the meeting.
  - ii. There will be no committee meeting on Spring Break. Potentially, we may need to rearrange things towards the end of the semester. If we need to cancel a committee meeting to convene the full Senate, we will let everyone know. It's possible, depending on the amount of new business.
- g. Questions
- i. Dr. Judy Jenks: What are the names of the bills?  
Dr. Close: HB1263 and HB70. More about this: Radford's in a unique position. We have a faculty member on the board. That's not

true for every state institution, as is. While our rep is nonvoting, there are a lot of institutions that have no faculty representation whatsoever, and so this would be a game changer, not just for us, but for pretty much every institution in the state.

- ii. Dr. Gingrich: Does it specify that faculty get to choose the representative?

Dr. Close: Boards would have to specify their way of having faculty representation. Our board feels that faculty should be able to elect their own representatives, and they should basically be out of it, altogether. And so, right now, the language is a little bit murky around what happens after the Faculty Senate president has served for two years.

Provost Usher: Our institutional stance on this was it just says faculty and staff. Our feedback was the bill should have more clarity to be able to say T&R, teaching faculty, etc. We're in favor and we think there should be more clarity there. The harder part is going to be what they mean by staff; we have A&P and classified staff/ We have been supportive of what the board wants to do to let the faculty pick their representative for the board.

Dr. Watson: A link to the language of both bills has been shared in the chat and I can add it to the minutes.

#### V. Committee Reports

- a. Campus Environment: The COACHE report was shared during the Board of Visitors meeting. Dr. Watson and Dr. Stowell also shared the results of the report during an Our Turn presentation on January 6. The next step is for the committee to set up dates to share the survey results more broadly on main campus and in Roanoke at RHEC and RUC.
- b. Curriculum Committee: The committee is looking at removing Navigate Your Journey from the gen ed model and making it a degree requirement for everybody. The committee will probably have a joint meeting with the governance committee to look at pathways and think about which internal governance bodies will be needed to approve gen ed.
- c. Faculty Issues Committee: This committee has a motion in New Business.
- d. Governance Committee: Rachel Santos has resigned as secretary, so Dr. Mullenbach has asked the committee to stay on the Zoom link after this meeting to select a new secretary.
- e. Resource Allocation Committee: Dr. Liska is developing a survey that will be distributed in conjunction with faculty issues to all faculty on travel. This builds on the work they did in the fall using data provided by Provost Usher and Adam Neal. The committee will meet with VP Rob Hoover next week, and all committee members have provided questions for that meeting.

#### VI. Old Business

- a. No old business.
- VII. New Business
  - a. 25-26.17, Resolution on Extra Employment, referred by the Faculty Issues Committee.
  - b. Motion 25-26.18, motion to revise the Crime Analysis Certificate referred by Curriculum Committee.
  - c. Motion 25-26.19, motion to create the Graduate Certificate in Substance Abuse and Addictions Counseling, referred by Curriculum Committee.
  - d. \*The rationales will be added to these motions in the motion book on the Faculty Senate website. They were submitted with a Curriculog link, which we now know not everyone has access to.
- VIII. Announcements
  - a. Dr. Close: For the March 19 BoV meeting, the Board is looking for an academic-related type of event to attend. If your department has an event scheduled that week (or if you would like to plan one) please communicate that information to your deans, and then they can communicate it with the provost. It's really nice to engage the board, when they're in town and they want to do stuff, and they really want to see us engaging students and showcasing the work that our great students are doing.
- IX. Adjournment
  - a. Adjourned at 4:20 pm.



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

**January 29, 2026**

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

Pelletier Archer Carhart Castor Chatham Chitwood Choate Close  
Corey Dunn Farrell Angelini Galeshi Gingrich Glass Huston Haynes  
Jenks Jeong Joseph Furher Lahn Lane (Stefaniak) Lenhart Liska Mesmer  
Mills   
Mullenbach Page Van Patten Plekhanova Prince Rakes  
Reed Rice Riddle Robinson Rotert Sallee Santos Sawyer Shao  
Sherman Smith Stewart Tanellari Turner Vernon Watson Webb

Young Absent: Joseph, Mills, Rice, Van Patten

- I. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Minutes approved by acclamation.
- II. University President's Report: President Bret Danilowicz
  - a. No report.
- III. University Provost's Report: Provost Bethany Usher
  - a. Enrollment
    - i. Continuing good news about enrollment. Registrar's office is finalizing the numbers. Preliminarily, we have 5,651 undergraduates enrolled, which is more than 500 more than two years ago and more than 100 more than this time last year.
    - ii. Altogether, we have 7,408 students. We are up 121 students from this time last year.
    - iii. The Provost thanked everyone for their efforts. She also credits our undergraduate standing policies, the work being done to help registration and bill paying. It's extraordinarily good news to see so many students still in good standing.
  - b. Health Sciences Building in Roanoke
    - i. Progress is being made.
    - ii. We have funding for the architecture and engineering planning, and we've narrowed it down to two sites.
    - iii. The Provost interviewed four firms yesterday, and the selection should be made in the next few weeks.
    - iv. The top criteria for choosing a firm is finding one that will thoughtfully

engage with our community, the goal is for everyone to have a real voice in multiple steps along the way in what that building is going to look like and how it's going

to work. We are building a center for the health and well-being of the whole region. There will be engagement sessions, workshops, etc. for everyone to give input on the design of the building and the vision for lab space, classroom space, public space, etc. These sessions will take place during the second half of the semester.

c. Flexibility for weather

- i. The Provost thanked everyone for adapting.
- ii. How weather decisions are made: The chief of police sends the weather decision team detailed forecasts. They make the best decision they can with the information they have for health, safety, and continuity of operations. They meet every 12 hours during a snowstorm and make a decision for the next set of hours, considering the conditions and staying in touch with the community colleges, Tech's emergency management, and the state highway patrol.
- iii. Matt, Jean, Katie, and Charlie were asked by the Provost to sketch things out for digital continuity, keeping in mind that our calendar doesn't have an built-in make-up days. They tried to send as much information about flexibility to faculty and students as possible. The Provost appreciates that everyone was thoughtful with their students and thoughtful with each other.

d. Questions

- i. Dr. Kevin Farrell: When the [weather] decision was made, most of us in Roanoke were looking at unplowed neighborhoods. They didn't start plowing residential neighborhoods until Tuesday. Some of us had to make decisions about going online, not knowing whether we would even be able to get out of our neighborhoods. Is there any kind of coordination between the university and the city governments of Radford and Roanoke regarding snow clearance and snow removal and the plowing schedule.

Provost Usher: Yes, Margie Vest is a key member of that committee and is regularly giving updates along with Carilion's facility people. Both cities have struggled to clear the streets, it's icy, we're not equipped for it. We knew it was going to be so cold and that it wouldn't melt, and "I was worried about telling everybody to flip online if they had the capacity to come to class. I wanted to give you the flexibility to do what you needed to do, knowing that otherwise we were going to have to wait at least a week. So we are in contact with the chief of police and Carilion as part of our emergency management and they get checked in with immediately before and they've been on speed dial to be able to get us clear.

- ii. Dr. Roofia Galeshi: Our personnel committee had a question about whether the closed days will affect the director or chair's evaluation and how these closed days will impact the director evaluation process. With there be any extended period? There's not much time left for the personnel committee to conduct the vote and write the letter.

Dr. Darryl Corey: They are worried that there isn't time to get the letter out and have time for faculty to give input. And they're saying they're getting mixed messages. An email went out saying that time was extended, but it didn't come from the Provost's office.

The Provost ceded her time to Dr. Jessica Stowell.

Dr. Jessica Stowell: There has a high volume of emails to Jonathan.

Since we lost two days, do faculty need two more days. Theoretically, that will

push out the time that the personnel committees have to work on their piece of it. I made the call to extend student evaluations, and that email went out to department chairs. We got feedback immediately that that would reduce time for personnel chairs and they already had a short timeline.

Provost Usher: I can be the one to extend the timeline. I'm happy to extend the deadline.

She asked Dr. Close to send her an email on behalf of the faculty, which she will reply to and extend the deadline. Dr. Close will move forward with this request.

#### IV. Faculty Senate President's Report: Dr. Matt Close

##### a. Weather

- i. Lots of discussion about our inclement weather policies, and campus closure versus continuing learning and remaining open. This has been an interesting process to navigate; we don't typically have back-to-back storms like this that disrupt our ability to teach in-person classes.
- ii. As a reminder, one resource that is available is a D2L shell for Resilient and Flexible Teaching that was developed during 2020-2021.

##### b. Internal Governance Committee

- i. That committee is meeting again tomorrow. They are currently looking at the main shared governance document and the revisions that have been proposed. Dr. Close will report on anything that comes from that meeting.
- ii. If they vote on anything, it will then come through our Faculty Senate channels.

##### c. Final Exam Schedule

- i. On Friday, Dr. Close will meet with the Academic Policies and Procedures Committee. A subcommittee within that committee is looking specifically at exams.
- ii. Dr. Close would like to see APPC and Faculty Senate figure it out with the new calendar model that we have.
- iii. Multiple committees on Faculty Senate will need to be involved, and there may be an opportunity to look at some data.
- iv. We'll wait until APPC submits its recommendations and then move forward.

##### d. Questions

- i. Dr. Kurt Gingrich: Does this mean that people are still talking about changing the final exam schedule this semester? So what's there and posted in terms of block exams times might still change?

Dr. Close: We're supposed to be sticking to that this semester. We have a number of people who are not currently giving a final exam during their block. They are trying to see how people are using that time and think about how we may use that time moving forward.

Katie Piper: This would be exploratory for future academic years. The final exam schedules published on the website are set.

#### V. Committee Reports

- a. Campus Environment: They are looking for dates for COACHE presentations on main campus and in Roanoke. The committee is also starting to think about the Faculty Morale Survey and will review the last one to see if any of those questions need to be updated prior to distribution of the next survey.
  - b. Curriculum Committee: They have six motions in New Business today. The ones concerning REAL studies minors and REAL 101 do not have Curriculum proposals yet, but they will soon.
  - c. Faculty Issues Committee: They looked at the draft of the faculty travel survey that was co-developed with RAC. They also started having a conversation about calendar-related issues, including exam week questions. They also have a motion in Old Business today.
  - d. Governance Committee: Met with the Provost to discuss the dean evaluation process, the contents of the letter, the contents of the review survey form, and the announced of what would be included will be revised. Governance and Curriculum are planning a joint committee meeting to discuss joint issues. Krystina Angelini has replaced Jake Fox on the committee.
  - e. Resource Allocation Committee: They met with VP Rob Hoover last week. Now they are waiting on some follow-up files from him and at their next meeting they will look at how to best summarize that information and determine if there is anything that needs to be shared with FSEC and Senate as a whole. They are also finalizing plans for the faculty travel survey.
- VI. Old Business
- a. 25-26.17, Resolution on Extra Employment, referred by the Faculty Issues Committee. 40 in favor, 3 opposed, 1 abstained, the motion passed.
  - b. Motion 25-26.18, motion to revise the Crime Analysis Certificate referred by Curriculum Committee.  
42 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstained, the motion passed.
  - c. Motion 25-26.19, motion to create the Graduate Certificate in Substance Abuse and Addictions Counseling, referred by Curriculum Committee.  
37 in favor, 4 opposed, 5 abstained, the motion passed.
  - d. \*\*\*Zoom glitched and didn't get all the votes. Two people reached out to Dr. Watson about the last two motions. The updated total for Motion 25-26.18 is 44 in favor, 0 opposed, 2 abstained. The updated total for Motion 25-26.19 is 38 in favor, 5 opposed, 5 abstained. Dr. Close will announce this at the beginning of the next Faculty Senate meeting.
- VII. New Business
- a. Motion to Revise the Honors College Graduation Requirements
  - b. Motion to Delete the Honors Minors
  - c. Motion to Delete REAL 101
  - d. Motion to Delete the REAL Studies Minors
  - e. Motion to Remove Navigate Your Journey from GE
  - f. Motion to Create the Navigate Your Journey Graduation Requirement
- VIII. Announcements
- a. No announcements.
- IX. Adjournment
- a. Adjourned at 4:46 pm.



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes  
**February 12, 2026**  
3:30-4:50 PM  
Via Zoom videoconference

☑Pelletier ☑Archer ☑Carhart ☑Castor ☑Chatham ☑Chitwood ☑Choate ☑Close  
☑Corey ☑Dunn ☑Farrell ☑Angelini ☑Galeshi ☑Gingrich ☑Glass ☑Huston ☑Haynes  
☑Jenks ☑Jeong ☑Joseph ☑Furher ☑Lahn ☑Lane ☑Lenhart ☑Liska ☑Mesmer ☑Mills  
☑Mullenbach ☑Page ☐Van Patten ☑Plekhanova ☑Prince ☑Rakes  
☑Reed ☐Rice ☑Riddle ☑Robinson ☑Rotert ☑Sallee ☑Santos ☑Sawyer ☑Shao  
☑Sherman☑Smith☑Stewart☑Duncan Turner☑Vernon ☑Watson ☑Webb ☑Young

Absent: Furher, Rice

- I. Approval of Minutes
  - a. Minutes approved by acclamation.
  
- II. University President's Report: President Bret Danilowicz
  - a. The President appreciates everyone's patience regarding him missing the last two meetings.
  - b. The President attended the Peer Review Advisory Board (PRAB) for SACS. PRAB provides SACS with candid feedback about what they do well and what they don't do well.
  - c. The President has been advocating for Radford in Richmond and getting regular updates on the legislative session from Lisa Ghidotti.
    - i. There are a lot of bills right now that could potentially impact higher ed, including ones about university boards. There's still a lot to be decided, but really nothing that will impact us in practical terms at the university level here.
    - ii. Our board works "quite constructively" with us, but destructive things are occurring at other institutions.
    - iii. The President has been advocating for and making the legislature aware of Radford's upcoming launch of the Center for Rural Health in April. About one-third of our undergraduates are in healthcare disciplines. Currently, four hospital systems have agreed to be part of the Center, plus five foundations, so far, plus more to come. We're going to have the opportunity to work with healthcare systems throughout the southwest to create projects around improving health disparities and create a network of funders to provide a lot of resource opportunities to support our

- students and faculty working to improve health outcomes, improve the pipeline of students going into healthcare in our region, and figure out ways to leverage better outcomes for more people, because the needs in these areas are growing. There's a lot of opportunity, and it's very exciting.
- d. Enrollment is still going well this semester. Retention is fantastic.
    - i. Provost Usher: Our retention of new freshmen was at 91.4% last year from fall to spring, and this year it's 93%. The impressive part is we used to have a fairly large gap between the recruitment of traditionally funded students and our Pell students, with traditionally funded students being retained at a much higher rate. This year, our Pell students were retained at 93.2% compared to the overall body at 93%. They're at parity, which is a massive improvement for Radford. The Provost credits faculty for leaning in to really help our students, and it has made a huge difference.

### III. University Provost's Report: Provost Bethany Usher

- a. The Provost thanked all of the committees, particularly Gen-Ed, for their work this semester.
- b. Inclement Weather Policy
  - i. The handbook was written before D2L and COVID and remote work, etc., and a lot of the language is either closing or opening. It doesn't reflect the conditions we've experienced over the past few weeks. "Thank you for your flexibility and your work and your commitment to your students and our educational mission all the way through that."
  - ii. We have a very tight academic calendar and we're pretty clear that nobody wants to do makeup days.
  - iii. The Provost asked Dr. Close, Dr. Mekolichick, Charley Cosmoto, and Katie Piper, the registrar, to start preparing guidelines and language to help faculty and students in case we start having extended snow days. We need to find ways to be doing continuity even if the roads don't cooperate and we must have modified openings, which were successful. The Provost specifically wanted to thank the Library for opening and all the people who went out of their way to make that happen.
  - iv. The Provost said we need to have a better structure for thinking about who's an essential employee and who is eligible to work remotely. We want to think about what it means to have flexible days. She asked Faculty Issues to look at policies around the state to see how other universities handle it.
- c. The Extra Employment Resolution
  - i. The Provost shared slides and discussed her perspective as far as how she reads and interprets the handbook on this issue, which was not handled clearly or consistently in the past. She showed slides with the handbook policy and talked about criteria and how the university values and encourages many forms of extra employment, especially in health fields and some other areas where people need to maintain licensure and accreditation and things people do to develop their professional expertise or enhance the reputation of Radford University.
  - ii. The additional guidance for extra employment the administration doesn't approve of or encourage aligns with the guidelines in the handbook (slide).

The Provost views it as a conflict of commitment if a faculty member is teaching a course that Radford offers at another institution, or if they are teaching a course that contributes to a program that we offer at the same level, because it's a reputational issue. Another issue would be if a faculty member is identified as program faculty at another institution while they're a full-time faculty member here. Being a visiting expert or sitting on a dissertation committee is fine.

- iii. The Provost said this affects a very narrow number of faculty (slide) that will not be approved in the long-run (five faculty).
- iv. It may make sense to edit some language in the handbook, particularly as it pertains to summer employment (off contract) and things like royalties.

d. Questions for the Provost

- i. Dr. Choate: What about teaching a class at a different level than what we offer, for instance, community college?

Provost Usher: If it's a course that transfers in and if it's in a degree aligned with what we do, then it's a conflict of commitment.

Dr. Choate: Is it a conflict to hire adjuncts who also teach the same courses at multiple institutions?

Provost Usher: No, the handbook is limited to T&R faculty.

- ii. Dr. Farrell: The language about the criteria and the additional criteria developed by Academic Affairs—is it fair to say that language is not printed policy somewhere?

Provost Usher: It will be now. It's been developed and shared with the deans and now everyone has the same criteria for what they'll approve and won't approve, regardless of which College.

Dr. Farrell: Should we expect this to be published somewhere, so we can point faculty to it?

Provost Usher: One of the things we don't have and that we need to figure out how to do, is we don't have anything formal right now that's between the handbook and procedures in Academic Affairs for how we do things that doesn't have to go to the Board every time we do it. So, the answer is yes, but we don't have a repository for this kind of thing, and so Faculty Senate Minutes often turn into de facto versions of that. So, yes, but we need to figure out a better way of being able to do that.

e. Provost Usher's Announcements

- i. CVPA has a bunch of great events coming up.
- ii. CHBS is hosting a series of Wednesday movie nights in Spanish.
- iii. The next RadTalk is Tuesday, February 17 and it's going to be on taxes with Rob Warren at the Radford Public Library. It's open to the public and will have excellent catered food. We've been getting much better participation from the community when we move these events off campus.
- iv. Just a reminder in the midst of all the craziness of the semester, we do amazingly cool things at universities and being a part of this community and a bunch of smart people doing neat things with our students is awesome. I encourage you to participate in all of it.

IV. Faculty Senate President's Report: Dr. Matt Close

- a. The Board of Visitors budget workshop will be on 2/25, and Dr. Close has requested to see if we can get any additional faculty participation, just to get educated. It's informative and may be of interest to some senators. The budget will be discussed and approved by the BoV at the 3/19-3/20 meeting.
- b. IG Committee (University Planning and Budgeting Committee)
  - i. They will meet on 3/2. Dr. Close and the RAC chair sit on that committee.
- c. Academic Policies and Procedures will be examining the final exam week and they are designing (for planning purpose only) a survey to go out to all faculty about how you are currently using your final exam week and how you would like to use it moving forward.
- d. The academic calendar
  - i. Reports of faculty experiencing a bottleneck between the two semesters in the number of tasks that need to be accomplished and the issues that have resulted from that.
  - ii. These include, so far, not having enough time to plan courses, students registered for classes that didn't attend the first week of class, and some staff offices that were so thin that they had to delay operations until the first week of class, which, in some cases, delayed instruction from happening in classes.
  - iii. **Please email Dr. Close about any issues you're having so we can capture that.**

#### V. Committee Reports

- a. Campus Environment: Three upcoming presentations for COACHE data. One in Roanoke, one in Radford, one online. Flyer coming soon. The committee is also in the preliminary stages of starting work on the Faculty Morale Survey
- b. Curriculum: Joint meeting with Governance about the new IG body and approval pathways for how the Gen Ed curriculum is going to be approved when you submit your courses. Motions in Old Business this week.
- c. Faculty Issues: The committee is looking at the language surrounding inclement weather, which, as the provost mentioned earlier, is in sore need of an update, so it looks like we'll be working on that going ahead. They are also talking about calendar-related issues and trying to figure out how to gather those and respond to faculty issues and needs pertaining to the calendar.
- d. Governance: Joint meeting with Curriculum. The committee plans to refer a motion to add a standing general education committee to university shared governance at the next meeting.
- e. Resource Allocation: They are discussing next steps for disseminating information from their meeting with VP Rob Hoover. The Provost also invited Alyssa Archer (chair) and Dr. Farrell (FI Chair) to talk about professional development issues. The committee will hold off on sending out the faculty travel survey until after that meeting.

#### VI. Old Business

- a. Motion 25-26.20, Motion to Revise the Honors College Graduation Requirements referred to us by the Curriculum Committee.  
46 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstained. The motion passed.
- b. Motion 25-26.21, Motion to Delete the Honors Minors.

- 46 in favor, 0 opposed, 1 abstain. The motion passed.
- c. Motion 25-26.22. Motion to delete REAL 101  
45 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstention. The motion passed.
  - d. Motion 25-26.23, Motion to Delete the Real Studies Minor  
44 in favor, 0 opposed, and 1 abstaining. The motion passed.
  - e. Motion 25-26.24, Motion to Remove the Navigate Your Journey Requirement from the General Education Program.  
38 in favor, 2 opposed, and 5 abstentions. The motion passed.
  - f. Motion 25-26.25, Motion to Create the Navigate Your Journey Graduation Requirement

VII. New Business

- a. No new business.

VIII. Announcements

- a. Calm Day is next week.
- b. Library: If you published something in 2025, please fill out the form the library sent out so they can celebrate you.

IX. Adjournment

- a. Adjourned at 4:50pm.