



Faculty Senate
Minutes
Monday, March 24th, 2025

A regular meeting of the University of Wyoming Faculty Senate was called to order at 3:16pm on March 24th, 2025, in the Family Room of the University of Wyoming Union. Some Faculty Senate members and guests appeared via Zoom.

The meeting of Faculty Senate was called to order at 3:15pm.

Secretary Treva Sprout Ahrenholtz called the roll and a quorum was present.

A motion was called to amend the agenda; seconded, carried.

A motion was called to approve the agenda; seconded, carried.

A motion was called to approve the minutes of the last session; seconded, carried.

Staff Senate provided an update regarding their upcoming elections, and the upcoming annual meeting with the Board of the Trustees. Reminder of the upcoming staff recognition day (4/7) and the two hours of release time granted to all staff.

No representative from ASUW was present to provide a report.

Chair-Elect Godby made a general announcement regarding a search committee for the VP-IT, and suggested the president has been advised and candidates will move forward to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

Guests:

President of the University, Ed Seidel. Mandy Gifford, Scott Turpen

Chairs Report:

Cabinet Updates – Some work to craft an equal opportunity SAPP which will come to Faculty Senate in the coming weeks. PhD Project is under investigation in the College of Business, guidance on guidelines to come.

Elections:

The Chair-Elect position for Faculty Senate has only one candidate, Evan Johnson. The Secretary position on the Executive Committee has only one candidate, Vladimir Alvarado. The Member-at-large position, there were three candidates Brad Rettler, Tiger Robison, and Clifford Marks. Paper ballots were distributed to the body of the senate that were present in person. A digital poll conducted via Zoom was held to collect the votes of people attending via Zoom.

Ballots were counted and tallied, and the Members-at-Large duly elected by the body of the Senate are Brad Rettler, with a total of 39 votes, and Tiger Robison, with a total of 38 votes. Clifford Marks received a total of 18 votes.



The Faculty Senate thereafter voted to unanimously elect Evan Johnson as Chair-Elect, and Vladimir Alvarado as Secretary of the Faculty Senate.

Other Business:

President Seidel addressed the senate regarding several issues. He addressed first the subject of the VP of IT, indicating he is ready to take his desired candidate to the Board of Trustees.

Seidel then turned to discussion of his vision for academic programs for the future of the University. Seidel specifically mentioned the fact that the faculty are the lifeblood of the university, and offered his thanks for all the work the faculty does.

Seidel discussed current trends in higher education, as well as ‘themes’ that should serve as pillars of the university community and work as a vision of the future., as well as his role in advancing those pillars. Seidel discussed the value of being more interdisciplinary throughout campus and considered that UW has made some good progress towards that goal, as well as the value of interdisciplinary cooperation amongst academics to resolve the interconnected nature of problems in the modern world. Seidel mentioned that there is a great deal of innovation where disciplines intersect. Seidel further mentioned the difficulties involved in joint-appointments between departments, and the intersection and values of unique cultures and responsibilities across campus and through departments; the goal seeming to be to drive the value and innovation behind the ideas of interdisciplinary environments, as well as the funding opportunities available to interdisciplinary units throughout campus.

Seidel then turned to the value behind the entrepreneurial pillar, not only when it comes to securing state funding, but also in the sense of drawing in additional private funding from companies and private donations; increasing revenues is an important goal for the UW community in the face of shrinking appropriations from the legislature. Seidel believes that there are a lot of entrepreneurial faculty on campus, who are just waiting for ‘permission’ and to be told its okay, to build a business around ideas generated on campus. Seidel then turned to discuss the value of the land-grant institution and the question of how the university contributes to the state economically. Seidel highlighted the value of the university as the ‘think-tank’ of the state and addressed the idea of a positive feedback loop between ideas generated by UW and real-world results.

Seidel then discussed the value of AI, and the transformative power that AI will have on the rest of human society, making an argument for the benefits of the School of Computing.

Seidel then discussed the practical benefits of experiential learning, which touches on his Next-Gen USP requirements that were being advocated for several weeks ago, advocating that experiential learning is one of the most significant factors in driving student success. Seidel cited several studies to highlight these points. He further mentioned support from ASUW, and the fact that the Alumni Association now reports directly to the President of the University.

Seidel then mentioned the fact that we have several academic programs, more programs than most other universities, and discussed some options for consolidating programs, eliminating programs, and combining programs. Seidel also discussed UW’s recently achieving R1 status, with the hope to lower teaching loads to further research.

Seidel then took several questions from the Senate.

Some of the questions revolved around salaries, the potential use and misuse of AI, review processes for programs. Seidel indicated that salary issues are among the top priorities of staff and faculty, and that he has been an advocate for employees of the University and increasing salaries. He highlighted various tools he is trying to use to provide salary increases where possible but acknowledged that without an increase in appropriations from the legislature, a permanent solution is not forthcoming. Chair-Elect Godby asked a question about enrollment, and Seidel addressed several issues related to enrollment including changing financial models. Seidel highlighted generally improving graduation rates and ways to improve marketing. Chair Fertig thanked President Seidel for his time and President Seidel left the Senate Chambers.

Chair Fertig brought Resolution 483 (Recommendation to follow 2-13 Process to Move the School of Computing out of the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences. A vote was held and the resolution passed.

Chair Fertig brought Resolution 484 (In Support of Changing the Name of the School of Culture, Gender, and Social Justice) to the Floor for a vote. A vote was held, resolution passed unanimously.

Chair Fertig introduced Resolutions 485, 486, and 487 to be voted on in coming sessions.

A motion to adjourn was made at 4:35p; seconded, carried.