

University of Wyoming
UW Leadership Team Meeting
March 3, 2026
8:15-10: 00 a.m. · Coe 506

Attendees:

Ed Seidel, President
Anne Alexander, Interim Provost, Office of Academic Affairs
Chad Baldwin, Associate Vice President, Institutional Communications
Scott Beaulier, Dean, College of Business
Tom Burman, Director of Athletics
Parag Chitnis, Vice President, Research and Economic Development Division
Nycole Courtney, Vice President, Student Affairs
Kelly Crane, Dean, College of Agriculture, Life Sciences, and Natural Resources
Gwen Dailey, Staff Senate President
Danny Dale, Interim Dean, College of Engineering and Physical Sciences
Amanda DeDeigo, Interim Dean, UW-Casper
Tara Evans, Vice President and General Counsel
Rob Godby, Faculty Senate Chair
Patrick Hardigan, Dean, College of Health Sciences
Julie Hill, Dean, College of Law
Alex Kean, Vice President, Budget and Finance
John Koprowski, Dean, Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources
Kelsey Kyne, Chief of Staff, Office of the President
Cass Kvenild, Dean, UW Libraries
RoseMarie London, Executive Director and Deputy Secretary, UW Trustees
Bill Mai, Vice President, Campus Operations
Amy McLaughlin, Vice President, Information Technology
Beth McMillan, Interim Director, School of Computing
Carolyn Pepper, Interim Dean, School of Graduate Education
Peter Parolin, Dean, Honors College
Scott Quillinan, Acting Executive Director, School of Energy Resources
Jenna Shim, Dean, College of Education
Jack Tennant, Executive Director, UW Alumni Association

Opening Remarks

President Ed Seidel opened the meeting by thanking Vice President of Student Affairs Nycole Courtney and her team for their efforts in responding to the death of Parker Jackson. He highlighted the emotional celebration of Jackson's life and praised the community for their support. Seidel shared that he will soon be visiting two supercomputing centers to better prepare for UW's role in transition of the NCAR Super Computing Center. He also congratulated College of Business Dean, Scott Beaulier, on the successful extension of AACSB accreditation for six years.

Discussion then turned to the legislative session and the University's budget outlook. Seidel reported that the budget bill ultimately returned to the Governor's recommended funding level. However, \$10 million of the \$40 million allocation will be withheld until the University demonstrates \$5 million in efficiency savings by December 1st. He testified before the education committees during the session and noted that work continues on a proposal to establish a \$50 million account to support research. Overall, the University appears to be exiting the session in a relatively positive position.

Vice President for Budget and Finance, Alex Kean, provided additional details. Legislators have asked the university to provide additional information as part of the efficiency review, including benchmarking staffing levels against peer institutions, compiling an inventory of graduates by program, and reviewing programs related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Money for raises was also included in the governor's general appropriation.

Seidel emphasized that while much of the requested information is already collected, the University must take the efficiency review seriously. Dean of the College of Law, Julie Hill, asked whether a plan is underway to benchmark staffing levels against peer institutions. President Seidel indicated that Kean, Interim Provost Anne Alexander, and Faculty Senate Chair Rob Godby will help lead that effort. College of Agriculture, Life Sciences, and Natural Resources Dean Kelly Crane added that planning should also begin soon for how compensation increases will be distributed.

NCAR-Wyoming Super Computing Center

Vice President for Research and Economic Development Parag Chitnis discussed developments regarding the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR)–Wyoming Supercomputing Center. Wyoming originally partnered with the National Science Foundation (NSF) to host an NCAR supercomputer in Cheyenne. In December, the Office of Management and Budget indicated plans to restructure NCAR and its supercomputing operations. NSF announced that it

was exploring the possibility of having a third party manage the supercomputer and asked whether the University of Wyoming would be interested in assuming that role.

The University indicated it would be willing to do so provided sufficient funding is available for maintenance and operations. NSF is interested in broadening the scientific areas supported by the facility and making fuller use of the building and computing resources. UW hopes to begin the transition process as soon as possible, with a goal of assuming operational responsibility by October 1. Under this arrangement, the university would gain increased access to computing time on the system and could expand its use across additional disciplines. The transition would likely require hiring additional high-performance computing (HPC) expertise.

President Seidel noted that institutions such as the University of Illinois Urbana–Champaign have successfully leveraged major computing facilities through partnerships with industry, citing its collaboration with Caterpillar as an example. In response to a question from Danny about whether UW’s current 20% allocation of computing time would change, Seidel indicated that the formal allocation would likely remain the same or increase, and the university would have greater operational control and strategic influence over the facility.

2026 Risk Assessment

Internal Auditor Kevin Chancellor provided an update on the University’s annual risk assessment process. Instead of repeating the individual meetings conducted last year, the office will distribute a short survey with ratings and open-ended questions to gather updated input on institutional risks. The responses will help Internal Audit evaluate the likelihood and impact of potential risks, map them on a risk “heat map,” and develop the audit plan for the upcoming fiscal year. Participants were encouraged to complete the survey and to report concerns at any time, as risk assessment is an ongoing process.

Chief Risk Officer Laura Betzold explained how the results of last year’s risk assessment are being used. About 85 consolidated risks were identified and then categorized. Fourteen were considered acceptable and inherent to university operations, while 20 were placed on the audit plan. Another 23 risks were already being addressed through existing policies, working groups, or administrative oversight. However, roughly 20 risks were identified as exceeding the University’s tolerance and requiring further action, and an additional small group of roughly 8 risks still needs to be vetted to determine whether they are already being managed.

The next step is to prioritize these higher-risk areas, identify responsible owners, and develop mitigation strategies. Emerging issues such as artificial intelligence were cited as examples of risks that initially lacked clear ownership but are now beginning to be addressed through

campus working groups. Leadership emphasized that many of the risks identified originated from academic units and reflected areas where additional institutional support is needed.

Shared Governance Working Group Interim Report

President Seidel introduced an update on the shared governance review process that has been underway since the previous May under the leadership of Trustee Michelle Sullivan and a committee that included representatives from Academic Affairs, Faculty Senate, and other campus stakeholders. Sullivan explained that the committee intentionally focused on producing a constructive, forward-looking report rather than relitigating past events, while acknowledging that some members of the campus community may feel that approach did not go far enough.

A central finding of the committee's work was that, although the University broadly supports shared governance, there is no common understanding of what it means in practice at UW. Sullivan said the next step should be a small group, likely led by Academic Affairs, to define shared governance more clearly for the campus and to develop a framework for designing consultative processes. She emphasized that shared governance should not be treated as a one-size-fits-all model; instead, the process should vary depending on who is affected, how reversible a decision is, what kind of input is needed, and what level of consultation is appropriate.

Dean of the Honors College and committee member Peter Parolin said one of the clearest lessons from the discussions was the depth of lingering pain, mistrust, and hurt within parts of the campus community stemming from past experiences. He supported the committee's decision to focus on future processes, but stressed that the University must get those processes right in order to rebuild trust and create meaningful pathways for fuller participation in university life.

Others reinforced that shared governance must both acknowledge differing lived experiences and be designed with care. Faculty Senate Chair Rob Godby described the committee as healthy and productive, but cautioned that campus constituencies are not all at the same point in moving beyond past disputes. He also emphasized that effective shared governance requires substantial time, planning, and resources, and that faculty and administrators alike will need to make room for that work if the process is to be effective. Participants noted that not every decision requires a committee and that governance processes cannot be entirely formulaic.

In discussion of next steps, Sullivan indicated that the individual replacing AVP Bagley may help lead a small effort to develop a more practical framework or set of guiding questions for future consultation. She pointed to principles such as identifying who is most affected, determining how much input is needed, and avoiding long gaps between consultation and decisions. Seidel

closed by thanking Sullivan for her leadership and reaffirming his commitment to ensuring the University moves forward in a stronger place on

Survey on Voter Preferences

Faculty Senate Chair Rob Godby presented results from a voter-preference survey and said the findings were encouraging in light of the relatively favorable budget outcome from the legislative session. He noted that the University benefited from broad public support and from the campus community's measured, disciplined response during a potentially volatile period. The survey suggests that Wyoming voters are generally cautious about major change: most prefer to leave taxes and spending largely where they are, with stronger support for K–12 education and more limited enthusiasm for increasing higher-education funding when voters are forced to weigh tradeoffs in a balanced-budget framework.

Godby said the results point to an important communications challenge and opportunity for the University. While there is support for UW, the survey indicates that higher education does not resonate as strongly statewide as K–12, suggesting the University needs to connect its message more clearly to broader public priorities such as lifelong learning, public services, and the state's overall well-being. He argued that UW should strengthen its long-term public identity and values-based messaging so that others are less able to define the institution from the outside. He also emphasized that the University should continue engaging and organizing the broad coalition of supporters that emerged during the legislative debate rather than allowing that momentum to dissipate.

In response to a question from Associate Vice President Chad Baldwin about a proposed fall ballot initiative to further reduce property taxes, Godby said the survey suggests such a measure should fail, but he cautioned against overconfidence. He noted that election outcomes will depend heavily on turnout, campaign narratives, and how effectively competing visions are communicated over the coming months.

President Seidel thanked Godby for the presentation and Baldwin for leading a strong communications strategy during the legislative session. He said the survey offers valuable guidance for sharpening future messaging and described the recent period as the beginning of a new era in which the University is speaking more assertively about its value and drawing stronger public support. He added that UW should continue building those relationships, including more direct engagement with legislators after the primaries, both to explain the University's role and to listen carefully to expectations for its future.

Digital Accessibility

The group discussed the University's response to new federal digital accessibility requirements for web content and instructional materials, particularly in Canvas. Interim Provost Anne Alexander and General Counsel Tara Evans explained that while the University has already done significant work on website compliance, the learning management system side has created more concern, especially for faculty. A tool was initially procured to identify accessibility issues, but once implemented it became clear that it was too limited. The University is now adding enhancements, including AI- and video-related features, to better help faculty address accessibility problems, especially with PDFs, which were identified as one of the most difficult areas.

Evans outlined a more supportive implementation plan designed to reduce the burden on faculty. Faculty will be able either to use the upgraded tool themselves, work directly with ECTL instructional designers who can make materials accessible for them, or use a hybrid approach. A short intake process and repository will allow faculty to submit materials for assistance. No changes will be required for the current spring semester; instead, the University will begin working with summer instructors and aims for full compliance by fall. Additional communications, training resources, and an exemption process will also be rolled out, including accommodations for materials whose conversion would constitute undue hardship or fundamentally alter the content.

In discussion, Faculty Senate Chair Rob Godby noted that the rollout had become an example of how better shared-governance practices could have helped. Faculty reaction was driven in part by the initial sense that a major new responsibility had suddenly been placed on them, especially given language suggesting that faculty alone would be responsible. He said the administration had responded constructively to those concerns and that the revised approach—with clearer exemptions, stronger support, more realistic timelines, and better tools—represents a much better path. He added that the experience offers a broader lesson about designing campus processes in a way that recognizes burden, builds buy-in, and avoids creating unnecessary anxiety.

Faculty senate exec committee

In closing discussion, Faculty Senate Chair Rob Godby raised concerns from a recent Faculty Senate Executive Committee conversation about the academic program review process. He emphasized that while the University may at times need to eliminate programs, the way those decisions are implemented can create unintended consequences for morale, hiring, recruitment, and student perceptions—especially when programs are cut without producing

clear financial savings. He pointed to examples such as philosophy and religious studies, where low enrollment may obscure other contributions such as credit-hour production, and argued that institutional processes should better account for these broader impacts. He also noted that some current systems for counting and evaluating programs may unintentionally discourage productive new degree development and intensify zero-sum competition among departments.

Godby suggested that the University reexamine these processes with an eye toward identifying genuine efficiencies rather than creating new costs or institutional harm. He argued that better communication and more thoughtful implementation could improve morale, support smarter resource allocation, and reduce unintended damage to the University's competitiveness.

President Seidel agreed that these were thoughtful points and said the University should continue reviewing its processes carefully. He added, however, that there are cases where eliminating a program may still be worthwhile even if it does not immediately save money, because it can reduce instructional load and create other operational benefits. He closed the meeting by noting that the University is in a relatively good position at the moment, while acknowledging that important work still lies ahead.