

Faculty Senate Minutes for September 23, 2025

Executive Committee Members in attendance: Nicholas Hinojosa, Wendi Williams, Jaclyn Miller, Silvia Herrera, and Maria Cervantes.

Senators in attendance:

Business and Public Safety: Ruby Campuzano, Jesus Amaya, JoAnna Martinez, Claudia Mercado, and Ana Valladarez.

Liberal Arts: Micah Bailey, Robert Miller, Melissa Terry, and Rachael Brown.

Math, Science, and IT: Courtney Galle, Mehrzad Mahmoudian-Gellar, Reginald Gonzales, Juan Luna, Fidel Rodriguez, and Isauro Zaragoza.

Nursing and Allied Health: Blanca Herrera, Alexia Trigo, Layman Darnell Miller, and Sharon Rice.

Social Behavioral Science: Nihan Kayaardi Hinojosa, Pooja Rishi, Tim Weber, Lisa Veliz, and Celina A. Jorge.

Lecturer Representative: N/A

Adjunct Representative: N/A

Senators absent: Rebecca L. Lynch, Victor Fonseca, and Annie Liss.

Meeting Agenda

4:00 pm: Welcome and Check Quorum

- Nicholas and Silvia verify quorum to begin meeting.

4:05 pm: Vote on Meeting Minutes

- Nicholas facilitated the approval of previous meeting minutes through a poll, with input from Mehrzad, Wendi, Mario, Fidel, and Timothy, ensuring compliance with new documentation requirements and clarifying the correct voting process for future meetings.
- Fidel formally motioned to accept the minutes, Timothy seconded, and Nicholas acknowledged that the process was conducted slightly out of order, noting that future votes would follow the correct procedure.
- 23 poll responses (22 votes on poll; 1 in the chat); met quorum and passed.

4:10 pm: Vote for Robin Bell for Interim Senator for the Liberal Arts

- Nicholas nominated Robin Bell for the interim senator position in liberal arts, referencing the relevant bylaws as clarified by Wendi, and conducted a vote to confirm the appointment.
- 26 poll responses; met quorum and passed.

4:13 pm: Announce new Lecturer Senator, Celina A. Jorge, and Adjunct Senator, Dr. Rebecca L. Lynch

- Nicholas welcomed back Celina A. Jorge and Rebecca L. Lynch as returning lecturer and adjunct senators and informed the group about ongoing efforts to compile and share updated contact lists for adjunct and lecturer faculty.

4:14 pm: Guest Speaker: Dr. Jesus Campos - Generative AI Website

- Dr. Jesus Campos presented the college's public-facing generative AI website, detailing its alignment with strategic goals, decentralized adoption approach, available resources for students, faculty, and staff, and ongoing development of ethical use standards, with questions addressed from Micah, Nicholas, and Wendi.
 - **Strategic Integration of AI:** Jesus explained that AI is integrated into the college's strategic plan, specifically in designing learning opportunities and streamlining operations, with a decentralized approach allowing each unit to determine appropriate AI adoption.
 - **AI Tools and Security Review:** He described the process for adopting new AI tools, which requires review by the Information Technology and Information Security Office, citing examples of restricted tools and emphasizing institutional licenses for approved tools like Copilot and Blackboard.
 - **Website Structure and Resources:** Jesus demonstrated the public AI website, highlighting sections for news, academic programs, and links to internal SharePoint resources tailored for students, faculty, and staff, including guidance on permitted tools, training opportunities, and policy statements.
 - **Student and Faculty Guidance:** He emphasized the importance of students consulting syllabi and instructors before using AI in coursework and described available training videos and resources for both students and faculty, with the faculty page moderated by Dean Chris Nelson.
 - **Ethical Use Standards and Task Force:** Jesus discussed the ongoing development of ethical use standards for AI, referencing draft language that stresses responsible use to avoid undermining learning, and confirmed that the Gen AI Task Force, including Nicholas, is actively considering these issues.
 - **Training Modalities and Access:** In response to Nicholas's question, Jesus clarified that both online and in-person AI trainings are available for faculty and students, with resources provided by the Teaching and Learning Center, Learning Commons, and external organizations.
 - **Video Resource Sharing:** Wendi located and shared the link to the student AI guidance video in the chat, as requested by Nicholas, ensuring access for all participants.

4:32 pm: Guest Speaker: Monica Benitez – Moderator of the Staff Advisory Council

- Monica Benitez presented the newly launched Staff Advisory Council website, described the council's structure, subcommittees, ongoing initiatives, and upcoming opportunities for staff involvement, with Nicholas and Monica discussing collaboration with Faculty Senate.
 - **Council Formation and Membership:** Monica explained the establishment of the Staff Advisory Council with 30 founding members, organized by campus, and outlined the process for filling current vacancies through campus-based nominations and voting.
 - **Subcommittee Functions:** She detailed the five subcommittees: Awards Development and Recognitions, Communications, Jaguar Engagement, Policies and Procedures, and Staff Mentorship, describing their roles, leadership, and collaboration with HR and other departments.
 - **Website and Communication Tools:** Monica showcased the council's new website, which includes information on council activities, bylaws, contact forms, event postings, and a staff recognition nomination process, with plans to launch a newsletter called Pawprint.
 - **Staff Engagement and Open Meetings:** She announced that general meetings will be open to all staff starting in the fall, with opportunities for staff to present and participate, and encouraged ongoing communication and collaboration with Faculty Senate.

4:48 pm: Faculty Senate Website Updates

- Plan to update the Faculty Senate website to correct typos and add new senator information.

4:49 pm: Senate Committees

- Nicholas, Wendi, and Mehrzad discussed the structure and membership of Faculty Senate committees, the need to update the Senate Constitution in response to SB37, and the process for committee selection and participation.
 - **Committee Structure and Participation:** Nicholas described the flexible structure of Senate subcommittees, encouraged members to select areas of interest, and agreed to distribute a form for committee preferences, as requested by Mehrzad.
 - **Constitution Committee Leadership:** Mehrzad inquired about the leadership of the Constitution Committee, with Wendi confirming their role as chair per the bylaws, and noted the involvement of the VPS office in the process.
 - **Constitutional Changes for SB37:** Nicholas and Wendi explained that the Senate Constitution must be updated to comply with SB37, with a draft incorporating new requirements ready for committee review once established.

4:55 pm: Updates regarding BCG (local) policy and SB37; Guest Speaker: Andrew T. Fish – Academic Affairs Initiatives Officer

- Andrew Fish provided an overview of SB37's impact on Faculty Senate operations, described the development and location of the new policy (BGC), and outlined the college's approach to maintaining shared governance and compliance, with questions from Mehrzad and others.
 - **Policy Development and Compliance:** Andrew explained that the college worked with TASB to draft policy BGC in response to SB37, ensuring compliance by the September 1 deadline to avoid disbandment of the Faculty Senate, and described the intent to preserve existing Senate practices where possible.
 - **Officer Appointment and Shared Governance:** He clarified that while SB37 requires the President to appoint Senate officers, the college intends to maintain faculty elections with presidential ratification to minimize disruption.
 - **Policy Access and Legal Framework:** Andrew demonstrated how to access the new policy via the TASB-managed policy manual, explained the distinction between local and legal policies, and noted that TASB may issue further guidance.
 - **Academic Freedom, SB17, and Dual Enrollment Guidance:** Andrew Fish discussed the college's efforts to reinforce academic freedom in light of recent political pressures, the implications of SB17 for curriculum, and addressed questions from Pooja and Micah regarding dual enrollment content and classroom management.
 - **Academic Freedom Statement:** Andrew described the drafting of a statement to reaffirm the college's commitment to academic freedom, to be presented to the board in October, and recounted past experiences where the administration supported faculty in politically sensitive situations.
 - **SB17 and Curriculum Exemptions:** He clarified that SB17's restrictions on DEI do not impact curriculum or instruction, and the college is compiling a list of courses potentially affected by political scrutiny, seeking faculty input for board advocacy.
 - **Dual Enrollment Content Guidance:** In response to Pooja's question, Andrew stated that dual enrollment courses taught at high schools must maintain higher education curriculum standards, with no content differences, and promised to provide further guidance on new laws affecting reporting requirements.
 - **Classroom Management and Recording:** Andrew and Micah discussed strategies for handling disruptive students and the legalities of classroom recording, emphasizing the importance of institutional support and maintaining curriculum integrity in all teaching venues.

5:16 pm: Open Discussion

- **Parking Permit Concerns and Enforcement:** Fidel and Mehrzad raised concerns about the increased cost of parking permits and lack of enforcement in faculty/staff parking areas, with Nicholas agreeing to relay these issues to the Staff Advisory Council and relevant administrators.

- **Permit Cost and Financial Impact:** Fidel reported staff concerns about the financial burden of parking permits, compared practices at other colleges, and suggested reallocating resources to eliminate permit fees.
- **Parking Enforcement Issues:** Mehrzad noted difficulties finding parking and observed inadequate enforcement of permit requirements, requesting that security increase monitoring of faculty/staff parking areas.
- **Meeting Accessibility and Anonymity under SB37:** Wendi and Nicholas explained that, due to SB37, Faculty Senate meetings are now publicly accessible via Teams links and advised participants on how to raise concerns anonymously through their senators.
 - **Public Meeting Access:** Wendi clarified that meetings are now open to the public, including non-STC participants, as required by SB37, and Nicholas described the process for joining via the event calendar link.
 - **Anonymity for Sensitive Issues:** Nicholas encouraged non-senators to communicate concerns through their senators if they wish to remain anonymous, ensuring representation without public disclosure.

5:24 pm: Vote to Adjourn

- Micah motioned for the meeting to be adjourned.
- 26 poll responses (25 senators; 1 non senator); met quorum and passed.

5:25 pm: Next Senate Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 28, 2025

- Meeting was adjourned.

Total Time Duration: 1 hour and 25 minutes