

**MINUTES
FACULTY SENATE
FEBRUARY 2, 2026**

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Present: Senators Adler, Apanovich, Barefoot, Braitberg, Brochin, Cochran, Cooper, Craig, Díaz de la Rubia, Downing, Eaton, Engineer, Figler, Friesen, Giacobazzi, Gregory, Guzman, S. Harris, Heileman, Hingle, Hudson (Chair), Hymel (Vice Chair), Jens, Kennedy, Knox, Leafgren, Lin, Little, Lowell, Mars, Meyer, Miller-Cochran (Parliamentarian), Neumann, Nolan, Paschke-Wood, Pau, Pollard, Prelock (Provost), Rafelski, Rishel, Rocha, Russell, Slepian, J. Smith, M. Smith, Spece, Stegeman, Stephan, Su, Van Haren, Waddell, Witte, Zeiders (Secretary), Zhupanska, Ziurys

Absent: Senators Abdennebi, Baker, Buxner, Cerny, Chandrasekar, Coletta, Coletta, Cornelison, Diaz, Eckert, Garcia, Garimella (President), Goetz, Grijalva, W. Harris, Huffman, Levy, Lucas, Maggert, McCallum, O'Leary, Perez, Roman-Palacios, Wittman

1. CALL TO ORDER [00:00:06]

Presiding Officer of the Faculty Senate, Mona Hymel called the February 2, 2026, Faculty Senate meeting to order at 3:00 PM in Silver and Sage and via Zoom. Secretary Zeiders was also present. Vice Chair Hymel stated the General Faculty election is open for voting for two weeks and the next Faculty Senate meeting will occur on March 2, 2026.

2. ACTION ITEM: APPROVAL OF THE [AGENDA](#) – VICE CHAIR OF THE FACULTY, MONA HYMEL [00:03:17]

Chair Hudson moved [**Motion 2025/26-25**] to approve the agenda of the February 2, 2026, Faculty Senate meeting with the friendly amendment to remove Item 5B. Motion was seconded. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

- Vice Chair Hymel stated the Senate is looking at voting technology to use in the Faculty Senate, which is Top Hat, Senators will be able to point their phone at a screen to vote. Paper ballots will still be available to those who need them. She stated her thanks for Provost Prelock for supporting this endeavor.

3. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE JANUARY 26, 2026, FACULTY SENATE MEETING [00:05:25]

- Vice Chair Hymel stated the January 26, 2026, minutes will be voted on in the March 2, 2026, meeting.

4. OPEN SESSION [00:05:41]

Dawn Hunziker, Associate Director, Disability Resource Center [00:06:04]

So many familiar faces, it's good to see everyone. My name is Dawn Hunziker. I am the Associate Director at the Disability Resource Center. Today, I'm here to provide an overview of the new ADA Title II Digital Accessibility Regulations passed in 2024 by the U.S. Department of Justice. Title II establishes web content accessibility guidelines, or WCAG 2.1 Level AA, as a required standard for all public-facing institutions. This includes all visual content which is websites, our mobile applications, our documents, and multimedia.

On April 24th, 2026, the standards go into effect, and I'm happy to share that the University of Arizona is in a position of strength, given our long commitment to campus accessibility. Years and years and years of work. We already have key foundations in place, including accessibility reviews of high-impact websites, accessibility expectations and procurement, established captioning practices for multimedia, and well-established accommodation workflows.

A critical part of our Title II strategy is the adoption of YuJa Panorama, which is integrated into D2L BrightSpace and is accessed by selecting the icon of the person inside a shape, such as a circle, a triangle. I'm sure if you're teaching, many of you have seen that new symbol in BrightSpace. Panorama automatically scans course materials uploaded to Brightspace, provides an accessibility score and offers clear, step-by-step guidance for remediation to meet accessibility standards. Panorama also generates alternative formats so students can read their course content on mobile devices or using assistive technology, such as screen readers.

Additionally, we will be launching a redesigned accessibility.arizona.edu hub to serve as centralized guidance and rolling out campus-wide accessibility trainings and workshops. As faculty and instructors, you should continue following the Disability Resource Center's (DRC) tips for inclusive and Accessible Classes found on the DRC's website, use YuJa Panorama's accessibility report to access your materials

for accessibility to assess those materials, use captioned video content and watch for upcoming trainings and webinars.

Overall, the University of Arizona is well positioned to meet the ADA Title II requirements through a coordinated, scalable approach that reinforces our commitment to equitable digital access. Reach out to us at accessibility@arizona.edu with any questions, or if you would like to chat more, resource is our middle name, and we're happy to work with all of you and engage with all of you. Thank you.

5. **Q and A with University and Faculty Leadership [00:09:16]**

A. Chair Hudson [00:09:24]

Welcome back, everybody, and thank you, Dawn. I was very worried about us being able to meet those accessibility deadlines and standards, and I'm really pleased to see that you all have quietly done the work and are there to give guidance to those of us who need it. So, thank you very much.

Normally, in February, we would be considering the college's various nominations for honorary degrees. In a confidential, closed executive session at the end of this meeting. We don't have nominations to consider this February. So instead, I will be bringing the resolution on honorary degrees, which I introduced to you last week, and which I hope that you will support a little later in our agenda today. I've added to the resolution the friendly amendment from Secretary Zeiders. The fact that the faculty bylaws specifically mention acting on the nominations, presumably by voting, of the college faculties as one of the explicit, enumerated functions of the Faculty Senate.

Thankfully, as I mentioned last time, we have only quietly rejected one nomination in the Faculty Senate in recent years for very good reasons. But as in our non-Senate, non-institutional lives, we pour over the horrors from genocide abroad, to child trafficking and worse, and even to the dismantling of our constitutional republic and our values. Processes which have been concealed, ignored, and facilitated by not just authorities of one party or the other, but by both.

I want our institution to be free of the dark money flows, the elite impunity, and the kind of reputation laundering that we see at other academic institutions. We do that through the tried-and-true checks and balances of shared governance, specifically faculty governance that is part of Arizona law. So, I hope that you will support the resolution, that we will be bringing later in this agenda.

In other news, Provost Prelock has requested a retreat, that is a long meeting with me, Vice Chair Mona Hymel and Secretary Katie Zeiders this Friday afternoon. The agenda will be for her to ask questions about the development of our committees to better understand their charge, how they function, and to clarify the need for each committee, to determine what things in the Bylaws and Constitution Faculty Senate would like to adjust and review, and to address any inconsistencies between ABOR policy and Faculty Senate Bylaws, Constitution, etc. I, for one, am looking forward to the retreat slash long meeting, and we look forward to helping her understand faculty governance as it has evolved at this institution. I dare say it's one of our distinguishing features in a national landscape of increasingly corporatized top-down institutions, including in our own state. I will report back to the Senate in March, if not before about the discussions that we have with Provost Prelock.

What I want to do during our long meeting slash retreat is push for a mutually agreeable Memorandum of Understanding of the kind that we've had for decades and decades, when we get a new administration or a new faculty leadership. So, I will push for that. It's been lacking, and I think it will help smooth out some of the bumps in the road that I anticipate ahead, and facilitate smoother collaboration, which, after all, is all our goal.

Another thing that I want to talk about in our retreat is to get a better understanding of the governance processes envisioned by our new administration relating to our affiliate units, especially UAGC, that is, University of Arizona Global Campus. Which, as we speak, as we come faithfully to these Faculty Senate meetings is offering new degrees, Bachelors, Master's in "professional studies." A new designation that does not have universally recognized standards or meaning across the academic landscape. Those degrees are composed of fewer credits than the comparable University of Arizona degrees, with no oversight from our Faculty Senate, or even from ABOR due to the exemption for UAGC, of all our academic and personnel policies, which I understand still obtains. I will be submitting to you by email and submitting to the minutes, some of the documentation about these degrees, which concern me greatly, not just because they bypass our faculty governance, but because we've heard concerns from deans and faculty in colleges that offer degrees similar to the ones being offered by UAGC, that these degrees, again, unsupervised by our faculty may undercut and continue to compete with our own degrees.

I'm also interested in more information about the Kyl Institute for National Security, formerly known as the University of Arizona Applied Research Corporation. A tax-exempt non-profit affiliate whose board, I recently learned is chaired by our own Vice President for Research, Tomas Diaz de la Rubia and includes John Arnold and the Dean of the College of Engineering, David Hahn among, other members, many of whom are military. I have questions about this institute. There are discussions that we need to have about the University of Arizona's contribution to national security, and as of yet, we have had exactly zero of these discussions.

Finally, as the All-Funds process begins in your colleges, I want to mention that there is a palpable anxiety among faculty, and even among deans about the new strategy for admissions. By instituting a new early action process, which we heard about last week, our administration has raised anxieties and questions out among the academic units about whether our communities have been properly engaged and informed about the change of strategy, and whether we will yield, I think that's the technical term, enough students and finance to allow colleges and departments to plan and function predictably. We are entering the all-funds season now. Deans are preparing budgets, including 2, 3, and 4% cuts, if I'm not mistaken. The time is very, very short, especially if cuts are going to have to be made, so I hope this is something that we can talk to Provost Prelock about in today's agenda.

There are also anxieties that I am hearing from faculty across the colleges about cutbacks to our graduate programs. I want to make sure that we get a chance to ask our provost what the administration is doing to allay and mitigate some of the uncertainty that arises from the pendulum swinging back. If you recall, the previous administration engaged in many, many, rather unpredictable and spendthrift, expansive, hopeful initiatives. The current administration, in my opinion, seems to be taking the opposite approach, narrowing them down almost as radically as they were expanded and gambled on in the first place. Each way is a gamble, and I want to make sure that we spend our time with the Provost helping to smooth out the potential upheavals to our institution, especially for academic pros and cons, all in the service of our students' success, our communities and the research that changes the world. Thank you very much.

Questions and Comments [00:20:03]

- Senator Ziurys asked if there are any goals for the retreat with the Provost including what is hoped to be gained or learned from the meeting.
- Chair Hudson stated only what she just read which was provided by Provost Prelock. This is a much-needed opportunity to sit down for a good stretch of time to narrow some of the distance that has evolved over the course of the last semester and last year, since President Garimella. She will not sign anything, and no action will be taken, they will study the history of Shared Governance at UA together.
- Chair Hudson stated Provost Prelock is probably one of the best people to do this with, with an eye to smoothing over some of the differences that some people perceive.
- Senator Ziurys asked if Chair Hudson senses opposition to Shared Governance.
- Chair Hudson stated Provost Prelock is shaking her head no. She will keep an open mind as she is stubbornly optimistic and will also stand her ground should anything arise. She doesn't expect this from the Provost's office. She sees that it is in everyone's shared interest to collaborate respectfully. To the extent that anyone may have an ulterior motive, she doesn't see this, but if she does, she will identify it and push back.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated she agrees with Chair Hudson's assessment about what she hopes to accomplish and that everyone will do so in good faith.
- Senator Cooper stated she is a Senator from the College of Fine Arts and noticed there seems to be a new strategy of removing Graduate Teaching Assistants funding from all the non-terminal graduate programs. This includes the Master of Arts and Master of Music degrees; this is a policy that is currently being rolled out.
- Senator Cooper stated a lot of her constituents have communicated concerns about this. One of the concerns is that it affects the long-term viability of all the programs, given how mMaster's students are central to teaching and other kinds of leadership and service. It also affects the ability to fill desperately needed local gaps in K-12 regions, since a lot of MA programs are of a training for teachers. It's also a serious concern for the goal of educational access. She asked if that is being done with Provost Prelock's consent, and support. and if so, what are the reasons?
- Senator Cooper stated as a member of the university community, and not just the College of Fine Arts, this has pretty big implications if it's rolled out across the university. She wonders what the extent of that Provost Prelock.
- Provost Prelock stated her thanks for the question. She thinks what is happening is that there is only a certain amount of dollars for graduate assistance and for tuition waivers. The Graduate College has worked hard to look at the criteria that should be thought about that would support the mission and vision.
- Provost Prelock stated most universities do not give full rides for master's students; they give it to the doctoral students. At least in their first two years and then grant funding supports them. In the Fine Arts and others, if they do PhDs, they may need more funding because a grant process is not typical. With Fine Arts, it's more challenging because some of the terminal level degrees for teaching, etc., at the master's level. What the goal is, instead, is to look at scholarships from donors to really focus on graduate students and not just undergraduates, so that additional support can be provided for the master student. This is a framework.
- Provost Prelock stated at other institutions, they don't usually support the amount of master's students that the University of Arizona has in the past. The goal is to identify what money is had, what it can be used for, and how students can be supported. The top level must be doctoral students. That's the only way to get doctoral students. For the master's students, considering what the unique programs are that might need additional support to draw them in, although the Fine Arts program is wonderful.
- Provost Prelock stated the focus now is how donor dollars can be used to really support Graduate Master's students because tuition waivers can't really be used for them as there are only so many. She is aware of what Dean Hasan Elahi is trying to do terms of looking at his structure, how much dollars he has, and how he uses foundation dollars and research dollars appropriately, while also supporting doctoral programs that are thriving.
- Provost Prelock stated they would love to give money to everyone but it's just not possible.
- Senator Cooper asked if the plan is to roll this out to different parts of the University.
- Provost Prelock stated all the Deans are looking at this and each will be unique depending on what their need is. A lot of master's programs provide funding that supports doctoral programs and a lot of the professional programs. The goal is to work on donor dollars to support this.
- Senator Downing asked if Provost Prelock can aid the Senate in understanding what happened at Vermont that may be guiding her decisions in Fine Arts.
- Provost Prelock stated they had arts and sciences lumped together, so it was not a separate program. Most of the students were not funded. English students were funded. There was a transition to support some of the doctoral programs, and they looked at which master's programs were thriving, and what the Undergraduate degrees were that needed support in the Fine Arts. These adjustments were made to become an R1 institution. There has to be support provided to doctoral level students. They started asking their donors for support, not just for Undergraduates, but for master's students as a filler to help support scholarships at the Graduate level.
- Provost stated she is sure Dean Limesand would be happy to discuss the framework that she uses, and how they try to use whatever money there is so that all colleges can get some dollars for their Graduate students.
- Chair Hudson stated shortly before Provost Prelock's arrival, there was a program lost in Musical Theatre and Fine Arts which

many in the Faculty Senate were distraught about. The excuse was that these were internal financial decisions made within the college by the Dean and the Faculty.

- Chair Hudson stated she presumes that faculty are concerned about the erosion of Arts education. She asked if there is a named sponsor support 501(c)(3) that would support Arts education the same way Athletics is supported.
- Vice Chair Hymel asked if Chair Hudson is talking about a separate foundation.
- Chair Hudson stated yes, a separate foundation.
- Provost Prelock stated there is a U of A Foundation.
- Chair Hudson stated that the U of A Foundation has proved very opaque and overwhelmingly interested in Athletics as far as she can see. What she would caution against is any sudden move that would result in the catastrophic failure of more of the Arts programs. If the University had to move this way, there should be a timeline of years to prevent the closure of more of the Arts programs which depend very heavily on MA terminal degrees.
- Chair Hudson stated colleagues at NAU personally thanked her for not stopping the destruction of the musical theater program because it redounded to their success.
- Provost Prelock stated the College of Fine Arts is thriving and that is because of its reputation and the amazing faculty there. Dean Hasan has been very successful in the foundation realm of bringing in dollars. Also, with the Arizona Arts Live and the support there, looking at the entire piece raises the question of how to utilize dollars that are the most appropriate to support education.
- Provost Prelock stated the Fine Arts are doing well and so are the number of students. Dean Hasan is being very aggressive with the donors and the foundation has the \$20 million donation from the Garcia family for study abroad. There are also dollars for endowments of chairs and other programs across campus. There is high focus on things other than athletics.

6. OLD BUSINESS

A. ACTION ITEM: Vote on Honorary Degree Motion – Chair of the Faculty, Leila Hudson

- Chair Hudson moved [Motion 2025/26-26] to pass the Honorary Degree Motion. Motion was seconded. Motion passed with forty-two in favor, four opposed, and two abstentions.

Text of the motion:

Proposed Motion on Honorary Degree Policy First Reading January 26

Vote February 2

Whereas ABOR Policy 2-220D states that:

*The universities **may award honorary degrees in accordance with criteria and procedures developed by each university.** Each university shall provide advance notice to the board and the executive director of the board of the names of the individuals who are to receive the degrees.*

And ARS 15-1601b states that:

*The universities shall have colleges, schools and departments and give courses of study and academic degrees as the board approves. Subject to the responsibilities and powers of the board and the university presidents, **the faculty members of the universities, through their elected faculty representatives, shall share responsibility for academic and educational activities and matters related to faculty personnel. The faculty members of each university, through their elected faculty representatives, shall participate in the governance of their respective universities and shall actively participate in the development of university policy.***

Whereas in 2006 the Faculty Senate, Provost, and President collaboratively developed, refined, and formalized the criteria and procedures used for the nomination, review, approval, and bestowing of honorary degrees in alignment with ABOR policy, ARS 15-1601b, and academic custom.

Whereas the 2006 policy was reiterated in 2012 and again in 2024-5 by the Office of the Provost

Whereas the Faculty Bylaws (VIII.1.g) states that one of the explicit functions of Faculty Senate is” (t)o act upon nominations for recipients of honorary degrees, which may be proposed by one or more of the College Faculties.”

Whereas under the 2006 policy aligned with ABOR and ARS 15-1601b, Faculty Senate has confidentially reviewed and approved nominations for honorary degrees brought forward by the Committee on Honorary Degrees in executive session each spring

Whereas a new policy of unclear origin was distributed by email to select members of the University community on November 17, 2025 and was posted on the policy website sometime after December 22, 2025, eliminating the Faculty Senate executive session confidential review and approval, among other changes

Whereas the confidentiality of the Faculty Senate executive session review process has never been violated, has prevented abuse and embarrassment to the University and the Arizona Board of Regents, and has yielded world-class cohorts of honorary doctorates that recognize individuals whose extraordinary achievements reflect the values and excellence of the University of Arizona community and mission

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate urges President Garimella and his delegates to continue using the procedures for the granting of honorary degrees that have served the University of Arizona well for more than two decades and that are consistent with academic tradition of the faculty approving and recommending all degrees (earned and honorary) through regular and agreed upon protocols

Be it further resolved that the Faculty Senate urges President Garimella and his delegates to refrain from attempting to unilaterally change policy, especially academic and personnel policy without transparency, public review, or consultation with the elected representatives of the faculty required by ARS 15-1601b.

Comments and Questions [00:39:20]

- Secretary Zeiders stated she supports this motion as she serves as the Chair of the Honorary Degree Advisory Committee, and she takes this role very seriously. Her concern with the revised policy is that it does not align with Faculty Bylaws.
- Secretary Zeiders stated as Chair of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee, she is increasingly concerned about whether the University leadership is adhering to and honoring those Bylaws which are formally recognized under ABOR policy. She supports this resolution and if she doesn't receive clear understanding of Senior leadership's acceptance of the Constitution and Bylaws, she will have to consider resigning from both the Honorary Degree Advisory Committee and the Constitution and Bylaws Committee.
- Senator Zuirys stated this is an important resolution to pass because it sets a precedent for what may happen in the future if the ability to contribute to honorary degrees gets taken away, then it raises the question of what will be taken away next. This seems like an arbitrary decision without any discussion or careful examination of ABOR policy, as per Secretary Zeiders comments.
- Senator Downing stated he supports the previous two comments and wanted to point out that he was President of the AAUP at the time 15-1601B was passed. He would like to point out how significant this decision would be in terms of what he views is a violation of state law. In that law, there are three sentences. The second sentence says that clearly that the Senate is subject to the powers of the Board and the President in terms of setting responsibilities for academic educational activities and matters related to faculty personnel. The third sentence was highly debated when drafting the law. There was a clause left out about subject to the powers of responsibility of the Board of the President. It was not put in there.
- Senator Downing stated he suggests that this should go into the motion precisely stated, that the faculty members of each university, through their respected elected faculty representatives, shall participate in the governance of their respective universities, which is what is occurring today. and shall actively participate in the development of university policy. This is a university policy. If it's being said without the Senate's active participation, that pro forma. Repeating what Senator Spece explained before, there is a sovereignty principle that the law overrides the policy.
- Senator Downing stated if individuals disagree with him, he invited President Garimella and the Provost to stand up and explain why this is not a violation of the law.
- Senator Neumann stated the paragraph that states "be it further resolved" seems to be out of scope as the motion is related to the specific issue at hand, but this extends well beyond that. He doesn't disagree with the Faculty Chair but would like this raised as a separate motion as it seems like the last paragraph extends beyond what was in the previous motion.
- Vice Chair Hymel asked if Senator Neumann is suggesting an amendment to the motion which would be to take off the last paragraph and considering it as a second motion.
- Senator Neumann stated what Senator Downing and others have discussed is well beyond the motion. They are dealing with the specific issue of honorary degrees.
- Vice Chair Hymel asked if Senator Neumann would like for the last paragraph to be eliminated at hand. If the Senate wants to vote on the paragraph separately, that this is done in a separate vote.
- Chair Hudson stated she believes the two parts of motion are intimately linked and she rejects the substance of the change. In the general terms put out in the second part, she also rejects the process of surprising the faculty and Faculty Senate with extra procedural policy changes. She appreciates the spirit in which the amendment was offered but she wants to stick with the original formulation.
- Senator Slepian stated the motion has a lot in it and has a definitive procedural item. When there is language like "urges" that doesn't fly a leg rig. Usually this isn't the language used in these things, it should be "shall," "will," "does," "is required to." To effectuate what is desired, there needs to be that kind of language, or this will be bifurcated, and the first piece is kept. The other is more sensual as opposed to directive. Direct action is wanted, and the appropriate leg reg, legislation regulation type of language should be used when a statute or something is put forward.
- Vice Chair stated to restate, Senator Slepian is suggesting in his law school hat, that the last paragraph should be separated, or to modify the language to "shall" or "will" as a friendly amendment.

- Vice Chair Hymel stated if she were to make a friendly amendment it would be to take all the “whereas” out.
- Senator Rafelski stated it was clearly stated by Senator Downing the first law should be obeyed, therefore, the first motion clearly doesn't need a vote. It is simply a decision which violates the law and must be refuted in a legal way. There cannot be a vote to uphold the law.
- Senator Rafelski stated the second resolution is the question of procedure which is whether the governing body of the University consult with the Senate in terms of changing procedures or should it not. There can then be a recommendation on this, but the two resolutions are very different. The first asks the government to uphold the law. The second asks the government to consult with democratically elected representatives, in procedures which concern academic matters.
- Senator Barefoot stated the university has a policy in place for creating and revising university policies, where there's a 30-day review period. She believes the spirit of the last resolution is to use that 30-day review period. She doesn't know if she necessarily has a friendly amendment. Regarding the 30-day review period, it's not clear what policies that necessarily applies to and doesn't. She knows there is information on the website about it, but she doesn't know if that applies to this sort of policy.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated part of this is because there is no MOU.
- Senator Barefoot stated either way, there is a policy in place for a 30-day open review, just like with the federal government. She believes that policy needs to be followed, where feedback can be taken and received, and then considered to implement changes.
- Senator Downing raised a point of order and stated no matter how they vote on this motion at this point, since they have not been presented with the honorary degree nominees, will there be no honorary degrees at this commencement.
- Chair Hudson stated she appreciates all the friendly amendments and as the prosper, she rejects all of them because she doesn't think there is the time or latitude to negotiate everyone. The spirit is clear inserting the language of “shall,” the legislative language, will highlight the comparative weakness by ordering the President to do something that it's not in our power to enforce. She rejects all three friendly amendments and believes the meaning will be clear. She believes the Senate should simply proceed with the resolution as verbosely written by her.
- Senator Slepian stated he agrees with the Chair. His comment was not made as a motion. It was made simply as a clarification. He believes she is talking about a motion on a policy suggestion; this is not legislative. He was simply giving more insight on that. He believes Senator Rafelski hit it on the head, where the law is the law. He strongly suggests this topic is brought up in Friday's retreat/long meeting.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated likewise, Senator Neumann did not make an amendment so there will now be a vote on the proposed motion.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated the OpaVote has been distributed and will close at 4:05 PM.

B. Senate Committee on ABOR policy 6-201(K) update – Chair of the Faculty, Leila Hudson, Vice Chair of the Faculty, Mona Hymel, and Senator Roy Spece [00:55:30]

Vice Chair of the Faculty, Mona Hymel [00:55:30]

I just wanted to read one small, section of ABOR policy. One of the reasons that we must set up a Senate committee is that this is 6-201(K) under 3. It says, “The president shall ask the faculty senate to designate a review committee composed of faculty and students to review and evaluate the proposed plan for reorganization.” and goes on to say what that committee has to do.

Chair of the Faculty, Leila Hudson [00:56:10]

This is just a quick update on the Committee on ABOR Policy 6-201. We have converted the ad hoc general faculty committee into an advisory committee of the Senate to conform with said policy 6-201(K). In order to do so, we have invited a graduate student representative, an undergraduate student representative, and we currently have invitations out to two senators, Cindy Richel from the College of Nursing, who has accepted, and we are still awaiting the final acceptance from another senator.

Once that is completed, the committee chaired by Senator Spece will, in fact, hear the petitions for review of the faculty from the Ocean City Micro Campus, which have not been acknowledged or answered by the President's Office. The Faculty Senate will do its part in providing review of their petitions, including a public forum at some time in the future, to follow ABOR policy.

Yes, I guarantee you this'll be another topic that we will be talking about at our long retreat meeting on Friday afternoon. Again, in the general atmosphere of lawlessness. besetting our country at the moment, it's very important to me, and I think to my colleagues. to maintain lawfulness, following of the rules, the protocols, the procedures that govern our institution. I'll take any questions if there are any.

Senator Roy Spece [00:58:25]

I wanted to note, unless I'm told otherwise, and the outstanding offer to an additional faculty member is not acted on, we will still meet this Friday, and hopefully proceed expeditiously, because we owe it to our colleagues.

- Chair Hudson stated they will find another senator for the committee. She will await an answer from the one person and if not, she will open it up and solicit the rest of the senators. She is sure they will find another Senator for the committee. She thanked Senator Spece for the update.

7. **NEW BUSINESS** [00:59:20]

A. **Finance, budget, all funds process** discussion – Provost Patricia Prelock and CFO John Arnold [00:59:53]

Provost Patricia Prelock [00:59:53]

One of the questions that was asked, I know John spent time with us, last week talking about a budget and answering a lot of questions. Hopefully that was helpful. Today, my goal is just to talk to you about the process, and this is the first time I'll be going through this process as well. John and Garth provided a lot of context for me, and I added some additional things to make sure that we are really working through a shared governance framework and making sure our Deans have a sense of what is expected.

There is a preparation for the All-Funds budget. It really is just a budgeting process. For some reason here, we call it the All-Funds process. Units under my division, like Faculty Affairs and Academic Affairs, must do the same thing, in addition to all the colleges. What they're given through a data pool is their unspent endowment funds, and any restricted funds from the foundation, their fund balance, and what it has been since FY24 through FY29.

There are metrics each college is given, including their undergraduate and graduate net tuition revenue for this past fall, they look at a 5-year period, and average student credit hours per type of student, including they're resident or non-resident student, enrollment in summer and online programs, retention and graduation rates, sponsored revenue and FNA, and then the average cost per faculty and student. This is just to make sure that everybody has the same data that we're working towards and understand. This is all decided ahead of time, before the deans or the vice provost meet with us.

Then, each college and unit should have been communicating with their leadership in their college and identifying major initiatives, like, what they are trying to accomplish over the next 5 years. They do a very short description of what they would like to accomplish as a college or unit. This is at a baseline of what their current budget is. They've been allocated a certain amount for FY27. That's what's coming up.

They're also asked to do three things. One is, what would it look like if you had to take a 2% cut? What would be the implication and the impact on your college, the return on investment? They're then asked the same question for a 3% cut and the same for a 4% cut. They have their baseline, and they've been allocated certain funds. If we had to do a cut, what would a 2, 3, and 4% look like? They make a case for how their unit would be impacted with each of those levels of cuts, whether it's eliminating positions, eliminating programs. not being able to do things in advising that they want to do. That is carefully thought about, because we don't want to compromise the academic success goals and the strategic imperatives that we want.

They're also asked whether there are revenue growth opportunities for their unit that would be new to the university, that could bring in new dollars. Not just thinking about what we cut but are there things that you think you can do in your college or unit that would. increase revenue. Those are the three things that they're asked to do for a plan for the next five years.

Then, they are asked about if there's any investment requests that they're making. Several colleges are moving towards something. It may be that they have a larger class than they expected this coming year, and they may need Faculty to support that, that's a justifiable framework, especially because it brings in revenue. Are there some things that, if they do in the next two years, they could increase revenue to support the strategic goals that we have? So they say what the request is, describe what the return on investment is for the institution, and then what would be the impact on our ability to ensure student success, research that shapes the future, or community engagement that creates opportunities.

They're also asked in that part, whether they have history, data, comparable data, or evidence of success when they've done investments like this before, and what the outcome has been. Deans are actually fairly sophisticated at doing this, and we ask lots of questions. We ask them to outline, if there is any critical life, safety, security, or regulatory compliance issues that would be impacted if they don't have this investment. That is also true for cuts. If they cut, many of our programs are accredited, and they have requirements that they have to follow.

Then what happens is that all those college and unit requests are considered and brought forward, and we look at, here's how much money we have, this is the available funding, we identify any cuts that would not compromise the ability of the college or the unit to function. That's a very strategic look. If we do any cuts. it might be that one unit gets a 2%, one gets a 4%, one gets a 3%, one doesn't get any because of what the compromise looked like. and so, then we identify those cuts that will not compromise that unit. Then we look at the investment requests that came in and if there are investments that we feel will lead to return on that investment and achieve the goals that we have. Those would then be considered, knowing how much money we have, what has to be done in terms of maintaining, as John talked to you about, days cash on hand, making sure we meet all our regulatory requirements, and knowing that there are some investments that could get us to a stronger place financially.

That is the basic process, and the final steps come to the leadership team after we've done all the analysis. I sit in on all the college meetings with John Arnold and the dean, so that I can ask questions and really frame this as an important contribution to our academics, and we don't want to compromise that. We then bring all the requests for investment forward, and the President, the Chief Financial Officer and I look at all of these requests and try and make the best decision possible, knowing what our funding is. That's the process that, is used with every college going forward.

Questions and Comments [01:08:13]

- Senator Rocha stated she appreciates Provost Prelock and stated regarding housing for incoming freshman, she is worried about whether there will be enough housing. She has been at the University for twenty-six years and there is never enough housing for everyone, which she can email Provost Prelock about.
- Senator Rocha stated the first people that are going are staff and it has always been this way. She is on the University Staff Council, and she represents this committee, her concern is that staff are never given enough notice. UHAP policy is very different than the staff policy for notice given for cuts being made whether it be budget cuts, or reorganization. She asked if there will be consideration for these things, if there are cuts to the departments, will the departments be required to do everything they can to give enough notice for employees to find new employment elsewhere. 90 days is standard for some faculty and should be standard for everyone, including staff.
- Provost Prelock stated Staff are very important to the success of this university. She is investing in advisors because she feels that they're crucial to supporting the University's efforts. They're even looking at their compensation, and they always want to be fair. It's not easy when there is a set pile of dollars, knowing how to best manage that. This should be done with compassion and care, and she thanked Senator Rocha for her comment.
- Secretary Zeiders stated her thanks for Provost Prelock attending the meeting and describing that process. She believes it's critical for senators to understand in terms of the impact on their colleges. In a broader context, she asked how this process plays out and the challenges with this process. Almost 25% of our faculty are adjuncts which is about 1,000 faculty with little job security, low pay, and no benefits. There are fewer tenure-track faculty now than in 2011.
- Secretary Zeiders stated she believes this kind of cyclical budget process is contributing to this. College deans don't get their budgets until the end of the academic year, maybe even the start of the new academic year. In effect, they are faced with hard decisions. about whom to keep on board including career track faculty can be kept on board. Because of this uncertainty, individuals must be laid off then rehired in the for another contingent-type position. It's always a challenge, but even now, in terms of the admissions uncertainties being faced, deans are facing a tough way of how to even make budget, financial decisions in their colleges. Secretary Zeiders asked if Provost Prelock can speak to that and maybe think about a different approach that does not exacerbate the problem of too many adjunct faculty.
- Provost Prelock stated her thanks for the question and said she raised a couple of important points. One is the cycle for budget and requirements for faculty and admissions; they're not in sync. This is being looked at because most of deans are not going to have their all-funds process until March.
- Provost Prelock stated people are asking for 90 days, but this isn't in the current process. She would like to give people at least 30 days, but there may have to be a whole bunch of people laid off, then hired back once admissions is viewed. Typically, this isn't known until May 1st, and it is unknown if students will really attend until the second week in September when there is the census. At least by May, they have a good sense of how many students or how many sections are needed need for faculty.
- Provost Prelock stated the deans are in a tough situation because the use of adjunct faculties is happening across the country nationally because of this push and pull of whether the number net tuition revenue will support the number of faculty, or if there are the number of sections needed to ensure students are supported.
- Provost Prelock stated the entire schedule is not aligned, and she has discussed this with CFO Arnold and a couple of deans, and they are looking at this. This would mean the All-Funds process would need to be moved much sooner. The challenge is that there won't be admissions data at the time that is needed. The question is how to figure out the best approach so that faculty and staff are not compromised, who are always worried about this.
- Provost Prelock stated her goal is hopefully to not be in this situation in the future, having to worry about cuts, and there can be a little more stability. Even with what's happening in the government, there are so many unknowns, even with F&A rates, and which funds will be supported. The University is in a precarious position, but she takes Secretary Zeiders' point and their coordination on this has to be figured out.
- Senator Rishel stated she appreciates the presentation, and in her college earlier in the day, their business Assistant Dean presented on the budget.
- Senator Rishel stated regarding the fund balance, when CFO Arnold attended the last meeting, he made a comment about working to eliminate all negative fund balances. It is known that some colleges have negative balances, and her college is fortunate to have a positive balance. He left her with the impression that some colleges that have a positive balance, may be asked to move monies to a college with a negative balance. She asked if Provost Prelock knows how this will look.
- Provost Prelock stated they haven't had the chance to talk with the deans yet. There is a meeting scheduled on

February 11, 2026. They are trying to not compromise the colleges. She is also looking at her office and how with fund balances, they can support it. She should be able to tell everyone more at the March meeting and update Senators on how this can be managed, once they speak with deans and if they can maintain some level of support.

- Provost Prelock stated the only challenge, even with the fund balance, is that they have the money, but they can't spend it, so this is always the challenge. One of the things they are going to try to do, is that for some of these investments that people want to make that can really show an ROI, that they make a special request to use a portion of their fund balances to move them forward. They're going to try not to compromise the colleges as much.
- Senator Ziurys stated Provost Prelock talked about a percentage cut to the colleges, meaning staff and adjunct faculty may be cut. She asked what cuts are being proposed for the administration.
- Provost Prelock stated they go through the same process. Every administrative unit has to say what a 2% cut would look like, how that would impact their ability to provide services, what a 3% and 4% cut would look like. They're going through the same exercise, and she expects, like last year, a 22% decrease cut for administration. It was much less for academic units last year at 3-4%.

B. [Draft Resolution on Hiring Practices](#) first reading – Senator Ted Downing [01:19:45]

Thank you very much. I put forth a motion. This is a first read. It's intended to allow the senators, if they wish to take it back, to discuss with your colleagues. I want to make it real clear what this motion is about, and what it's not about. Okay. This motion is about excellence. It's about accuracy, not about academic credentials of whoever the applicants are, or whoever else applies to that position. It's about whether the CIO position, one of the four most important positions in a university, with the financial officer, the president, the provost, and the CIO.

I encourage all of you to go back and look at the qualities expected of a CIO. A PhD is not even necessary. You could have a BA who's been the master CIO of a major Fortune 500 company who would be qualified for this job. That's what we're measuring. We're measuring in an R1 institution, our job is information and the protection of it, the generation of it, and generation of new knowledge. That knowledge must be secure. The CIO's position is critical. It's just not the administrator of a computer center. If you look closely, they manage the finances, they manage enrollments, there's all kinds of activities going on, your emails and everything like that. The security of our data, especially those people that are under government contracts.

This discussion is about how state jobs and jobs are allocated. To do an internal search is a major decision. We don't do internal searches for faculty positions, rarely. I can't remember any. We can understand they have to be rigorously vetted; they must present papers. You all know the position. That same criteria should apply to those at the next level up, the administration. You can't simply decide that you like the person, or they're nice, or whatever it is. There has to be a criterion. Grants depend upon team efforts.

I talked to you last talk quickly about the Department of Defense criteria. One of the criteria they judge us on is the quality of our team in computers security. That'll be part of your score. Even though you're a great engineer at this university if your overall institutional score is low, that's dangerous. We're talking about institutional capacity, not whether a person has academic credentials.

The third and final...we're talking about how do we determine whether excellence exists? There's a simple way. It's called competition. You want to buy a car, you read Consumer's Reports. You want to decide whether somebody is the best for the job, you open the market, for God's sakes. Why are we closing the market with an internal search for anything? Oh, because cost savings, I heard that. Do you know the costs when we make a mistake? I'll tell you, the state of Arizona does.

On our information processing, the State of Arizona had a security test in 2018. This Senate investigated the results of that test. What did we discover? We discovered on that test we failed it. ASU passed it, NAU passed it, the Board of Regents passed it. We failed. I think everybody failed the first time, but each one was given a work list. The University of Arizona failed to meet the work list. The other three did. They passed. They're gone. They're okay for security. We never did.

The Auditor General of the State of Arizona asked over and over again for us to present a plan. Not just pass the test, just a short plan. We didn't do it until 2022, and the Auditor General wrote the state legislature and said, we give up on the University of Arizona on security. Now, with a record like that, that tells you we should be recruiting rigorously in an international search to find the best person possible to make certain that we have excellence. That's what this is about and talk it over with your faculty. Ask them, which is important at competition, excellence is determined by open market competition. That's the way it works in the whole world. I used to teach Economic 409. I can tell you, that's what we taught them at that point.

What I'm suggesting is go back, discuss the proposition. It has nothing to do with the current candidate or who got it. It has everything to do with the reputation of this university and whether or not we're competitive, and that's what I stand for. Thank you.

Comments and Questions [01:25:08]

- Senator Rafelski stated he remembers just a few months ago, there was the process of appointing several executives to the university including Provost Prelock, and Senior Vice President for Research and Partnerships, Tomas Diaz de la Rubia. Faculty listened to them and gave their opinions. The question is not if it was done, but at which level is this stopped at, and what is an important job at the University which requires public hearings.
- Senator Rafelski stated he has been around for a long time, but IT hasn't been a job level which required public vetting. He agrees that times have changed. New departments have been created. The university is probably on the verge of creating a new college. IT is now the big industry, including artificial intelligence, which may be 20% of the economy of the United States in very few years.
- Senator Rafelski stated with this in mind, this discussion is not about this moment in history, but IT should be looked upon exactly at the same level as the Senior Vice President for Research and Provost were looked at. There should be a senior vice president for information technology, and such a position should be vetted publicly, recommended.
- Senator Rafelski stated he believes considering whether Elliot Cheu is the best candidate for this position should be detached from the discussion early on. This is an issue that should be voted on which is making the position of, IT Chief, a Senior Vice President for information technology, and to be publicly vetted henceforth. Soon, IT will become even more prevalent.
- Senator Spece stated he is trying to figure out the posture on this and whether a second is needed.
- Vice Chair Hymel stated this is a first read on the moment. When the Senate returns, this is when there will be a formal motion made in the Senate.
- Senator Ziurys stated she believes this is a good idea because open competitive searches are needed. Faculty are not hired directly from one's department unless someone is exceptional. There is still a review and people apply from the outside. Applications are reviewed and it is decided who the best candidate is. This is a normal procedure for faculty positions and others in the University. Recently, it hasn't been this way, and she supports this motion.
- Senator Brochin stated she respectfully disagrees and thinks that internal searches are not inherently bad and there should be internal searches. There is critical work to do as a Senate. The new early admit and the way that that has impacted colleges, how it will now be connected to all-funds has not been discussed. When the Senate gets into these particulars it takes up valuable, critical, limited time that faculty has together. She rejects the motion.
- Senator Downing stated this motion is not against internal searches. It's this motion is not against internal searches. It's discussing how to find the best candidates. If internal searches were done to determine the National Basketball champion, this wouldn't work. Competition is what makes a university, and it is what students are trained for. They aren't trained to find a friend.

C. Report on UAGC Hiring – Secretary of the Faculty, Katie Zeiders, and Senator Bill Neumann [01:31:54]

Secretary of the Faculty, Katie Zeiders [01:32:12]

I did just want to report one thing unrelated to the UAGC hiring, and then I'll get to that. In open session last Senate Dr. Schwartz brought up some issues in NIH grants related to the larger Arizona audit. NIH grants were not getting NOAs. I just wanted to let you all know that this has been resolved. I worked closely with Patty and Tomas to advocate for faculty. Those that are affected have been offered financial support until the audit is resolved. I wanted to thank Dr. Schwartz for bringing that up, and for our leadership rising to the occasion to support faculty.

I'm going to move on to UAGC, hiring. I wanted to take the time to report to the Senate about a recent committee that Dean Packard reported on a few months ago. The committee was convened to hire 23 administrators into UAGC, and Senator Neumann and I were asked to be part of it. Gary reported before, but all UAGC faculty were considered staff. This was a process to rehire these people as career track faculty with the title of Global Campus Professor. The committee work is now complete, and I wanted to report on the process specifically.

In late October, the committee met with Provost Prelock and Dean Packard to clarify the committee's charge. The initial plan was to list all 23 positions to only be open to UAGC faculty. I and others raised the issue that if UAGC was serious about merit-based hiring, that it would open it to all UA employees. Dean Packard indicated that this could not be done, but after verification from HR that this was a common practice. Provost Prelock agreed and approved the opening of the search to all UA employees.

On November 3rd, the search was open to all UA faculty and was open for 7 days. There are about 50 applicants across 23 positions. Dean Packard also requested that this process be done before Thanksgiving, but the committee did not believe that was possible. We requested more time. On December 2nd, committee met to do the initial review of applications. We assessed minimum qualifications, and all those who met minimum qualifications were invited to interviews. We conducted 27 interviews. The interviews were 20 minutes for most positions and 45 minutes for the Vice Provost and Dean's positions.

The committee made no decisions on hiring. We only ranked candidates that we interviewed for each position. The committee was also asked to vote on proposed rank, so assistant, associate, or full on the Global Professor. The criteria for these rankings were created by UAGC faculty. I abstained from this vote because there was

insufficient information given to the committee to fully evaluate this, in my opinion.

Our work was complete on December 17th. So, two things to note, some of the concerns that came up in the committee. First, there was a concern about the number of applicants whose doctoral degrees were earned from institutions that operate fully online. and are structured or historically associated with for-profit higher education. Examples include University of the Rockies, Capella University, and Walden University. There was some concern about the quality of that. Also, there was concerns around the alignment between some candidates' disciplinary training and the academic units to which they were to be part of. Particularly in the cases where doctoral preparation was outside the primary field of the department.

Next step, I believe there is a process underway to hire the additional 90 UAGC faculty. I am not involved in this process, and I believe others can comment on this. So, I wanted to hand it over to Bill if there's any additional information, then I would be happy to answer questions from senators.

Senator Neumann [01:36:15]

Thanks, Katie. Yeah, as far as our task, it reminds me of the statement that was once famously made that basically, the difficult we can do immediately, the impossible take a little bit more time. We appreciated the support the Provost and the executive leadership gave us to really have a chance to go through the interviews and consider all the candidates fairly.

As a career track faculty member that's been on numerous hiring both in promotion and hiring committees, personally, I was impressed with the overall qualification of the candidates combined with both their training and professional experience. I went back through and looked at a number of the CVs and there were earned degrees from a number of both our current, U of A peers, R1 institutions, when we're talking about it, the faculty brings to us, in addition to some of the online credentials, they bring to us degrees from UCLA, USC, Stanford, Northwestern, and others, just to name a few. It is not easy to say that it's all one or the other.

What you have is a body of faculty that are bringing their expertise. The other thing I would say is, is that they have really demonstrated their commitment and excellence on teaching. We can argue all we want to in terms about Ashford and UAGC in general. We had a chance to talk to the individuals that make up this organization. They have represented themselves on national organizations on pedagogy, and they have taught extensively. If you understand how UAGC operates, there is a core set of faculties that work on pedagogy and developing the course materials and oversee several thousand adjunct faculty. They have a culture built around assessment and understanding and how those faculty are performing.

What I would say is the other aspect of it is these faculty bring a lot of professional experience. As a career track faculty, that's one of the things I believe that we bring to the university. They have years of experience, sometimes a decade or two of experience. They have held titles like Vice President, Managing Director, or even an owner of businesses. The practical side is we look at the community; we look at workforce development. professional development of our students, they're well positioned on that.

I will acknowledge in terms of what Katie was mentioning that this was an interesting process that was originally thought of in terms of moving folks into faculty roles and became a hiring decision. As such, the materials that we received were aligned with hiring decisions, not a typical portfolio of items that would come in. However, whenever you looked at the entirety of their approach, the work that they've done, the assessments that they've been involved with and led as well. We felt like those of us that did vote for their faculty placements, that they were well qualified and appropriately put into the titles that they did.

Questions and Comments [01:39:54]

- Chair Hudson thanked Senator Neumann and Secretary Zeiders for their work on the committee, she asked if any the being searched for went to University of Arizona employees and not already UAGC employees.
- Chair Hudson stated the second observation is that both this item and the previous item about who is hired forms an interesting juxtaposition. In the end, a wide variety of different hiring criteria, decisions, and protocols. The key item is governance, and open scrutiny of the faculty of the University of Arizona.
- Chair Hudson stated she appreciates both members service on the committee. She still believes this is an item for discussion with Provost Prelock in the long upcoming meeting is, regarding how searches are done. There needs to be broad participation, and faculty must have oversight. There is no one-size-fits-all model. There cannot be continued exclusion of the mechanisms of oversight that are already had, and the mechanisms of governance.
- Senator Neumann stated the short answer that Secretary Zeiders has indicated is that they did not make hiring decisions at all, they ranked candidates, and there were candidates from both UAGC and the U of A that were forwarded for consideration.
- Chair Hudson asked any of the UA candidates were hired.
- Secretary Zeiders stated they did not make the hiring decision so that would be a question for Gary.
- Senator Eaton stated her thanks to both Senators who presented. She asked when it was mentioned that they didn't have the materials to assess rank, do they know why that was and will that be provided on future faculty members being reviewed.
- Secretary Zeiders stated her thanks for the question. It wasn't clear why they didn't receive those materials; she

did ask for them but never received them. It included assessing quality of teaching, whether faculty have created a high-quality course, and deep expertise in a subject matter. Those were things that she could not assess from a CV, promotion or cover letter. This is a question for the Provost on whether more materials will be provided to the committee that is reviewing the next 90 faculty. She believes this a critical question, and one that can be followed up on if Provost Prelock wants to comment.

- Provost Prelock she also has Caleb Simmons present, and he can answer any questions. The administrators they were hiring were CV and cover letter. That's pretty much what is done most administrators. She understands the confusion about also looking at rank, but many of these people were already, as Bill mentioned, highly qualified individuals.
- Provost Prelock stated this next round is different, it is looking at faculty, and as Caleb, can explain, they will have a teaching portfolio, their CV, a statement of their teaching, all those things that we would be expected in a dossier. That will be open to the community. There are several tenure-track faculties, and career-tracked faculty from UA, in addition to UAGC members, and they will be part of that review committee.
- Executive Director of UAGC, Caleb Simmons stated in response to Chair Hudson's question, there were people from the U of A side, he is unsure of how he can share about numbers, but it's a non-zero number.
- Executive Director of UAGC, Caleb Simmons stated as far as the process, part of this is the transitions of what the committee was charged with to begin with, and what it became. The documents that were collected were also collected over multiple systems. but did, produce what would be fair for administrative search including time and position. One thing that has been left out is current rank. Current rank at the institution was considered when thinking about the academic appointment and rank. Looking at a short period of years, time and service, teaching, and the assessment made in the interviews. Most of the committee felt comfortable making those rank appointment recommendations.
- Senator Brochin stated she heard that UAGC is working on 90 credit degrees and had proposed changing all the degrees to this. She asked if this kind of move will come to Faculty Senate for approval, and if there is information on the status in the process of that.
- Senator Brochin stated today, ASU's Faculty Senate today is voting on a 90-unit degree at ASU. She believes the U of A need to be prepared for the impacts of ninety credit degrees
- Secretary Zeiders stated she believes any curriculum should most certainly come to the Faculty Senate and the curriculum development committee should know about the degrees. She is concerned about all 90 credit degrees if this is the plan. If the plan is to have UAGC do all 90-credit degrees and the workforce angle on that, she is very concerned. That would funnel all rural kids, low-income kids, and low SES kids into UAGC, which may still happen with an early action admissions strategy. She is very concerned about that, and something that she will advocate against time and time again.
- Secretary Zeiders stated there needs to be a more thoughtful discussion of 90 credit degrees in this university, She doesn't believe Provost Prelock will disagree with her on this.
- Senator Ziurys asked for the salaries that are involved.
- Secretary Zeiders stated she will send her all this information including all twenty-three positions and the minimum and mid salaries that were listed on the job postings
- Senator Kennedy stated regarding the supplied Bachelor's degrees, she believes it would be wise, since this is an emerging that it might be wise for the Faculty Senate to look at this and see if there is a role for an applied bachelor's degrees within the University of Arizona, what that role should be and what academic standards should be applied to it.
- Senator Kennedy stated there are a lot of students, particularly non-traditional students, who would be benefited from 3-year accelerated degree programs, which this is part of. They have a particular role and purpose in people's lives, and she doesn't want to immediately walk away from something that offers real potential to student. There are very good research support and many benefits to doing this. She believes that one can be constructed in a way that is differentiated from a traditional bachelor's degree but also provides a quality education, in a quality educational experience.
- Secretary Zeiders stated her thanks for the comment. Provost Prelock stated her thanks for comments being raised. UAGC is working on a proposal, but nothing has been moved forward, therefore it is premature to go there. They have been very innovative and move quickly in terms of market differentiation, affordability, efficiency, and competitive agility.
- Provost Prelock stated other things to be considered include how this impacts the UA degree and how employers will view this. It is important to determine the workforce conduct. A lot of individuals at UA are involved in workforce and there are regulations and licensures. There is a lot to think about, and it is not ready for primetime. When it is, she is sure it will be highly discussed with the Faculty Senate.

D. Facilities Management and Risk Assessment Group – Vice President for Facilities and Operations Administration, Josh Wright, and Senior Vice President for ORP, Tomas Díaz de la Rubia [01:51:17]

Vice President for Facilities and Operations Administration, Josh Wright [01:51:46]

Thank you for having me. This is my first Faculty Senate meeting, so this has been very exciting. I'm so impressed you all stuck about this long to hear about environmental health and safety. What a thriller at 5 o'clock, let me tell you. I'm Josh Wright, I am the Chief Facilities and Planning Officer for U of A. I've been here about six months. I'm

a proud graduate of this institution as well, several times over. Thank you, Leila, for the invitation to be here today.

We're here to talk about two things, primarily environmental health and safety. There's been some recent restructuring at the university, many of you have seen those memos that have come out about how we're working to be a lot more efficient and a lot more consolidated and strategic about our environmental health and safety initiatives across the entire institution and really think collectively about those things. Primarily we're going to hear from Leon talk about how that is coming together, and what his office does. I will briefly, at the very end, if we have time, touch on the University of Arizona's campus master plan update, which is also happening right now, we would love to get your input on that, and I'll tell you. So, with that, I'm going to turn it over to Leon Harris, who is our Senior Director of our Environmental Health and Safety Department.

Leon Harris, Director, Research Safety and Occupational Health, Research Laboratory and Safety Services [01:53:04]

Yeah, thank you, I will be sure to make this brief. I know we're up against time here, but as Josh mentioned, I'm Leon Harris, Senior Director for Environmental Health and Safety. I'll touch briefly here first on sort of the transition that Josh mentioned. Previously, the institution took somewhat of a separate support model, and we're dealing within all the safety and regulatory compliance offices. Previously, we had, some of our laboratory safety services, radiation safety, chemical safety, biological safety over, and reported and organized under the Office of Research and Partnerships. The rest of the safety house was outfitted under risk management services, and that would be environmental compliance, fire safety, occupational safety, things like OSHA. Those were all outfitted under Office of Public Safety.

As of October, last year, all those safety services have sort of been plucked from the various organizations and kind of outfitted under Josh Wright's leadership under facilities. We now have an environmental health and safety unit that's more aligned with what you would find in a traditional academic institution. There's a ton of efficiencies gained. We had a real opportunity here to kind of align, University of Arizona, EHS with the rest of the academic institutions across the nation.

We offer a ton of services. My plan today was to come and talk about sort of our core services that touch our laboratory safety, about our laboratory safety program. In the interest of time, I'll breeze through these, but I will touch just briefly on these core programs. A radiation laser safety program, so, in addition to serving as the Senior Director for Environmental Health and Safety, I also serve as the Radiation Safety Officer and Laser Safety Officer as well and head those programs for our unit. We deal with everything such as with ionizing radiation and lasers, cradle delays. for the campus.

Next, I'll introduce my wonderful Assistant Director, Maggie Murphy. Maggie is our Certified Industrial Hygienist. Maggie, also recently, along with the Industrial Hygiene program, has taken on occupational safety as well. So, exposure assessments, air quality, all those things, and then any OSHA-related program, fall protection. confined spaces, lockout, tag out. Maggie will be spearheading those programs for us here.

Next our Biosafety Officer, Cesar Ramirez. Any use disposition, biohazardous agents, Cesar runs our biosafety program here at the institution. Regarding chemical safety, Mr. Russell Noon. Russell is our Chemical Hygiene officer and heads our DEA-controlled substance program. Anything to do with use and disposition of hazardous chemicals, and just general lab safety. Russell will, spearhead those efforts for us.

I want to talk briefly about the scope of our lab safety program here at the institution. We roughly have about 653 PIs that are registered with our unit, about 7,000 individuals received some service from our lab safety department, whether it's medical clearance for a respiratory fit test, or they're an authorized user for our radioactive materials laboratory. We have about 7,000 individuals that receive some service from our office. We also oversee just about 3,000 lab spaces. Just to give an idea of sort of the throughput on campus here, last year, we disposed of about 250,000 pounds of hazardous waste on campus. Most of that generated right by our laboratories.

We have a data management tool I could spend an hour talking about how wonderful this thing is and how much it is a game changer for us when a colleague's been able to provide efficient services. It's essentially a database for PIs, labs, shops. It allows us to kind of pull together similar exposure groups and kind of assign training templates that we can also track and monitor and follow up on. We do all our inspections inside of our data management program and we also track those things. We also have a user-in-focus dashboard that allows for some self-servicing for our PIs. They can log in, do some self-service, and that helps to alleviate sort of the workload from our staff. They can add workers, remove workers, add and remove locations, request waste pickups, etc. So, this helps to alleviate the burden on our end but also gives our PIs an opportunity self-service their approvals.

Next, I want to touch on our laboratory safety inspections. We have mentioned before, we have about 3,000 labs registered with our unit. We are in every single one of those laboratories. In some cases, if it's hazard-specific, like lasers, for example, we're obligated to be in there more frequently, semi-annual for regulation. We do adhere to that, but we do see every lab the same. Also, while we're on campus performing any periodic service that we provide, whether it's contamination surveys, seal tests, whatever it might be, if there's a need for an additional inspection, we will also log that at the time.

Findings and corrective action, so while we're out and doing an inspection, we have an online checklist. Once we identify a finding, the checklist assigns the corrective actions, and then we have continued follow-up until we achieve resolution.

Our land inspection program, again, we had 1,100 inspections performed last year in 2025. We found about 1,100 findings. 97% of the items that we identified were addressed prior to the follow-up due date. We've got great collaboration, great partnership with our stakeholders and we appreciate that. Also, we have a 98% timely completion of any regulatory required training, which is great.

Last one here that's important, and I'll kind of skip through the last little bit here, but we do have our laboratory inspection program. What you're looking at here is data over the past three years that talks about inspection findings by severity. In 2023, we identified 1,600 findings throughout the course of the year. In 2025, we finished just about 1,100. About a 30% reduction in findings, and most important to note is the critical findings, the things that are immediately dangerous to life and health, or significant dangerous to property or persons, those findings have dropped by about 70%.

- Vice President for Facilities and Operations Administration, Josh Wright stated if anyone needs anything, to please contact their office as they would rather be told about issues than finding out in an inspection. Masterplan.arizona.edu will have deliberately inclusive and transparent information with regards to updating the master plan. The website includes agendas, minutes, topics, and updates on the process.

8. **Adjournment [02:01:11]**

Chair Hymel adjourned the February 2, 2026, meeting at 5:02 PM.

Katie Zeiders, Secretary of the Faculty
Jasmin Espino, Recording Secretary

Motions of the February 2, 2026, Faculty Senate Meeting

[Motion 2025/26-25] to approve the agenda of the February 2, 2026, Faculty Senate meeting with the friendly amendment to remove Item 5B. Motion passed by unanimous consent.

[Motion 2025/26-26] to pass the Honorary Degree Motion. Motion passed with forty-two in favor, four opposed, and two abstentions.

- *Text of the motion can be found on Page 4.*

Attachments Within the Minutes

1. Page 1, Action Item 2: Approval of the [Agenda](#)
2. Pages 7 and 9, New Business
 - a. Item 8A: [Finance, budget, all funds process](#) discussion
 - b. Item 8B: [Draft Resolution on Hiring](#) Practices first reading

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