

**LIX No. 11**  
**Faculty Senate Minutes**  
**February 5, 2025**

The Faculty Senate of Southeast Missouri State University met on Wednesday, February 5, 2025, in the Redhawks Room of the University Center. The following Senators were present: Michael Aide, Michael Bezushko, Larry Bohannon, Abram Book, Christopher Bradley, Eric Clements, Jenny Cropp (chair), Corrie Dudley, Erin Fluegge, Pam Gershuny, Barbara Lamont, Andy Liu, Hayley Love, Kelly McEnerney, Jenna Moore (chair-elect), Joe Murphy, Josh Newth, Tomoaki Nomi, Peter Oman, Anthony Scherer, Kyle Schneider, Mike Taylor, Misty Tilmon, and David Yaskewich. Vice Provost Doug Koch and SGA Liaison Sophie Martin were also present. The following alternates were present: Belinda McMurry and Shannon Clapsaddle.

Chair Cropp called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m. and asked for approval of minutes from the January 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. There were no corrections, the minutes were approved and will be posted on the webpage.

**GUESTS**

Faculty Senate hosted two guest speakers, the first was Dayna Northington, Chair of the Clerical, Technical, and Service (CTS) Staff Council, provided an update on the council's activities and initiatives. Now in her second year as chair, with her term expiring in May 2026, she noted that CTS employees include administrative staff, DPS officers, and some employees in Facilities Management and IT, with a total workforce of approximately 150–160 full- and part-time employees. As the lowest-paid employee group, CTS staff experience significant turnover, though many remain due to the strong sense of community and dedication to the university. The council meets quarterly with Dr. Vargas and hosts various guest speakers at meetings. Staff development remains a priority, with a Staff Development Day held in November and another planned for spring break, covering topics such as the new work order system and foundation accounting. Administrative Professionals Day is scheduled for April 24 at noon in the UC Ballroom, featuring a keynote address by Brian Hampton and financial wellness training. The council is working on revising bylaws and creating a training toolkit on mySEMO in collaboration with the Professional Staff Council. Additionally, they are drafting a compensation proposal to supplement the existing extraordinary merit process, which is currently based solely on supervisor evaluations, with an evidence-based portfolio model similar to the faculty tenure and promotion process. They are also exploring options for longevity-based salary increases. Northington highlighted that CTS employees, who serve on the council's 17-member voting body with four alternates, receive no release time or compensation for council service. She also noted that CTS staff are unable to take adjunct teaching positions due to their hourly pay structure.

Dustin Hopkins, Chair of the Professional Staff Council (PSC) and a System Administrator in IT, provided an update on the council's role and ongoing concerns. Elected chair in June 2024, he explained that the PSC serves as an advocate for professional staff by providing a forum for university matters and funneling concerns through the Director of Human Resources. The council represents approximately 300 professional staff members and 36 administrative staff members, though administrative staff cannot serve on the council. The PSC consists of no fewer than 12 representatives serving three-year terms, with four alternates serving one-year terms. The chair-elect serves a two-year term, while the treasurer serves for one year. The council meets monthly, with around 50 attendees, and its members serve on various university committees. Hopkins highlighted ongoing concerns regarding overtime pay, particularly for salaried employees, in light of new Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) regulations that set threshold salary requirements to determine exempt and non-exempt status. Additionally, while CTS employees, who are hourly, cannot teach adjunct courses, many professional staff members, as exempt employees, are eligible to do so.

## OLD BUSINESS

A motion to approve the second reading of Bill 25-A-XX “Removing Notification to Miss Class” together with Bill 25-A-XX “Teaching During Absences” was made by Senator Love and was seconded by Senator Clapsaddle.

A friendly amendment to change (line 20, redline) the word ‘days’ to the words ‘calendar days’ was suggested by Senator Fluegge after having consulted with human resources. Additionally, discussion of the wording (line 25, redline) to remove the words ‘during absences’ from the first sentence following the heading ‘Alternate Delivery Methods’ as it was determined to be unnecessary. A motion to accept these amendments was made by Senator Moore and was seconded by Senator Book. This motion was unopposed.

The motion to approve the second reading passed with 25 votes in favor and 0 votes against.

## NEW BUSINESS

A motion to approve Bill 25-A-XX Three-Year Academic Calendar was made by Senator Taylor and seconded by Senator Schneider. This bill reflects that the schedule would shift to begin after the observation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day in spring 2026. This calendar does not affect the opening or closing of the University (or the staff schedule). This bill will be brought back for a second reading at the next Senate meeting, share to departments for feedback.

A motion to approve Bill 25-A-XX University Standing Committees Procedures was made by Senator Murphy and seconded by Senator Schneider. Senator Murphy explained that this bill was to add a method to use to equitably select candidates for University standing committees or councils, often the Membership Committee is tasked with selecting candidates to put forward without any way to distinguish between them. This procedure would offer an optional method to use to differentiate candidates to select which to nominate. There was a discussion about adding the word ‘voluntarily’ into the text of the procedure, but it was not clear if it would be necessary. This bill will be brought back for a second reading at the next Senate meeting, share to departments for feedback.

A motion to approve Bill 25-A-XX Restoring Section III.G. of the Grievance Procedures (First Reading) was made by Senator Moore and seconded by Senator Cropp. Chair Cropp indicated that the purpose of this bill was to add back some language that was accidentally removed when edits were made by the previous session of the Senate, additionally some edits were made to correct an inconsistency in how the records of the committee would be archived. This bill will be brought back for a second reading at the next Senate meeting, share to departments for feedback.

**Chair Report:** Chair Cropp reports that the presidential search is moving forward, with open forums scheduled and the candidate’s CV set to be posted the day before. Questions were raised about why only one candidate was brought to campus, with the explanation that while several strong candidates applied, the selection committee unanimously agreed that one stood out significantly. There are no concerns about the candidate declining the position.

The Budget Review Committee is set to meet on Friday, with an update to follow at the next meeting. The Academic Program Review Committee had its initial meeting and will reconvene on February 14. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Committee continues to meet monthly and will be conducting a student survey as part of the required quality initiative. To encourage participation, students who complete the survey will be entered into a lottery for free parking passes, though there are questions about potential tax implications.

Concerns were raised about international students struggling to find employment in town, with some reportedly experiencing food insecurity. Suggestions included organizing a food drive, collaborating with Redhawks Pantry, and exploring whether faculty meal vouchers could be shared with students in need. There are also challenges with Cape Girardeau rental requirements, as some landlords require Social Security numbers.

Lastly, it was noted that Dr. Pam Parry, a former faculty senator and past chair of the Compensation Committee, has passed away. Her contributions were greatly valued, and she will be missed.

**Administrative Liaison Report:** Interim Provost Koch reports that several administrative changes are taking place. Bruce Skinner will serve as interim vice president of Enrollment Management and Student Success, effective July 1, in addition to his current roles. Mel Odegard will be interim dean of the College of Education, Health, and Human Studies, and Michelle Brune will step into the role of interim vice provost. These transitions were communicated via email to the campus community.

Additionally, there was discussion about the lack of a formal policy for notifying the university community when a SEMO-affiliated individual passes away. Currently, each situation is handled on a case-by-case basis, with priority given to the wishes of the deceased's family. There was also a suggestion to hold a Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) session focused on international student issues.

**SGA Report:** Ms. Martin reports that the Student Government Association (SGA) has installed new parking meters, which are now operational. SGA is seeking faculty support to help fill five vacant seats: two in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, one in the College of Health and Human Services, one in the College of Education, Health, and Human Studies, and one in the College of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. All positions are for undergraduate students. SGA meets weekly on Mondays at 8 p.m., and information is available on their Instagram. Additionally, the Chief of Staff is organizing a “Dinner with the Deans” event on March 3. SGA has also launched a poll to determine its next philanthropy initiative.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Academic Affairs:** Senator Love reports that the Academic Affairs Committee has been working on adjustments to the calendar and continues to work on the other charges of the committee.

**Compensation:** Senator Fluegge reports that the Compensation Committee adjusted the language of the bill presented for a second reading with comments from Human Resources.

**Documents:** Senator Bezushko reports that the Documents Committee has received the results of the survey to departments asking about Senator election procedures, they are currently working on a redline version of an amendment to the Faculty Senate constitution.

**Governance:** Senator Newth reports that the Governance Committee is working with Documents to make sure that the new election procedure amendment is appropriate.

**Professional Affairs:** Senator McEnerney reports that the Professional Affairs Committee has sent an invitation to all faculty indicating that a RNTT focus group was to be formed to obtain opinions and concerns on the potential for alternate RNTT designations. Additionally, they are working on an emeritus bill.

**Membership:** Senator Murphy reports that the Membership Committee did not meet and did not have anything to report.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Moore:** The Winter Dance Concert opens tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. RFS, 2pm SS

**Dudley:** Food Drive in Crisp Hall sponsored by the Office of Addictions.

**Adjournment:** Chair Cropp called for a motion to adjourn. Senator Taylor made the motion; seconded by Senator Moore. The Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

**The next Faculty Senate meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 18<sup>nd</sup>, 2025, from 3-5 pm in the Redhawks Room of the University Center.**