

LX No. 12
Faculty Senate Minutes
February 18, 2026

The Faculty Senate of Southeast Missouri State University met on Wednesday, February 18, 2026, in the UC Redhawks Room. The following Senators were present: Larry Bohannon, Abram Book, Christopher Bradley, Jenny Cropp, Erin Fluegge, Pam Gershuny, Michael Holm, Arusha Ijaz, Courtney Kizat, Barbara Lamont, Hayley Love, Kelly McEnerney, Jenna Moore (Chair), Joe Murphy (Chair-Elect), Josh Newth, Tomoaki Nomi, Peter Oman, Anthony Scherer, Robin Smith, Mike Taylor, David Yaskewich. Interim Provost Doug Koch was also present. The following alternates were present: Marikit Fain and Vera Campbell-Jones. The following proxies were present: Mario Guimaraes, David Tomcheck, and Samantha Washington.

Call to Order

Chair **Jenna Lee Moore** called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

Approval of Minutes – February 4, 2026

A senator noted a discrepancy in the previous meeting minutes regarding the President's remarks about the university's financial condition. The original minutes stated the President said that "fluctuations are normal" and that "we are not in crisis." Senators clarified that he explicitly stated:

- *"We are not in a **budget crisis.**"*
- Corrected the statement to read; President emphasized the university is not in **budget crisis.**

The minutes were approved as corrected.

Guest Presentation – Dr. Stephen Schultheis, Vice President for Enrollment Management & Student Success

Dr. Schultheis delivered an extensive presentation introducing himself, outlining enrollment outcomes, division reorganizations, and forward-looking initiatives. He encouraged ongoing faculty engagement throughout the presentation.

Introduction & Background

Dr. Schultheis shared:

- He joined SEMO one month prior.
- Previously served in Georgia (two institutions) for 10 years and New York for 14 years.
- He has experience spanning advising, learning centers, financial aid, admissions, and academic liaison roles.
- He originally began his career as a middle school math teacher and came to higher education unexpectedly.
- He emphasized his commitment to “servant leadership,” supporting students who elect to be in higher education rather than being compelled (as in K–12).

He described SEMO and the Cape Girardeau community as exceptionally welcoming.

Enrollment as a University-Wide Responsibility

Schultheis stressed that **enrollment is the responsibility of the entire institution**—not just the admissions division.

- Faculty were placed prominently on his organizational slides to recognize their central role in creating and maintaining academic programs and supporting retention.
- He defined enrollment as the “whole student lifecycle,” including recruitment, retention, and graduation.

Spring 2026 Census Enrollment

Dr. Schultheis presented census numbers:

- **Total enrollment: 7,943**, a **7.3% decline**, the largest recent drop.
- **Graduate enrollment:** significantly down due to fall’s international enrollment decline (“pig in the python”).

- **Undergraduate enrollment:** fell from 5,814 to 5,617, an area requiring focused attention.
- **Early college / dual credit:** 1,220 students — essentially flat.
- **Online program enrollment:** strong growth:
 - +18% (231 students) in total online majors
 - +53% increase in new undergraduate online students
 - +70% increase in new graduate online students (52 students)
- **Transfer enrollment:** up 18% (32 students)

He noted that although the international enrollment issue will continue to affect multiple semesters, the university must pivot and “stop talking about it” in order to focus on growth strategies.

Organizational Restructuring in Enrollment Management

Recent personnel changes include:

- **Lenell Hahn** moved from Admissions leadership into **Executive Director of Enrollment Strategy**, overseeing Early College, TRIO, the Registrar, and Online & Graduate Studies.
 - **Katie Krodinger** now serves as **Executive Director of Admissions & New Student Programs**, bringing renewed energy to recruitment.
- These changes took effect in January.

Initiatives Targeting Fall 2026 Enrollment

Corporate Partnership Strategy

- Developing **tiered partnerships**:
 - **Tier 1:** Major employers needing active engagement (e.g., Mercy Healthcare with 52,000 employees).
 - **Tier 2:** Known partners requiring periodic on-site recruitment.

- **Tier 3:** Potential or developing partnerships.
- Current corporate/education partnership enrollment: **41 students** last fall; goal is **115** for Fall 2026 and up to **150–170** the following year.
- Faculty expertise will be needed to tailor program offerings and speak directly with industry leaders.
- Senate discussion: cohort possibilities (e.g., AI programs for healthcare; forensic programs for police).

Bridge Program (Summer 2026 Launch)

- Designed for students not fully admissible but capable of succeeding with transitional support.
- Pilot program aims for **20–25 students** during the final 4-week summer term.
- Students would take **7 credits** (UC100 + two courses), live in residence halls, and receive TRIO support.
- Courses must be **face-to-face** to ensure structure and engagement.
- Faculty questions addressed timelines, teaching needs, and enrollment benchmarks for “go/no-go” decisions.

Programs of this type have outperformed IPEDS retention benchmarks at previous institutions.

Student Engagement Tracking

- The division is defining what qualifies as **academic** and **social** engagements (e.g., advising visits, rec center use, clubs, faculty interactions).
- A goal is to establish a measurable threshold predicting retention. Past research at Schultheis’s former institution found **6 engagements per semester** significantly improved persistence.
- SupportNet will be used to record and analyze engagement data.

Re-Registration Reporting

- Institutional Research is developing dashboards showing:
 - % of students registered for the next term
 - Breakdowns by program, college, housing status, and online vs. on-campus
- Departments will be asked to monitor these numbers to identify students at risk of not returning.

Student Development Curriculum

- Will parallel academic progression but focus on non-classroom skills (financial literacy, internship preparation, résumé development, etc.).
- Goal: outline competencies for each year and track student completion.

Textbook Rental Program Expansion

- Students currently pay \$36 per rental book regardless of retail cost, this represents an incredible affordability advantage.
- Graduate programs have begun participating.
- Dr. Schultheis asked faculty to consider adopting rental-eligible texts wherever feasible.

Calendar & Registration Process Changes

Potential proposals include:

- Aligning **spring + summer registration** periods.
- Moving **fall registration** earlier (first week of March).
- Expanding 8-week terms for nontraditional students.
- Simplifying the summer term structure (“Baskin-Robbins model” currently too complex).
- Eliminating **mid-semester fee-drop** practices, which he called “unethical” given students’ investment.

- Offering **24/7 registration**, while acknowledging PIN/advising realities.

Senators raised concerns about advising workload, timelines, and low enrollment summer course cancellations.

Support for Veteran & Military Students

- Current VA certifying official (Amanda) has a caseload ~350:1; recommended ratio is 125:1 → resource concerns.
- If staffing improves, SEMO could target new military markets with online programs.

Old Business

Bill 26-A-11 – Second Reading Motion to approve; Senator Taylor, seconded; Senator Murphy

Revising Title & Description of Vice President for Equity, Access, and Behavioral Health

- Clarifies that the **Dean of Students and Title IX Coordinator** is an **administrative** position.
- Removes outdated language describing membership in the College of Education and Council of Deans.
- This bill passed with a unanimous vote.

Bill 26-A-12 – Second Reading Motion to approve; Senator Bohannon, seconded; Senator Murphy

Revising Contact Points for Office of Equity Initiatives

- Assigns ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 contacts to **Dean of Students**, replacing the dissolved Office of Equity Initiatives.
- This bill passed with a unanimous vote.

New Business

Bill 26-A-13 – First Reading Motion to consider; Senator Taylor, seconded; Senator Newth

Revising Duties of Faculty Senate Chairperson

- Inserts “non-voting” to clarify the Chair’s role as ex-officio on legislative committees.
- Discussion centered on whether the Chair should remain non-voting **except** on the Membership Committee, given the Chair’s involvement in populating committees.
- Governance Committee will revisit and return recommendations.

Bill 26-A-14 – First Reading Motion to consider; Senator Newth, seconded; Senator Murphy

Revising Duties of Chairperson-Elect

- Mirrors changes proposed for the Chair.

Bill 26-A-15 – First Reading Motion to consider; Senator Taylor, seconded; Senator Murphy

Three-Year Academic Calendar

- Registrar’s draft reviewed.
- Future fall break dates currently marked as tentative; Provost’s office now has finalized dates and will provide them.

Reports

Chair – Jenna Lee Moore

Highlights included:

- **Cybersecurity training** required annually; some emails sent to Deleted Items folder.
- **Email sending limit** remains 300/hour; departmental addresses have higher limits and exemptions.

- **Administrative rights** removed from university computers; whitelisted software available; real-time IT approval process in place.
- Budget Review Committee met Feb 13–14 to evaluate New Investment Opportunities (Green Light, Gear Up, Discovery).
- **Academic Program Review** underway; only standard cycle reviews being considered (extraordinary review programs excluded).

Administrative Liaison – Interim Provost Doug Koch

- Encouraged completion of the **Strategic Planning Survey** (closing Feb 21).
- Extraordinary review and academic restructuring materials moving through college councils; faculty were urged to participate.

SGA Report – Layne Collier

- Not present; chair will forward detailed information about student funding options.

Committee Reports

Academic Affairs (Mike Taylor)

Confirmed calendar content; no further updates.

Compensation (Erin Fluegge)

- Discussed headcount pay and 3-week course policy.
- Coordinating multi-group conversation about a unified compensation memo prior to April 14 Budget Review meeting.

Documents (Larry Bohannon)

- No meeting last week; brief email communication.

Governance (Joshua Newth/Robin Smith)

- Finalized Chair/Chair-Elect bills; working on conflict of interest and grievance policy updates.

Professional Affairs (Abe Book)

- No report.

Membership (Hayly Love)

- SGA attendance sign-up remains open; volunteers urgently needed for the next two Mondays.

Johnson Faculty Center (Joe Murphy)

- Reminded Senate that Budget Review Committee meets April 14 to discuss compensation; discussion items should be finalized beforehand.

Announcements

- **Theatre:** *Six Inches Above the Knee* (Feb 26–29).
- **Music:** Orchestra/Choir Concert + Concerto/Aria winners (Mar 3).
- **Astronomy:** Moonrise Party (Mar 3).
- **Women's History Month:** Trivia (Mar 17), Poster Session (Mar 24), CAN Forum (Mar 25).
- **Happiness Project:** Faculty invited to participate in multi-day study.

Motion to adjourn; Senator Taylor, seconded; Senator Moore

The meeting adjourned around 4:35 p.m.

Next Meeting

March 4, 2026

3:00–5:00 p.m.

UC Redhawks Room