

Minutes of the 2026-2027 Faculty Senate

<https://www.radford.edu/faculty-senate/minutes.html>

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April 23, 2026



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

April 23, 2026

3:30-4:50 PM

Via Zoom videoconference

☒Pelletier ☒Archer ☒Carhart ☒Castor ☒Chatham ☒Chitwood ☒Choate ☒Close
☒Corey ☒Dunn ☒Farrell ☒Angelini ☒Galeshi ☒Gingrich ☒Glass ☒Huston ☒Haynes
☒Jenks ☒Jeong ☒Joseph ☒Fuhrer ☒Lahn ☒Lane ☒Lenhart ☒Liska ☒Mesmer ☒Mills
☒Mullenbach ☒Page ☒Van Patten ☒Plekhanova ☒Prince ☒Rakes
☒Reed ☒Rice ☒Riddle ☒Robinson ☒Rotert ☒Sallee ☒Santos ☒Sawyer ☒Shao
☒Sherman☒Smith☒Stewart☒Duncan Turner☒Vernon ☒Watson ☒Webb ☒Young

- I. Approval of Minutes
 - a. Minutes (4/16 and 4/21) approved by acclamation.
- II. University President's Report: President Bret Danilowicz
 - a. No report.
- III. University Provost's Report: Provost Bethany Usher
 - a. Lots of end-of-semester excitement and presentations.
 - b. The Provost attended the AAC&U Gen Ed meeting with a group of faculty. She wants to thank everyone participating in the Gen Ed work, and she appreciates the Senate's support for RADF 101.
 - c. The Provost also thanked everyone for their hard work and support of shared governance, and she expressed her commitment to shared governance. The Provost also thanked everyone who worked on updating the UIGRC documents (Dr. Close, Dr. Mullenbach, Dr. Hendrix, Dr. Hendrix, Katie, and Bruce). It was a collaborative and thoughtful process.
 - d. The Provost respectfully asked for Motions 38 and 44 to be tabled "because in the idea of shared governance, they're both things I really support, and both really need updates. But coming at the end of the semester, I haven't had a chance to work closely with those committees to be able to bring forth edits that we can bring forward to the Board of Visitors...I would really appreciate some support so we can work together to be able to bring passable items forward."
 - e. Questions

- i. Dr. Gingrich: “I find it rather unusual that the Provost would specifically ask that we table motions on our agenda. I’d like to know why you’re asking this...What is it about those motions?”
Provost Usher: “For 38 (extra employment), we need to work on a university policy and then make sure we’ve got reflective language in the handbook on that...It’s really important, and I think we need to be able to do some clarification. I want to be able to work collaboratively with that group to make a policy and handbook language that’s appropriate. For 44, I totally agree we need to be able to do that, but I have some edits I’d like to make that doesn’t restrict what a chair or a dean can say.”
- IV. Faculty Senate President’s Report: Dr. Matt Close
 - a. Dr. Close thanked all of the senators and said he appreciated their time and consideration with this year’s Senate business. He also thanked everyone who attended the special meeting.
 - b. Dr. Close ceded the rest of his time for the Faculty Travel Survey report, which was presented by Senator Archer and Senator Liska. (Faculty Travel Report attached.)
- V. Committee Reports
 - a. Curriculum: The committee has motions in Old Business.
 - b. Governance: No report.
 - c. Faculty Issues: The committee has two motions in Old Business today.
 - d. Resource Allocation: No report.
 - e. Campus Environment: The closing date of the Faculty Morale Survey is 5/1. Please encourage your constituents to take the survey.
- VI. Old Business
 - a. 25-26.38: Motion to Revise the T&R Handbook for Extra Employment Request to go into closed session.
39 in favor, zero opposed, seven abstained.
The motion passed.
 - b. 25-26.44: Motion to Revise the T&R Handbook for Recommending Reappointment or Non-Reappointment of Special Purpose Faculty
A request was made for Senate to go into closed session.
43 in favor, zero opposed, one abstained.
The amendment to the motion passed.
42 in favor, zero opposed, two abstained.
The motion passed.
 - c. 25-26.45: Motion to Adopt the Undergraduate Academic Advising Policy
42 in favor, zero opposed, two abstained.
The amendment to the motion passed.
33 in favor, four opposed, five abstained.
The motion passed.

- d. Motion 25-26.46: Motion to Limit Credits from a Prefix in Inquiry Areas⁴²
in favor, one opposed, two abstained.
The motion passed.
 - e. Motion 25-26.48: Motion to Limit Inquiry Courses to a Single Designation
Point of order.
Motion to extend time an additional 10 minutes.
34 in favor, six opposed, one abstained.
The motion passed.
16 in favor, 22 opposed, six abstained.
The motion failed.
 - f. 25-26.49: Motion to Limit Competency Courses to a Single Designation
Motion to extend time until we complete our agenda.
30 in favor, nine opposed, three abstained.
18 in favor, 18 opposed, seven abstained.
Referred to Parliamentarian for procedure.
Senate President Close voted no.
The motion failed.
 - g. 25-26.50: Motion to Limit Integration Courses to a Single Designation
18 in favor, 13 opposed, 11 abstained.
The motion passed.
- VII. New Business
- a. No new business.
- VIII. Announcements
- a. Committee chairs, please make sure that you have continuity reports submitted before you leave for the summer.
- IX. Adjournment
- a. Adjourned at 5:10pm.

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August 13, 2026



Faculty Senate Retreat Minutes
August 13, 2026
DRAFT

Provost Updates:

Provost Usher noted that she is starting her fourth year and came to RU to partner with the faculty. Building trust and partnership is a focus through processes, searches, etc. Provost Usher wants to make sure more things are more responsible and reliable and that our systems work. Referenced University Shared Governance Review Committee (USGRC) work and discussed the need for consistency in how we work. Reduced the number of administrative positions on the USGRC while maintaining the same number of faculty. Stated there is a need to update the Academic Affairs Shared Governance to align with newly revised University Shared Governance documents. Sad news: Rich Dunham, retired faculty and previous chair of Theatre has passed away. The Provost requested and a moment of silence for Rich was recognized.

Other updates:

Professional development: Faculty are encouraged to sign up for the ACUE AI modules. Still possible to sign up. Must complete by 10/30/2026 and full time faculty will have access to additional \$500 in professional development monies. Adjunct or part-time faculty will receive a \$500 payment for completing this. In addition, there has been an increase in the amount of money per college by \$500 per faculty. Every college has these funds but may differ in how these are accessed. Academic Affairs guests introduced themselves and shared priorities and initiatives.

Dr. Mekolichick: Discussed strategic focus on faculty development, mentioned the ACUE AI modules, 8 available now, two more coming, due by 10/30/2026. She also noted the significant push on experiential learning.

Dr. Gomez Beane: Discussed enrollment document shared with senators and noted changes in structure. CBE courses moved from the IMPACT lab to Academic Affairs. The focus now and 40 days from now is for enrollment to be flat plus one. Flat is the new growth. Biggest part of this retention.

Dr. Jessica Stowell: Shared updates on the data front: 1) charter and membership for a data governance committee, collaboration with a lot of offices across campus, 2) slowly starting to release dashboards, coming out and sharing those with deans and chairs. Program reports are moving to dashboard format. SACSCOC has proposed a draft of revisions to the standards, including a reduction in number of standards. Change is coming. Being more responsive and trusting of institutions. Every faculty member's credentials do not need to be sent.

Assessment: Three year assessment cycle, Nick Vaught, new director of Institutional Effectiveness, will be sharing more soon.

Curriculum: Hired new Director of Undergrad Curriculum, Also shared changes to Curriculum cycle dates. New gen ed: Shifting timeline for Curriculog course proposals due by January 15th to the Registrar's office. Program proposals will be a little different, different deadlines, more information to come!

Ms. Katie Piper, Registrar also shared updates. During the summer, the office's biggest focus was on IT implementation for new gen ed. Draft of next year's catalog to reflect changes from REAL to Gen Ed. Scheduling open for Spring 2027 and offering training for that. Also working on publishing information for campus community, including: final exam schedule. 2026-2027 catalog was published in May 2026.

Dr. Tim Fuhrer, Director of Undergraduate Curriculum
Priorities:

- 1) implementation of gen ed, faculty should consider what courses could be considered.
- 2) Teaching RADF 101 opportunities – please consider this opportunity for your department or school.
- 3) If you have more detailed questions about gen ed, please consider attending the virtual Our Turn sessions offered next week.

Dr. Benton and Professor VanKirk shared RADF 101 Update: Senators were updated on the approach being developed for the RADF 101 course, including the plan to recruit faculty for teaching the course. Also noted were the clusters approach to assigning students to the courses, including the request that students provide areas of interest for enrollment in those courses. See shared slides for additional information.

Faculty Senate Meeting

Called to order at 1:15 pm

Attendance (by college):

Artis: Krystina Angelini, Tara Pelletier, Matthew Close, Nathaniel Lahn, Tim Fuhrer, Andrew Foy, Eric Choate, Shawn Huston

CEHD: Jessica Prince, Anna DeVito, Josh Roe
CHBS: Kevin Farrell, Laura Vernon, Michael Meindl, Nicole Hendrix, Kurt Gingrich, Roby Page, Courtney Watson
Nursing: Judy Jenks, Joanna Murray, Kereen Mullenbach
CVPA: Will Sawyer, Stuart Robinson, Bruce Parsons, Rachel Rotert, Wesley Young
Davis: Rich Gruss, Thomas Duncan, Benjamin Biermier Hanson, Luke Liska
Libraries: Alyssa Archer
Waldron: Michelle Lenhart, Tara Riddle

Minutes were reviewed: Two edits were needed to the 4/23/2026 minutes, including noting Dr. Gingrich's attendance and updating spelling of Dr. Fuhrer name.

Minutes were approved by acclimation pending those revisions. Please see updated minutes for 4/23/2026.

Faculty Senate President's Report:

President Watson introduced FSEC and began the update of summer activities. President Watson attended the Board of Visitors Meeting and Retreat this summer. A new rector was elected, Mr. Dale Ardizzone. Board Advocacy Priorities were established including Capital Projects, such as the Roanoke building fund and ongoing lobbying for capital projects (Tyler, Norwood, Dalton, Amphitheatre, Infrastructure. Continuing to build the healthcare workforce and focus on the Center for Rural Health (sustain momentum through multiple legislative budget cycles). Other Board priorities included enrollment, competition, landscape of higher ed. President Watson also noted state priorities, including expanding credentialing pathways for dual enrollment, growing the talent pipeline (via reduced out-of-state tuition), investing in Virginia's healthcare future. President Watson noted the successful selection of the DUC, Dr. Tim Fuhrer. Work on RADF101 and the work being done around experiential learning; SCHEV push for "internships".

Dr. Watson also served on the University Policies Committee this summer and will continue to represent the faculty on that committee in the coming year. It was noted that Senate will have an opportunity to review all policies; most will go to Senate committees, the rest to the Senate SharePoint file (DHRM). Policies originators from UPC can be invited to Senate committee meetings if the committee would like them to listen and take notes.

Dr. Hendrix discussed the Provost initiative to conduct Academic Governance revision considering the significant shared governance revision work from last year. Dr. Katie Hilden Clouse has agreed to join a small working group with Dr. Hendrix and the soon-to-be elected chair of the FS Governance Committee. (That committee elected Dr. Stephen Glass as chair, along with co-chair Dr. Kereen Mullenbach). Dr. Glass will serve on the working group) and help to engage the FS Governance Committee in that revision work. Dr. Watson noted the University AI Initiatives- ACUE Registration Still Open. She also mentioned ideas around holding town halls and proposals to conduct these around AI,

State of the Sector (Landscape of Higher Ed, Challenges and Opportunities), and the Center for Rural Health

Dr. Watson mentioned the work needed by the Campus Environment Committee needed in response to the Faculty Morale Survey, including the report of the findings, analysis, Senate/campus presentations. The theme for the year for Faculty Senate is Communication, Clarity, Visibility, and Shared Governance. She asked senators to be visible to your constituents and shared new avenues for consistent communication, including new highlight document that will be shared with Senators for distribution to constituents, the What's On Your Mind? Via an open, anonymous Qualtrics survey. She also reminded everyone that outreach to our constituents can be conducted via email, phone, in-person and noted potential challenges with privacy related to FOIA.

Dr. Watson updated the senate on the new schedule of engagement with Provost Usher, including new monthly FSEC meetings with the Provost. The meeting was moved to the stairwell due to heat issues in Artis 310.

Dr. Kurt Gingrich shared a briefing on Robert's Rules of Order related to how Faculty Senate conducts business.

A special election was held to fill the FSEC At-Large position vacated by Dr. Fuhrer due to his selection as the DUC. Dr. Eric Choate and Dr. Laura Vernon were nominated via email for FSEC at large position. No further nominations from the floor. Dr. Eric Choate was elected to FSEC.

Meeting adjourned at 2:25 pm for Faculty Senate Committee meetings.

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