



meeting minutes 04/10/26

Faculty Assembly – Hybrid meeting

Attendance: Kelly Emelianchik-Key, Andres Ramirez, Meredith Mountford, Steve Diaz, Robert Shockley, Ann Musgrove, Anne van Zelst, Ayse Torres, Bridgette Cassidy, Bryan Nichols, Carman Gill, Charles Dukes, Christy Timm Fulkerson, Cristobal Salinas Jr., Daniel Reyes-Guerra, David Kumar, Dilys Schoorman, Lisa Finnegan, Ron Persin, Elizabeth Villares Sacks, Gwendolyn Carey, Jennifer Rogers, Jillian Powers, John E. Critelli Jr., John Hardman, Joyce Krzeminski, Katie Friesen, Katie Miller, María D. Vásquez, Michael Frain, Michael DeDonno, Michelle Vaughan-McGovern, Rick Laliberte, Rina Bousalis, Robyn Klein, Ruya Savuran, Sabrina Sembiente, Susannah Brown, Taka Mays, Vicki Brown

I. Approval of Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Andrés Ramirez called the meeting to order and welcomed attendees participating both in-person and via Zoom. He opened by requesting a motion to approve the minutes from the previous Steering Committee and Faculty Assembly meeting.

- Motion to approve minutes was made by Robert Shockley and seconded.
- No corrections or discussion were raised.
- Minutes were approved.

II. Faculty Suggestion Form

Andrés reminded attendees of the anonymous Faculty Suggestion Box, an initiative launched this academic year. The form is available for any faculty to submit issues of importance to the college.

- No suggestions have been submitted to date.
- Incoming President-elect Daniel Reyes-Guerra will continue and maintain this initiative in the coming year.

III. President's report

Andrés Ramirez delivered an end-of-year State of the Faculty Assembly address, summarizing the key focus and achievements of the 2025–2026 academic year.

This year's Faculty Assembly focused on strengthening shared governance, amplifying faculty voice, and fostering meaningful dialogue across the College of Education. Andrés extended sincere thanks to the Steering Committee for their sustained commitment and contributions throughout the year. Some of the contributions through the year included:

- Transitioned to hybrid meeting format to expand participation.

- Launched Brown Bag series, intentionally designed to engage newer faculty, create entry points into governance, and build pathways toward leadership roles.
- Introduced anonymous Faculty Suggestion Box to ensure broader representation of faculty voices.
- Budget model discussion
- Leadership searches and faculty evaluation processes.
- Use of Artificial Intelligence in academic life and instruction.

IV. AI initiative update

Before moving to new business, Andrés invited Vicki, John Critelli, and Victoria Brown to provide an update on the AI Collaborative's work for the year.

Activities Completed

- Hosted two faculty training events on AI tools: Microsoft Copilot and Google Gemini.
- Participated in the university-wide Technology Showcase (last month).
- Conducted a marketing analysis of AI skills required in education-related careers.

In Progress

- Developing a faculty survey on AI use in instruction; a parallel student survey will also be distributed.
- Survey data will be combined with data from the university's fall AI survey to produce a comprehensive report for the Dean with recommendations for next year.

New Business

V. Discuss Election Slate and Ballot

Updates to the election slate were discussed, long with processes for elections. Senator spots were clarified. Daniel Reyes-Guerra had been tentatively placed on the ballot for Vice President due to a lack of other nominees. The group discussed at length whether this was the appropriate course of action. Concerns were shared that having one person hold both President and Vice President roles runs counter to the principles of shared governance. It was shared that the VP role is specifically designed to transition into the Presidency, and encouraged a separate candidate to step forward.

- Daniel Reyes-Guerra voluntarily withdrew his VP nomination, agreeing the position should remain open to allow others to step up. The VP position will be left vacant on the current ballot. It will remain open for a special election or appointment at the first meeting of the fall semester.

If no candidate emerges, Daniel will serve in both roles unofficially in VP capacity while formally serving as President.

Election procedures were clarified. Senator elections are based on total votes. The top vote-getters fill the available slots; there is no head-to-head competition. An election is held even if there is only one candidate (write-ins are also accepted). A question was raised about whether faculty in instructor status are eligible to run. The current bylaws do not permit it; however, the group agreed this should be revisited. After discussion, the group agreed the slate had not been distributed with enough advance notice. A motion was made to delay the election by one week. The slate remains open for nominations through April 17th and elections open Monday, April 20th. Faculty encouraged to self-nominate or nominate colleagues for open positions before the slate closes.

VI. New Budget Model Discussion

Interim Dean Charles Dukes presented an overview of the university's new performance-based budget model. Department chairs then provided initial departmental responses. This discussion was facilitated at the recommendation of the Steering Committee. Currently, the new model — also

referred to as University Budget 2.0, performance-based budget, or activity-based budget — allocates resources to academic colleges based on performance in three weighted areas: Student Credit Hours (SCH) 65%; External Research Funding (grants only; training grants excluded) 20% ; Student Success KPIs (graduation rates, retention, employment outcomes) 15%

Key structural notes:

- A 3-year performance average starting from 2024 will determine budget allocation.
- 2025–2026 is a “ghost year” or “hold harmless” year: budgets remain the same, but parallel calculations will be run to show what the impact would have been.
- Starting the year after, budgets will be impacted by up to 10%, with progressively larger impact over time.
- The College of Medicine, Graduate College, and library are excluded from this model.
- Note on undergraduate credits: 70% of undergraduate credit hours go to the teaching college; 30% go to the home college. This structure particularly affects COE, which exports many undergraduates to take content courses in other colleges.

Dean Dukes emphasized that urgency is required. The two-year planning horizon (Year 1: immediate actions; Year 2: fruition of mid-term efforts) was outlined as the operational framework.

- Purpose remains unchanged: quality student experience and rigorous research.
- New programs require caution — curriculum approval takes at least one year, and ROI must be considered.
- Grants must be evaluated for return on investment within the two-year window.
- An infographic summarizing the budget model was shared with department chairs and will be distributed more broadly.

Departmental Responses

Teaching & Learning (Michelle Vaughan-McGovern & Sabrina Sembiante)

- COE ranks lowest in the student success KPI bucket; the undergraduate elementary education program carries the most weight in this metric.
- Plan: Focus on strategic advising for at-risk students in the Fall 2023 and Fall 2024 cohorts using the KPI dashboard this summer.
- Will identify students close to 4-year graduation thresholds and intervene proactively.
- Curriculum review: Faculty will be engaged to identify course bottlenecks that affect graduation rates.
- Additional sections and expanded caps for high-enrollment courses are also being considered.

Educational Leadership & Research Methodology (Robert Shockley)

- Strong graduate FTE productivity, especially at PhD and master’s levels.
- Active partnerships with 6 school districts, which also create grant and contract opportunities.
- Long-term exploration: Convert the popular undergraduate leadership studies minor to a baccalaureate degree (feasibility study planned).
- Near-term: Develop a research methodology minor for undergraduates, building on 5 existing courses developed in partnership with FAU High.
- Also exploring alternative revenue through contracts not tied to the funding formula.

Communication Sciences & Disorders / CSD (Reporting: Anne Van Zelst, on behalf of Dr. Williams)

- Immediate actions: Increasing caps on existing undergraduate courses and adding sections for high-demand offerings.
- Importing strategy: CSD prerequisites (e.g., anatomy and physiology) are popular with health science majors from other colleges, which brings 70% of those credit hours to COE.

- Mid-term: Explore a bridge/certificate program for Speech Language Pathology Assistants (SLPAs), as no such program currently exists.
- Long-term: Explore a doctoral program and development of a full undergraduate degree in Communication Sciences and Disorders.

Counselor Education (Elizabeth Villares Sacks)

- CACREP accreditation caps faculty-to-student ratios, limiting master's-level expansion.
- Expanding the existing undergraduate applied mental health minor by adding elective courses.
- Exploring recertification programs for post-graduates seeking additional credentials.
- Curriculum proposals for new courses will be developed over the summer for fall approval.
- Research strategy: Prioritizing research grants over training grants; leveraging university partnerships (e.g., CAPS) to grow collaborative research.
- Online school counseling degree program approved; awaiting CACREP green light.
- EdVision will be used to market graduate programs to undergraduate students in their junior and senior years which could be a key pipeline strategy.

Special Education (Joseph Gagnon)

- Goal is to increase undergraduate enrollment through expanded access, course updates, and improved advising.
- Advising improvements include group advising and embedded advising activities in courses.
- Taking courses through COSI continues to be a strength for student success.
- Potential cross-listing of courses with CNI (College of Nursing and Integrated Health) being explored.
- 4+1 degree program in development with CNI: allows bachelor's students to earn a master's degree.
- Bachelor's in Early Care and Education (BECE) has moved to a fully online format, which is expected to drive enrollment increases.
- Special Education Pilot Research Program launched this year to provide internal funding for faculty pilot studies, supporting future grant applications.
- Foundation funding strategy: Encouraged pursuing foundation grants (e.g., William T. Grant Foundation, Spencer Foundation), which begin with a brief letter of intent rather than a full proposal which could be a more efficient approach given time constraints.

VII. Senators Report

- April 27 Senate meeting will include remarks from President Hasner and updates on major research initiatives, including the planned acquisition of a quantum computer. Internal search underway for Associate Provost for Academic Affairs; decision expected by June 1st.
- An AI Curriculum Task Force is being formed university-wide to guide AI course and program integration, including resource allocation and evaluation.
- Special Senate Committee on Campus Safety and Security is being created in response to recent state legislative changes, including the expansion of the Guardian Program to higher education institutions.
- FAU Strategic Plan is near completion. Final approval is expected at the Board of Trustees and Board of Governors levels, with presentation to the Board of Governors scheduled for June (the meeting will be held on FAU's campus). The plan is expected to be released publicly soon.
 - A significant development was reported regarding the Board of Governors' decision to remove Introduction to Sociology from the general education

curriculum statewide. This removal raises concerns about enrollment impact, curriculum access, and disciplinary integrity..

- Context: Over recent years, several College of Education courses have also been removed from the general education curriculum (EEX 2091, global studies course, EDF 2085), due to state-level curriculum restructuring.
- Dean Dukes suggested that rather than attempting to re-enter those specific removed courses, COE should consider creating new general education electives or attractive elective courses

Dean's Talking Point

Dean Dukes shared a positive anecdote from the AERA conference in Los Angeles and noted that FAU consistently generates positive alumni sentiment, and emphasized that the college must do a better job telling its story externally.

New Faculty Welcome – Dr. Ruya joined the Math Education Department on April 1st. She will begin teaching in the summer and fall semesters. Her hire marks a new era for math education at FAU.

Active Faculty Searches

- Counselor Education: Multiple searches nearing completion.
- Educational Leadership: Chair search nearing completion; other positions ongoing.
- CSD: New assistant professor hire confirmed; start date pending.
- Special Education: Instructor search underway for an ABA instructor.

Dean Dukes noted all searches are proceeding well. Future hiring direction may shift after the strategic plan is finalized.

Strategic Plan Timeline

- FAU's strategic plan will be presented to the Board of Governors at their June meeting on FAU's campus.
- The plan is expected to be released to the university community very soon, likely allowing for limited written feedback.
- COE hiring decisions already made were approved by the Provost as needed now, ahead of the strategic plan's release.

Dean Dukes asked faculty to reflect on the year's most impactful work and provide that feedback to their department chairs at April faculty meetings. This is not only for the formal Impact Report, but to build the college's capacity to communicate its contributions more effectively. COE has a strong general reputation but does not always perform well on measurable metrics. Dean Dukes suggested the gap may be due to a lack of information-sharing rather than a lack of performance. We must shape and communicate the college's narrative proactively.

VIII. Additional Discussion:

Proposal for collaboration between the College of Computer Science and Engineering and COE around AI pedagogy. A broader discussion followed about the proper framing of AI in education:

- COE should be positioned to teach applications of AI in pedagogy (e.g., personalized learning, automating administrative tasks, interactive curriculum, AI curriculum design roles).

- Core tensions were explained: Computer Science views itself as the home of AI because it deals with programming and building; other colleges view AI as a tool applied within their discipline.
- Dean Dukes raised the broader point that the university needs general principles around curriculum ownership beyond AI, so these conflicts don't continue on a topic-by-topic basis.
- It was added that curriculum committee representatives at all levels need to be vigilant about this as all colleges begin developing AI-related courses.
- Vicki noted she is developing a course called "Learning in the Age of Algorithms" and has already begun the process of exploring general education placement with the Provost's office.

Questions to the Dean:

A chat question raised the question of how COE is working with partner school districts to understand what they need from graduates.

- Dean Dukes acknowledged sporadic engagement and agreed this needs to be more consistent and structured.
- He shared that meetings with Broward and Palm Beach officials have been difficult to schedule and maintain momentum.
- John Critelli offered that ELRM's partnership directors are available to support the college in expanding these efforts.
- school district representatives from Palm Beach and Broward spoke at Faculty Assembly last year; Daniel Reyes-Guerra indicated this could be continued.
- Dean Dukes expressed interest in moving beyond one-time presentations toward deeper, more sustained partnerships and exchanges.

Meeting Adjourned: at noon

Recorded: Kelly Emelianchik-Key

Reminders

- Vote on the faculty assembly elections from 4/13-4/17