



## University Faculty Senate Meeting

### Minutes

January 26, 2026

1:00 PM – 3:00 PM

Engineering East Room 106

1. The UFS meeting was called to order by Dr. William Trapani at 1:00PM. The meeting was held in Engineering East Room 106.
2. Senate approved [December 1, 2025](#), UFS Minutes by unanimous consent.
3. President's Report

Dr. Trapani reported the following:

- **Recognition of Faculty Achievements**

Dr. Trapani recognized newly named **Faculty Emeritus** and emphasized the importance of publicly acknowledging faculty service and accomplishments. Faculty recognized included:

- Dr. Ira Bogotch, College of Education
- Dr. Joseph Furner, College of Education
- Dr. Paul Hart, College of Business
- Dr. Tomas Schonbek, Charles E. Schmidt College of Science
- Dr. Ben Lowe, Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters
- Dr. Hugh Miller, Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters
- Dr. Edward Schwerin, Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters

Special recognition was given to Dr. Schwerin who was present at Senate, acknowledged for longstanding impact and leadership within the university.

- **Update Regarding Dr. Kate Polak**

- Dr. Trapani provided a summary and clarification of the situation involving Dr. Kate Pollock.
- An external investigative report concluded that some social media posts fell below expectations of civility and failed the *Pickering test*; however, the report did not find sufficient grounds under university guidelines for disciplinary action.
- The university chose not to discipline Dr. Pollock but decided not to renew her appointment.
- Dr. Trapani emphasized:
  - There is no new information beyond what was previously shared.
  - The union continues to represent Dr. Polak.
  - Discussions with the President are ongoing.
- Dr. Trapani raised several broader concerns for reflection:
  - Whether university guidelines provide sufficient clarity for employees
  - How “interference with the university’s mission” is defined and measured
  - The scope of presidential authority in personnel decisions
- Faculty expressed concern about precedent, academic freedom, and instructor vulnerability under annual contracts.

- Dr. Trapani clarified that:
  - Faculty Senate bylaws require all external processes (including grievances) to conclude before formal Senate committee action.
  - Senate members may still introduce resolutions independently if they choose.
  - One senator indicated interest in drafting a resolution, potentially for introduction under New Business.
- **Strategic Planning Update**
  - Strategic planning efforts are ongoing, with listening sessions underway.
  - Working groups will be formed once listening sessions conclude.
  - Faculty participation is expected and encouraged as the process moves forward.
- **H-1B Hiring Moratorium Update**
  - Discussions at the state level have shifted from eliminating current H-1B positions to a likely one-year moratorium on new H-1B hires.
  - This pose concerns particularly for STEM and business disciplines.
  - Efforts to secure exceptions were discussed but have not resulted in carve-outs.
- **Campus Safety & Board of Governors Update**
  - A new Student Safety and Success Committee is being proposed at the Board of Governors level.
  - Dr. Trapani relayed faculty concerns regarding increased securitization on campus and the lack of consistent safety infrastructure across classrooms and offices.
  - The issue of equity and symmetry in safety measures was highlighted.
- **Board of Trustees & Institutional Updates**
  - The Board of Trustees reaffirmed Metric 10 (research expenditures) as a key performance metric.
  - FAU has achieved all three Carnegie classifications:
    - R1 Research
    - Opportunity
    - Community Engagement
  - FAU is among a small group of universities nationally holding all three designations.

#### 4. Guest Speakers

James Capp, Associate Vice President Strategic Planning & Student Success to present a report on Admissions

- A PowerPoint presentation on Undergraduate Admissions, including FTIC enrollment, recruitment trends, transfer pathways, and enrollment projections, was presented.
- The presentation highlighted current and projected admissions data, enrollment strategies, and student success initiatives.
- The full presentation is linked and attached to these minutes for detailed data, charts, and analysis.

#### 5. Open Forum with the Provost

Provost Dawson-Scully acknowledged the seriousness of the current moment, particularly regarding personnel-related matters. While unable to address HR-specific issues, he committed to listening to faculty concerns and serving as a communication bridge between Faculty Senate and executive leadership (ELT). He then went on to the following topics:

- **Commitment to Faculty Engagement & Accessibility**
  - He emphasized strong support for academic freedom and academic integrity.

- He committed to:
  - Attending every Faculty Senate and Steering Committee meeting
  - Being accessible to Senate leadership outside of meetings
  - Attending faculty assemblies at colleges at least once per year, with the goal of once per semester
  - Visiting university-level faculty governance committees to better understand governance processes and best practices
  - Meeting regularly with department chairs, including scheduled lunches to hear departmental perspectives

The Provost shared that his goal is two-way communication: bringing faculty voices to administration and returning administrative context back to faculty.

- **Provost Background**
  - Provost Dawson-Scully shared his professional background, noting FAU as his first faculty appointment.
  - His academic background is in neuroscience, with research focused on animal adaptation to environmental stress.
  - He described his progression from faculty service into administrative leadership, including roles outside FAU, and his long-term aspiration to serve as Provost.
  - He expressed strong personal commitment to FAU and faculty service.
- **Strategic Plan Update**
  - He acknowledged faculty concerns about the pace of the strategic planning process.
  - He committed to requesting additional listening sessions once a draft is developed, allowing faculty feedback before finalization.
  - Emphasized that faculty participation and voice are essential to the plan's success.
- **University Website Redesign**
  - He announced an upcoming university-wide website redesign, noting it will occur in phases.
  - Phase One will prioritize consistent formatting and layout, with some functionality temporarily removed.
  - Later phases will restore functionality and backend processes.
  - Faculty raised concerns about limited ability to update research and departmental content in real time.
  - He committed to working with University Communications to improve faculty content management, including exploring automated systems that pull faculty scholarship data into web profiles.
- **Budget & Performance-Based Funding**
  - He provided an overview of the internal performance-based budgeting model under development.
  - Key points:
    - A steering committee has been working on this model for two years, including faculty representation.
    - The upcoming year will serve as a shadow year to analyze impacts without budget consequences.
    - Safeguards will be in place during early implementation to minimize negative effects.
    - Full implementation is expected by Year Four.
  - Faculty will receive updates and have opportunities to review how the model functions over time.

- **Board of Trustees & Board of Governors Updates**
  - He summarized recent Board of Trustees actions:
    - Reaffirmation of Metric 10 (research expenditures) as a key performance measure
    - Adjustment of funding thresholds due to changes in the federal research climate
    - Approval of matching funds for the College of Nursing in partnership with Palm Beach Health Network
  - Upcoming Board of Governors meetings will be reported on at a future Senate meeting.
  - He noted that Provosts across the state system meet monthly and he will share relevant system-level updates.
- **Vision & Institutional Priorities**
  - He outlined key priorities:
    - Reducing administrative burden on faculty to allow greater focus on teaching, research, and service
    - Strengthening student success metrics while maintaining academic integrity
    - Thoughtful integration of AI into pedagogy and curriculum
    - Expanding high-quality online education with best practices
    - Enhancing student engagement through internships and experiential learning
    - Growing FAU's R1 profile while ensuring contributions from all colleges are recognized
  - He emphasized the importance of sharing faculty success stories and institutional achievements broadly.
- **Recognition of Leadership & Service**
  - Provost Dawson-Scully expressed appreciation for Russ Ivy for his continued service during and after his interim Provost role.
  - He acknowledged the significant workload and leadership commitment demonstrated during that period.
  - Appreciation was also expressed for the Provost's Office team and their service to students and faculty.

## 6. Open Forum of the Senate

- Including discussion of:
  - A draft resolution circulated in advance for review and consideration.
  - Reports shared by faculty regarding community concerns, including allegations of individuals being stopped and questioned regarding legal status. Concerns raised included the manner of interactions and escalation during such incidents.
  - Limited availability of makeup exam services at the Testing Center for classes with fewer than 150 students.
  - Accessibility issues identified after course review, including the need for faculty to retrofit course materials to meet accessibility standards.
  - Communication challenges related to campus closures and event-related impacts, including advance notice and coordination.
- These items were introduced for discussion and awareness.

## 7. Committee Reports

- Academic Planning and Budgeting Committee, Kim Dunn
  - [26-27](#) and proposed [27-28](#) Academic Calendars
  - [Academic Calendar Overview](#)
  - [Class Minutes 2026-2027 Academic Calendar](#)

- [Class Mintes 2027-2028 Academic Calendar](#)
  - [Summer 2026](#)
  - [Class Minutes Summer 2026](#)
- Dr. Dunn presented proposed academic calendars with positive recommendations from Steering.
- AY 2026–2027 Academic Calendar:
  - Includes a one-day Fall Break on September 21.
  - Reading Days adjusted to begin one day later to maintain required instructional minutes.
    - **Motion:** A motion to approve the 2026-2027 academic calendar was made. **Motion carries.**
- AY 2027–2028 Academic Calendar:
  - Includes a one-day Fall Break on October 11.
  - Reading Days adjusted accordingly.
    - **Motion:** A motion to approve the 2027-2028 academic calendar was made. **Motion carries.**
- Summer 2026 Academic Calendar
  - A revision to the Summer 2026 calendar was presented to add an additional holiday in observance of Independence Day, recognizing the national anniversary.
  - Discussion included concerns about instructional time, particularly for accelerated summer courses.
  - The Committee noted plans to continue reviewing instructional minutes and to develop guidance on ensuring minimum contact hours.
    - **Motion:** Motion to approve the 2026 academic calendar with revision was made. **Motion carries.**

8. [UPC Consent Agenda](#)

- Positive recommendation from Steering. **Approved by unanimous consent.**

9. [UPC Action Agenda](#)

- Positive recommendation from Steering. **Motion to approve carries.**

10. UGC Consent Agenda

None.

11. UGC Action Agenda

None.

12. Old Business

- [Bylaw Revisions](#) Action
- Proposed revisions to the Faculty Senate Bylaws were presented with a positive recommendation from Steering, following review by Policies and Procedures.
- Attention was drawn to a clause requiring representation from multiple campuses for certain colleges, which has historically been unenforceable and not consistently applied.
  - Motion:** A motion to remove the unenforceable clause was made. **Motion carries.**
  - Motion:** A motion to adopt the revised bylaws as amended was made. **Motion carries.**

### 13. New Business

- Special Election
  - Steering (1)
- Steering Committee Vacancy
  - The Senate was informed of Dr. Khalid Sobhan's departure, creating a vacancy on the Steering Committee.
  - Per bylaw requirements, the vacancy must be filled as soon as possible.
  - A list of nominees for the one-year replacement term (remainder of the current year plus AY 2026–2027) was presented.
  - Nominees were asked to submit a brief written statement for inclusion in the voting materials.
  - Voting will be conducted electronically over a one-week period; voting ending on February 3, 2026 at 5PM, with the goal of seating the new member prior to the upcoming Steering Committee meeting.
- Spring Elections
  - Academic Planning and Budget Committee (3)
  - Policies and Procedures Committee (4)
  - Steering (3)
- Spring Senate Elections
  - The process for regular spring elections was outlined.
  - Open nominations will begin via email and close shortly after the February Senate meeting.
  - Elections will be held for two-year terms on the following committees:
    - Academic Planning & Budget
    - Policies & Procedures
    - Steering
- **Other: Proposed Resolution on Academic Freedom & Due Process**
  - A draft resolution concerning academic freedom, due process, transparency, and shared governance related to the case of Dr. Kate Polak was introduced and read into the record.
  - Senators engaged in discussion regarding:
    - Scope and wording of the draft resolution
    - Timing and urgency
    - The appropriate role of the Academic Freedom and Due Process Committee
    - Compliance with Senate bylaws regarding concurrent investigations by other bodies
  - **Motion:** A motion was made to defer formal committee investigation until it is confirmed that no other internal bodies are actively addressing the matter.
  - **Motion:** A motion was made to authorize the Senate President (with Steering) to draft a clear charge for the Academic Freedom and Due Process Committee at a later date.
  - Dr. Trapani committed to:
    - Convening Steering to refine a resolution
    - Calling a special Senate meeting to consider a revised resolution

- Reporting back to the Senate with updates

14. Good of the Senate

**15. Meeting adjourned at 3:02 PM.**

**UFS Senator Attendance Roster**  
**Spring 2026**

Senators include College representatives, faculty assembly heads, steering committee, standing committee chairs, elect/past president, and non-voting members President and Provost.

Present =x

Last Name	First Name	Role	College	26-Jan	23-Feb	30-Mar	27-Apr
Agapova	Anna	Senator	Business	x			
Almonte	Mauricio	Senator	Arts and Letters				
Arneklev	Bruce	Senator & Steering	SWCJ	x			
Atkin-Plunk	Cassandra	Senator	SWCJ	x			
Attonito	Jennifer	Senator	Business	x			
Baghersad	Milad	Senator	Business				
Balkan	Stacey	Senator	Arts and Letters				
Banerjee	Kuntal	Senator & FA Chair	Business				
Beetle	Chris	Senator	Science				
Berlatsky	Eric	Senator & UGC Chair	Arts and Letters				
Broderick	Amy	Senator	Arts and Letters				
Brown	Vicki	Senator & Policy and Procedures Chair	Education	x			
Burnett	Craig	Guest	Arts and Letters	x			
Calargé	Carla	Senator	Arts and Letters	x			
Darling	Sharon	Senator	Education	x			
Dawson-Scully	Ken	Provost	Academic Affairs	x			
DeGiorgio	Michael	Senator	EE&CS	x			
DeRigne	LeaAnne	Senator & Steering	SWCJ	x			
Dumbaugh	Eric	Senator	Science	x			
Dunn	Kim	Past-US President & APBC Chair	Business	x			
Eason	Shane	Senator & FA Chair	Arts and Letters				

Ellis	Meredith	Senator & Steering	Arts and Letters	x				
Ferguson	Michelle	Senator & FA Chair	Nursing	x				
Finnegan	Lisa	Senator	Education	x				
Fiorillo	Patricia	Senator & FA Chair	Library					
Furner	Joseph	Guest	Education	x				
Gendler	Richard	Senator	Business					
Gosser	Mary Ann	Guest	Honors and Schoars Program, UGS	x				
Harrawood	Michael	Senator	Honors					
Harris	Mike	Senator	Arts and Letters	x				
Hasner	Adam	University President	Office of the President					
Hoffman	Fred	Senator	Science	x				
Kaisar	Evangelos	Senator	EE&CS					
Lanning	Kevin	Senator	Honors	x				
Leventouri	Theodora	Senator	Science	x				
Levy	Ting	Senator	Business	x				
Lewin	Phil	Senator	Arts and Letters	x				
Lin	Yuandan	Senator	Science	x				
Locke	Stephen	Senator	Science					
Lu	Michael	Senator	Medicine					
Luck	George	Senator & FA Chair	Medicine					
MacDonald	Ian	Senator	Arts and Letters					
McConnell	Will	Senator	Arts and Letters	x				
Mello	Lawrence	Senator	Library					
Moslemian	Davood	Senator	EE&CS	x				
Mountford	Meredith	Senator	Education					
Newman	David	Senator & Steering	Nursing	x				
Nichols	Angela	Senator	Arts and Letters					
Nielsen	Sarah	Senator	Business					
Nikolova	Daniela	Senator	Science	x				
Penhollow	Tina	Research Chair	Science					
Quidley-Rodrigu	Narciso	Senator	Nursing	x				

Ramirez Agudel	Andres	Senator	Education				
Reyes-Guerra	Daniel	Senator & FA Chair	Education				
Robé	Chris	Senator	Arts and Letters				
Rosso	Stacie	Senator	Arts and Letters				
		Academic Freedom and Due Process Chair					
Rothe	Dawn	SWCJ	x				
Rowell	Shaina	Senator & FA Chair	Honors				
Sacca	Lea	Senator	Medicine				
Sacks	Emily	Senator	Business	x			
		Senator & FA Chair					
Sarajedini	Vicki	Science	x				
Schmidmeier	Markus	Senator	Science				
Schoorman	Dilys	Senator	Education				
Shen	Wen	Senator	Medicine	x			
Sorge	Korey	UUPC Chair	Science	x			
TBD		Senator	Education				
TBD		Senator	EE&CS				
		Senator & FA Chair					
Teegavarapu	Ramesh	EE&CS					
Terrell	Syvonne	Senator	Nursing	x			
Torres	Ayse	Senator	Education				
Trapani	William	UFS President	Arts and Letters	x			
Wagner	Kevin	Senator	Arts and Letters	x			
Warsi	Salwa	Guest	Registrar's Office	x			
Wiggill	Sarah	Senator	Medicine	x			
Yin	Zhijun	Senator	Science	x			