



**University Faculty Senate Meeting
Minutes
February 23, 2026
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Engineering East Room 106**

1. The UFS meeting was called to order by Dr. William Trapani at 1:01PM. The meeting was held in Engineering East Room 106.

2. Senate approved [February 2, 2026](#), UFS Minutes by unanimous consent.

3. President's Report

Dr. Trapani reported the following:

Update Regarding Dr. Kate Polak

- Dr. Trapani provided an update regarding the situation involving Dr. Kate Polak. He reiterated concerns about the university's decision not to renew her appointment and emphasized continued support for faculty.
- Additionally, Dr. Trapani expressed regret that the administration had chosen to block meaningful Senate review of administrative leave cases by denying participation with the Academic Freedom and Due Process committee. He noted that historically the administration has always cooperated with the committee's work, but that the new administration has taken a much different approach, arguing that the existence of lawsuits and likelihood of additional lawsuits meant that the cases were still active and not ripe for discussion. Dr. Trapani noted that meant it would likely be years before we received any clarity on why these actions had occurred and, especially, why a successful instructor such as Dr. Polak was being non-renewed by the President (which is also something that has never occurred before).
- He noted that due to these university decisions there was no further action he could take, but that the faculty union continues to represent Dr. Polak
- Dr. Trapani also raised broader issues for consideration by the Senate, including:
 - Whether university guidelines provide sufficient clarity for employees
 - How "interference with the university's mission" is defined
 - The scope of presidential authority in personnel decisions
- Faculty expressed concern about precedent, academic freedom, and the vulnerability of instructors working under annual contracts.
- Dr. Trapani also reported that he has asked the Provost to 1) explore whether multi-year contracts for instructors could be expanded across colleges in order to provide protection in case the administration engages in actions like this again and 2) to review SUS institutions' speech codes to see if there are additional protections that should be considered for adoption.

Strategic Planning Update

- Dr. Trapani reported that the university's strategic planning process is ongoing. Listening sessions are currently being conducted and faculty participation is encouraged.

- The administration has also formed a faculty committee with representatives from each college to assist in the development of the strategic plan.

H-1B Hiring Moratorium

- Dr. Trapani reported that state-level discussions appear to be moving toward a one-year moratorium on new H-1B hires, rather than elimination of existing positions.
- Faculty noted that such a policy could significantly impact hiring in STEM and business disciplines.

Campus Safety and Board of Governors Update

- Dr. Trapani reported that the Board of Governors is proposing a Student Safety and Success Committee.
- Faculty also expressed concerns about campus safety infrastructure and the uneven availability of safety measures in classrooms and offices.
- Dr. Trapani announced that he would be launching a “Special Committee on Campus Safety” as a way for faculty to engage in the governance process on these matters. He announced that Dr. Angela Nichols (Political Science) had agreed to chair the committee. He thanked Dr. Nichols and welcomed any volunteers or suggestions for committee topics.

Board of Trustees Update

- The Board of Trustees reaffirmed Metric 10 (research expenditures) as an important performance metric.
- FAU has also achieved all three Carnegie classifications:
 - R1 Research
 - Opportunity
 - Community Engagement
- FAU is among a small group of universities nationally to hold all three designations.

4. Guest Speakers

- Academic Integrity Module Update – Dan Meeroff, Dean of Undergraduate Studies
 - Dr. Meeroff presented a new Academic Integrity instructional module developed by the Office of Undergraduate Studies in collaboration with COSI.
 - The module is available in Canvas Commons and can be imported directly into courses by faculty.
 - The module includes four lessons:
 - Overview of academic integrity
 - Explanation of FAU Regulation 4.001 governing academic integrity
 - Guidance for students regarding due process during academic integrity cases
 - Overview of potential penalties for violations
 - The module is designed as a short instructional resource for students and is optional for faculty to adopt.

5. Open Forum with the Provost

Provost Dawson-Scully discussed several initiatives and priorities.

Provost Fellows Program

- The Provost discussed the Provost Fellows Program, which brings faculty into the Provost’s Office to work on institutional initiatives and policy development.
- He expressed appreciation for the faculty who recently served as fellows and noted the value of faculty expertise in addressing university priorities.

- **Summer Session and Intersession Planning**
 - The Provost highlighted work by Provost Fellow Dr. Michael Rappaport related to summer session planning and potential development of a summer intersession.
 - Preliminary analysis indicates that the university has historically budgeted summer offerings based on existing allocations rather than student demand.
 - The Provost indicated that expanding summer offerings could:
 - ✓ Increase revenue to support university initiatives
 - ✓ Improve student retention and graduation rates
 - ✓ Better align course availability with student demand
 - Discussions are underway with the university's Chief Financial Officer regarding possible expansion of summer offerings.

- **Faculty Professional Development**
 - The Provost also acknowledged the work of Provost Fellow Patricia Kollander, who worked on faculty professional development initiatives related to ACUE (Association of College and University Educators).
 - He noted that ACUE participation has shown positive outcomes in student success metrics and encouraged faculty participation in the program.

- **Artificial Intelligence Initiatives**
 - The Provost also noted that Provost Fellow Dr. Wendy Hinshaw has been working on initiatives related to artificial intelligence and its potential applications in teaching, learning, and university operations.
 - The initiative is intended to help the university explore responsible and effective ways to integrate emerging technologies into academic programs.

Faculty Engagement

- The Provost also reported that he has been meeting with:
 - faculty assemblies across colleges
 - governance committees
 - department chairs in small rotating groups
 - These meetings are intended to strengthen communication between faculty, governance and university administration.
6. Open Forum of the Senate
- Concerns regarding a classroom disruption incident and the need for clearer institutional guidance on how such situations should be handled were raised.
7. Committee Reports
- [Recommendation on BOG Statement of Free Expression](#), Academic Freedom and Due Process, Dawn Rothe
 - [Civil Discourse Final Report \(2022\)](#)
 - A statement developed by the Academic Freedom and Due Process Committee was presented.
 - Key points of the statement:

- Existing university policies generally align with the State University System Board of Governors’ free expression statement.
 - The Senate reaffirmed its commitment to civil discourse and the free exchange of ideas.
 - **Motion:** A motion was made to adopt the committee statement on civil discourse and freedom of expression. **Motion carries.**
- [Research Committee](#), Tina Penhollow
 - A report was provided regarding the work of the University Research Committee, which oversees faculty research recognition programs and sabbatical review processes.
 - The committee received 41 sabbatical applications during the most recent cycle and recommended 20 awards, representing an increase from previous years.
 - Applications were evaluated based on several criteria, including the clarity and feasibility of proposed research projects, anticipated scholarly outcomes, and the overall contribution of the work to the faculty member’s field and the university.
 - Discussion also included broader considerations regarding faculty research support and recognition.
- [Graduate Programs Committee](#), Eric Berlatsky
 - A report from the Graduate Council summarized committee activity during the academic year.
 - Between August and January, the committee reviewed and approved multiple graduate curriculum proposals, including:
 - New graduate programs
 - Program modifications
 - New course proposals
 - Course revisions
 - The committee also discussed efforts to improve clarity in thesis and dissertation titles to enhance public understanding of graduate research.
 - Additionally, members discussed the need for increased graduate assistant stipends in order to remain competitive in recruiting graduate students.
- [Undergraduate Programs Committee](#), Korey Sorge
 - The Undergraduate Programs Committee (UPC) provided an overview of its ongoing work reviewing undergraduate curriculum proposals.
 - The committee meets monthly and includes representatives from all colleges offering undergraduate programs. In addition to reviewing new courses and programs, the committee evaluates course revisions, program modifications, and proposals for course deactivations.
 - The committee works closely with the Registrar’s Office and other administrative units to ensure that curriculum changes align with university policies and catalog requirements.

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](#)

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

11. [UGC Action Agenda](#)

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

12. Old Business

- Senate Elections
 - The process for regular spring elections was outlined. Open nominations began via email and closed shortly after the February Senate meeting.
 - Elections will be held for two-year terms on the following committees:
 - Academic Planning & Budget Committee
 - Policies & Procedures Committee
 - Steering Committee
 - All available Academic Planning & Budget Committee (APBC) positions were filled during the nomination period. As a result, the APBC election was closed and removed from the ballot.

13. New Business

None.

14. Good of the Senate

- Discussion arose regarding the existence of two Graduate Council committees. It was clarified that the UGPC handles programmatic and curriculum changes, while the Graduate Council focuses on policy, graduate faculty appointments, and broader graduate education issues. A recommendation was made to consider having one representative serve on both committees to streamline operations.
- Concerns were raised about H1B visa restrictions and their potential impact on faculty recruitment, graduate student numbers, and research excellence. The group discussed the need for careful tracking, clear guidance on job postings, and internal processes to manage H1B-related hiring challenges. It was noted that this regulation has not yet passed and is still under public comment.
- Student travel funding for departmental ensembles was discussed. It was noted that current policies primarily support intercollegiate teams, leaving departments responsible for significant costs. There was a request to explore funding solutions for departmental ensembles attending conferences.
- Emphasis was placed on maintaining the recruitment and retention of world-class staff despite potential limitations imposed by visa policies. The broader context of the governor's edict and state-level decision-making was acknowledged.

15. **Meeting adjourned at 2:40 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 Note: Feb 2 special meeting

Last Name	First Name	Role	College	26-Jan	2-Feb	23-Feb	30-Mar	27-Apr
Agapova	Anna	Senator	Business	x		x		
Almonte	Mauricio	Senator	Arts and Letters					
Arneklev	Bruce	Senator & Steering	SWCJ	x	x	x		
Atkin-Plunk	Cassandra	Senator	SWCJ	x	x	x		
Attonito	Jennifer	Senator	Business	x	x	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			x		
Brown	Vicki	Senator & Policy and Procedures	Education	x				
Burnett	Craig	Guest	Arts and Letters	x		x		
Calargé	Carla	Senator	Arts and Letters	x				
Darling	Sharon	Senator	Education	x	x	x		
Dawson-Scully	Ken	Provost	Academic Affairs	x		x		
DeGiorgio	Michael	Senator	EE&CS	x		x		
DeRigne	LeaAnne	Senator & Steering	SWCJ	x		x		
Dumbaugh	Eric	Senator	Science	x				
Dunn	Kim	Past-US President & APBC Chair	Business	x		x		
Eason	Shane	Senator & FA Chair	Arts and Letters			x		

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

Nikolova	Daniela	Senator	Science	x	x	x		
Penhollow	Tina	Research Chair	Science					
Quidley- Rodriguez	Narciso	Senator	Nursing	x	x	x		
Ramirez Agudelo	Andres	Senator	Education		x	x		
Reyes-Guerra	Daniel	Senator & FA Chair	Education					
Robé	Chris	Senator	Arts and Letters					
Rossow	Stacie	Senator	Arts and Letters			x		
Rothe	Dawn	Academic Freedom and Due Process Chair	SWCJ	x		x		
Rowell	Shaina	Senator & FA Chair	Honors					
Sacca	Lea	Senator	Medicine					
Sacks	Emily	Senator	Business	x	x	x		
Sarajedini	Vicki	Senator & FA Chair	Science	x		x		
Schmidmeier	Markus	Senator	Science					
Schoorman	Dilys	Senator	Education	x	x	x		
Shen	Wen	Senator	Medicine	x				
Sorge	Korey	UUPC Chair	Science	x	x	x		
TBD		Senator	Education					
TBD		Senator	EE&CS					
Teegavarapu	Ramesh	Senator & FA Chair	EE&CS					
Terrell	Syvonne	Senator	Nursing	x		x		
Torres	Ayse	Senator	Education					
Trapani	William	UFS President	Arts and Letters	x	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	x	x		
Miller	Katie	Guest	Medicine		x			

Kharlamov	Viktor	Guest	Arts and Letters			x		
Duboue	Erik	Guest	Honors			x		