

Faculty Senate Plenary Meeting
Dec 17, 2026
Zoom
3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Attended on Zoom (39): Abeynanda, Gayan; Baughn, Christina; Brower, Greg; Capasso, Tom; Cole, Tracy; Cutchen, William; Daniel, Casey; Davidson, Clay (Cordell); Dasgupta, Santanu; Dzwonkowski, Brian; Frye, Doris; Gavrilita, Christina; Hauff, Caitlyn; Huang, Ying (Johnson); Hudson, Geoffrey; Liebertz, Scott; Lohar, Bhushan; McDonald, Tyler; O'Connor, Tracy; Pancione, Kirsten; Pramanik, Paramahansa; Pennywell, Gwendolyn; Pettway, Matthew; Rabideau, Brooks; Robertson, Justin; Salvitti Fermin, Mariarita; Shaw, Christy; Shea, Allyson; Stenson, Alexandra; Streeter, Donna; Swofford, Jim; ter Horst, Eleanor; Thomas, Rebecca; Vrana, Laura; VandeWaa, Elizabeth; Walker, Sean; Wassenaar, Christina; Wilbert, Arik; Wu, Charles (Kuan-Sheng)

Zoom Attended a Fraction of the Meeting (<30 min) (3): Coronado, Yun; Mbaka, Maryann; Marass, Ashley

Excused (11): Bates, Robin; Brock, Casey; Davis, Sara; Davis, Tara; des Neiges Léonard, Marie; Fox, Dalten; Giles, Rebecca; Grelet, Simon; Holliday, Candice; Huang, Jingshuan; Macdonald. Rebecca; Marri, Preethi; Merritt, Brandy; Minton, Bonnie; Parsell, Karen; Selwyn; Candice; Williams, Katie

Preliminary Business

This meeting was called to order ~3:00 p.m. with Faculty Senate Vicepresident, Laura Vrana, initially presiding. Faculty Senate President, Christina Wassenaar, took over presiding ~3:10 pm. Quorum (34 senators) was met.

Approval of November 2025 Minutes (38 Yes on Zoom, 0 No, 0 Abstentions)

Approval of December 2025 Agenda (38 Yes on Zoom, 0 No, 0 Abstentions)

President's Report:

Christina Wassenaar updated us on:

COM Dean Search : Interviews are completed. Four strong candidates applied. Decision will likely be made early next year.

Faculty Success Team: Work is in progress of compiling a list of Committee members, which is slated to include two Faculty Senate members, one Faculty at Large and around 7 administrators (senior enough to push forward change in the room). Christina Wassenaar is also working with Nicole Carr on finalizing a charge for this committee to be presented to Dr. Kent before Winter Break.

Regular Meeting with FS Leadership and CAD – although FS leadership meets regularly with the President’s Council, it has become clear that regular meetings with Deans and Chairs would also be extremely useful. Discussion between Christina Wassenaar and Dr. Kent along these lines have been encouraging and will hopefully lead to more formalized interaction between FS leadership and CAD starting next semester (Spring 2026).

Chair Professional Development - in conversation between Dr. Kent and Christina Wassenaar, Dr. Kent suggested that, as the program grows and more material is rolled out, participation by Chairs may become more expected, if not mandatory but details are not yet fleshed out. Also, what is useful will vary by Chair.

Old Business:

Salary Survey Peer-Institution Selection Process - in response to questions during the last Plenary Meeting, Geoffrey Hudson (Chair of the FS Faculty Salaries & Benefits Committee) gave a detailed presentation on how peer institutions were selected for the purpose of the salary survey. The PowerPoint slides are available (links below).

Link to PPT slides: [Faculty Salary Survey Process for 25-26 \(Faculty Senate Plenary Presentation Dec 25\) \(1\).pptx](#)

Link to the PDF version of the slides: [Faculty Salary Survey Process for 25-26 \(Faculty Senate Plenary Presentation Dec 25\) \(1\).pptx](#)

In the presentation and/or discussion that followed, the following was clarified or left as an action item:

- **Lower Access:** We had some discussion as to what the term “Lower Access” means in South Alabama’s 2025 Carnegie Classification - according to Gemini, A School is Labeled Lower Access in this Carnegie Ranking if its enrollment of Pell Grant Recipients and Underrepresented Minority students is lower than the average for its region.
- **Instructor:** Geoffrey Hudson was told that the adjustment (if any) for non-tenure track faculty will match the percentage for tenure track faculty.

- **Target Percentile for Salary:** a firm goal has not been set, rather the process is envisioned to involve looking at the data and then determining what is achievable.
- **Results Dissemination:** nothing specific has been said for this go-round, but last time the results were disseminated to the Deans & Faculty Senate.
- **2026 Salary Adjustment:** no firm commitment has been made for a salary adjustment in 2026. Rather, it will depend on how long it takes to crunch the data and what is available in the budget.
- **Survey Frequency:** the stated goal is to conduct salary surveys annually for at least three years, but that may depend on how long the process takes.
- **Library CIP** - because library CIP codes aren't always straight forward to properly align with our librarians job descriptions, it was pointed out that the 2021 CIP code for library faculty was correct and to please apply it again for this salary survey.
- **Other Classifications:** we had some discussion as to why only three classifications were used this year; the understanding is that Carnegie switched to using only these three classifications (which is also why the process had been delayed). However, as an action item, some clarification was sought on this point.

Reports from Committees (those in writing can be found in the attachments linked here: [Committee Reports](#))

- Evaluation (Clay Davidson) - *nr*
- FacDev&Ment (Tracy O'Connor) - *nr*
- FacSal&Ben (Geoffrey Hudson) - *PDF of Salary Survey presentation is available in the attachments to the agenda*
- Res&CreatAct (Rebecca Thomas)
 - Working with Angela Jordan on Spring Research Mixers - current concept is 3-Minute-Thesis-like intro followed by more informal socialization for the rest of the meeting.
- Sust&EnvirQual (Dalten Fox) - *nr*
- Teach/Learn&Tech (Michael Black) - *nr*
- UnivPlan&Dev (Sean Walker) - *nr*
- UnivPol&HandBk (Donna Streeter) - *in writing and below*
 - The Committee had received the Council of Dean's (CAD's) Revisions to Policies we (FS) had proposed.
 - A good bit of discussion ensued about FS 1029's Section 3.15.6 Non-Tenure Track Professorial Level Positions – Promotions: The action item that resulted was to explore if we could improve clarity of the section and expand it to people who were not initially hired as assistant professor of instruction/ credit time at other ranks performed with equivalent qualifications to assistant professor of instruction
 - Because of time pressure, the push is to accept the CAD-revised policy as is and work on additional revisions afterwards. As such, accepting the policy in its current state will be voted-upon during the next Plenary session.
- Wellbeing&Ret (Caitlyn Hauff) - *in writing*

- Bylaws Review Committee [ad hoc] (Candice Selwyn)

Reports from Caucus Leaders (those in writing can be found in the attachments linked here:[Caucus Reports](#))

- A&S (Eleanor ter Horst) - *nr*
- CAHP (Casey Brock) - *nr*
- CEPS (Caitlyn Hauff) - *in writing*
- CIS (Michael Black) - *nr*
- COM (Greg Brower) - *in writing: briefly: 4 candidates for COM Dean's Search, interview dates, CVs etc. can be found at a link provided in the attachment to the agenda*
- CON (Elizabeth Vandewaa) - *nr*
- ENGR (Brooks Rabideau) - *nr*
- LIB (Tracy Cole) - *in writing*
- MCOB (James Swofford) - *nr*
- SIM (Robin Bates) *USA Health Simulation Program is hosting the USA Foundation Meeting today 12/11/25. We will also have completed initial evaluation for accreditation on 12/15/25*

Reports from University Committees:

New Business

- Reminder: Surveys (ORED Research Administration Effectiveness & Structure - [Take the survey](#)),

Adjournment

Minutes created by Alexandra C. Stenson.