



# Faculty Senate

## Faculty Senate

Agenda for meeting of Thursday, April 23, 2026, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

**Location: In person at the Charge on Chamber, Student Union, Room 340**

*For those unable to make the in person meeting due to travel, location, or health issues, there is a Zoom option:*

<https://ucf.zoom.us/j/99071440669?pwd=nKA20Cu5aMvBk2gESibJ5pNI2H9hNY.1>

Passcode: 855988

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call via Qualtrics
3. Approval of Minutes of *March 26, 2026*
4. Recognition of Guests
5. Announcements
6. Report of the President
7. Report of the Provost
8. Presentation of the List of Candidates by the Nominating Committee Chair
  - a. Election of Officers for 2026-2027 Senate Year (voting will be conducted via Qualtrics; please ensure you have access to an electronic device to participate.)
    - i. Chair
    - ii. Vice Chair
    - iii. Secretary

*(Candidate information available in meeting materials.)*
9. Establishment of the Steering Committee Members for 2025-2026 Senate Year
10. Establishment of the Committee on Committees Members for the 2025-2026 Senate Year
11. New Business
  - a) Senator Staffing on Faculty Senate Committees
12. Other Business
13. Adjournment

## 2026-2027 Faculty Senate Nominee Forums

### Jeffrey Kauffman

#### **Forum Zoom Information:**

**Time: Monday, April 20, 12-1pm**

Topic: Faculty Senate Chair Candidate Forum

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://ucf.zoom.us/j/94555226886?pwd=9hEb2fRbS5Q3PMghcsXB3p04AqmKIP.1>

### Devon Jensen

#### **Forum Zoom Information:**

**Time: Wednesday, April 22, 10-11 am**

Topic: Faculty Senate Chair Candidate Forum

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://ucf.zoom.us/j/98739129562?pwd=sphhaAdwZ3wDq3SvEmyewDbarJYUok.1>

### Nicole Lapeyrouse

#### **Forum Zoom Information:**

**Time: Friday, April 17, 11-12pm**

Topic: Faculty Senate Vice Chair Candidate Forum

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://ucf.zoom.us/j/97838741371?pwd=hHQvj0xU3PcrW0KZzb5K2tuHDld8U1.1>

### Peter Sinelli

#### **Forum Zoom Information:**

**Time: Friday, April 17, 10-11am**

Topic: Faculty Senate Vice Chair Candidate Forum

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://ucf.zoom.us/j/98561944330?pwd=s5jpGxAE8dWxFbeubU7xa4Kd4jjij2.1>

### Daniel Seigler

#### **Forum Zoom Information:**

**Time: Tuesday, April 21, 12-1pm**

Topic: Faculty Senate Secretary Candidate Forum

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://ucf.zoom.us/j/97162885617?pwd=Vx7zxAaAXicK7An5rs9UJVNRXk5bo6.1>

## **Chair Candidate: Jeff Kauffman**

**Biography:** I am an Associate Professor and Associate Chair in charge of undergraduate programs in the Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering Department. I conduct broad research in the areas of structural dynamics and adaptive structures, with particular emphasis on multifunctional and energy-efficient structures for vibration reduction, structural morphing, and energy harvesting. My projects, funded by NSF, ONR, DoD, NASA, and industry partners, range from developing high-bandwidth, high-authority actuators for vibration testing in jet engines to taking inspiration from how mosquitoes eject drops from their wings before flight to discover new ways of decontaminating surfaces.



I enjoy teaching a variety of courses, from large lectures (365 students in Aerospace Structures at 7:30am!) to lab-oriented classes. There I get to interact with students more directly and witness their “aha!” moments in the smaller lab setting. I am fortunate to advise a fantastic research group with a diverse mix of students who keep me on my toes (like by hiding 250 miniature ducks in my office). With Ali Gordon, I direct HYPER, an NSF REU Site that provides summer research experiences in hypersonics (113 undergraduate students since 2019). Beyond UCF, I am an AIAA Associate Fellow, Chair of the Adaptive Structures Technical Committee, and Deputy Director of the Aerospace Design and Structures Group. There I frequently write the committee’s annual “Year-in-Review” article for *Aerospace America*, which allows me to highlight and advertise all the cool research my colleagues across the world are doing.

**Pathway to Service and Leadership:** My experience in and approach to leadership is rooted in service. I am sure many of us got started in similar ways, by pitching in when our department asked us to help on a committee or with a special initiative. For me, it started with search committees shortly after joining UCF, then the department Lab Committee, and other department/college roles. At this stage, I was noticing how much more a group could accomplish when there was effective leadership from the committee chair. Several years in, I was my college’s representative to the Undergraduate Policy and Curriculum Committee (UPCC) / Undergraduate Council, which elected me as chair starting in 2021. A year prior, my colleagues elected me to Senate, and then to Steering in 2022.

These past two years, I have served the Senate as Vice Chair. Last Spring, my department asked me to serve as Associate Chair and Undergraduate Program Coordinator. In my department, that also means leading the ABET accreditation effort, and we are wrapping up compiling two Self-Study Reports for our undergraduate programs. Beyond UCF, I have served my technical community through various roles on the AIAA Adaptive Structures Technical Committee. My colleagues elected me as Chair two years ago, and as I conclude my term there, the Group Director tabbed me to serve as one of her Deputy Directors moving forward.

**Senate Activities and Leadership:** As Vice Chair, my most important role was to chair the Committee on Committees, which is responsible for staffing all the 30+ Faculty Senate committees and councils – this is where the real work of the Senate happens! We worked diligently to ensure diverse representation so that perspectives from across the university are included. This past year, I have filled in for Chair King in three Senate meetings due to conflicts with Board of Governors / Board of Trustees meetings. In those meetings, I ensured all Senators had an opportunity to speak and be heard, including navigating and then working with the Student Union and Chair King to get those pesky audio issues fixed! I believe we had vibrant discussions in these meetings that provided valuable feedback to administration (while still ending on time!).

As Vice Chair, I also represented UCF on the Advisory Council of Faculty Senates, meeting with our counterparts from other SUS institutions and advocating for our interests with the Chancellor and Board of Governors. Along the way, I have worked with Chair King to brainstorm timely Campus Climate Report topics, bylaws revisions for a more effective Senate, topics to refer to various committees, and strategies for advocating for faculty at the Board of Governors.

**Strengthening Shared Governance:** If elected, my overriding goal as Senate Chair will be to advocate for faculty by strengthening the Senate's role in university governance. We need to build on what Chair King has accomplished in terms of working with the administration to find solutions to the many issues faculty face. Expanding this interaction requires an effective leader who can work with administrators and the Board of Trustees to maintain credibility while still pushing back against university overreach. We certainly have work to do, yet there is progress – while some issues or regulations changes just pop up on our radar, both Provosts Johnson and Buckwalter have come to the Senate requesting our input on key policies instead of simply announcing decisions. My goal is to elevate the collective concerns of the Senate and embed faculty voices in the university decision-making process. This approach also provides greater transparency into how the administration makes its decisions and, equally importantly, communicates the impacts.

Turning inward, I am keenly aware that our committees are a vital avenue for shared governance, and we need to remain informed of their work. Our Senate agendas include reports from operational and curriculum committees when time permits. When relevant, I plan to add a committee highlight as part of our Campus Climate Reports, identifying a committee addressing a timely topic for a short discussion at Senate. Another key goal is to revitalize the Senate website so it can serve as a useful repository of materials for committees, Senators, and general faculty alike. In this way, all faculty will be able to see what the committees are accomplishing, and it will be easier for Senators to communicate with and receive feedback from our informed colleagues.

**Reducing Administrative Burden:** We all recognize the steady increase in administrative and bureaucratic tasks. Faculty already do not have enough time to focus on teaching, research, and service, and this trend is getting worse. The Provost recently remarked how the most effective departments are those where faculty pitch in to help each other. Of course we all want to do that, but too often we either do not have the time to take on another task, or we are so tied up with busy work that we do not get to know our colleagues well enough to ask for help! Faculty have raised these concerns but have not seen the necessary changes, and I fear many have simply resigned themselves to this new load. We have heard promising things this year at Senate on financial and HR centers focusing on customer service. We need to stay engaged in this process, provide direct feedback, hold the administration accountable to deliver this new culture, and then continue that momentum to other areas of the university.

**Advocating for Engagement of All Faculty:** The current academic life in Florida is not what I expected 15 years ago. Yet I desire all faculty find their role as fulfilling as I find mine. I recognize that as UCF navigates this new landscape, some colleagues feel disconnected. The Collaboration and Engagement Committee identified weaknesses and gave terrific recommendations to the Provost on collaborations, recognition and evaluation, communication, and resources. We need to keep these topics front and center so that we see concrete actions from the administration. One of the things I appreciate most about serving in Senate is getting to know colleagues across the university and hearing their perspectives. This experience has made me much more aware of how different units approach problems and how the Senate can help find solutions. In my college, the Senators periodically gather for lunch. Regardless of the election outcome, I plan to do the same with several Senators at a time across various units so we can share and hear each other's experiences. Building these cross-unit relationships will make a stronger and more informed Senate, and it will enable all Senators to advocate more effectively for the entire faculty body.

## Faculty Senate Chair Nomination Statement

### Dr. Devon Jensen – ELHE Department in CCIE



**Bio Statement:** I serve as a faculty member in the Department of Educational Leadership and Higher Education in CCIE at the University of Central Florida, where I teach across both master's and doctoral programs. My teaching and scholarship focus on higher education leadership, finance, governance, student success, career pathways, and institutional strategy. Prior to my current role, I served in graduate education leadership, working closely with faculty and university leadership to support program development, policy implementation, and student success initiatives. My work is grounded in connecting theory to practice through a sustained focus on institutional context. In my teaching, I regularly incorporate UCF-specific data and policy realities ranging from performance-based funding and enrollment management to budgeting, curriculum governance, and student outcomes. This approach reflects my broader commitment to understanding and engaging the systems that shape institutional effectiveness. Through my service on the Faculty Senate as both a member and a supporting administrator, I have developed a strong appreciation for the role of shared governance in navigating complex institutional environments. I approach this work as both a scholar and practitioner as someone who seeks to interpret complexity, connect perspectives, and contribute to informed decision-making.

**Faculty Senate and UCF Alignment:** UCF is operating in a moment of significant institutional momentum and complexity. The university's recent achievement of preeminence within the State University System of Florida, its continued investment in technology and innovation, and its ambition to be recognized among the nation's top 25 public research universities all represent important advances. At the same time, these priorities are reshaping the expectations, experiences, and responsibilities of faculty. As expectations evolve around research productivity, interdisciplinary engagement, workforce alignment, and student success outcomes, it is essential that these changes are implemented in ways that are both strategic and sustainable. Faculty are central to this work, and the Faculty Senate plays a critical role in ensuring that institutional progress is informed by faculty expertise, grounded in academic values, and aligned with the full mission of the university.

#### **Focused Design:**

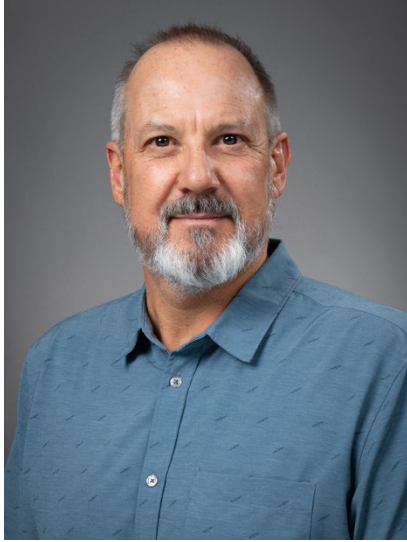
**1. Strengthening Shared Governance Through Clarity and Engagement:** Effective governance depends on transparency, communication, and trust. I will work to ensure that Faculty Senate discussions and decisions are clearly communicated across colleges and departments, while also strengthening feedback loops that allow faculty perspectives to meaningfully inform institutional decision-making.

**2. Grounding Senate Work in Institutional Context and Evidence:** The strategic directions for UCF whether related to funding models, academic program development, or student success are deeply interconnected. I will support a Faculty Senate that engages these institutional realities with a clear understanding of institutional data, policy context, and strategic priorities. My goal is to help the Senate serve as a space where complexity is not simplified but thoughtfully interpreted.

**3. Supporting Faculty Success in a Changing Institutional Environment:** As UCF advances its strategic priorities previously mentioned, it is critical to ensure that faculty across disciplines are supported in navigating evolving expectations. This includes maintaining balance across teaching, research, and service; while recognizing the spectrum of faculty roles and contributions; and ensuring that institutional strategies reflect the breadth of the academic mission.

**Closing:** I approach this role with a deep respect for the responsibility of faculty governance and a commitment to collaborative, informed leadership. UCF's continued growth and success depend on our ability to navigate complexity with clarity, purpose, and shared commitment. The Faculty Senate has an essential role to play in that work, and I would be honored to serve in this capacity.

## Vice Chair Candidate: Pete Sinelli



**Biography:** I am a Senior Lecturer who joined the UCF Anthropology department in 2005. My archaeological research centers on the Lucayan Taino people who lived in the Bahamas and Turks & Caicos Islands and were the first Indigenous Americans impacted by European colonialism. I teach a broad array of archaeology and anthropology courses across all modes, from large GEP sections to upper division topical offerings for Anthropology majors. My approach to teaching and course design has earned three Teaching Incentive Program Awards, a COS Outstanding Instruction Award, and a COS Inclusive Design Professional Development Award.

I believe strongly in the power of high-impact experiential learning. Since 2011, I have led the annual Caribbean Archaeology Field School through UCF Study Abroad. The program is the largest and longest-running archaeological field school at UCF, and has earned a High-Impact Practice/Research Intensive designation. Over the years, hundreds of undergraduates have developed skills in field archaeology by excavating Lucayan Taino sites with me in the islands. Many have worked further under my supervision to complete Directed Research which culminated in presentations at the Student Scholar Symposium, while others have cultivated their experience into a graduate study topic. I also serve on or chair committees for HUT, MA, and Ph.D. students, one of whom was awarded an NSF Doctoral Dissertation Improvement Grant in 2023 to fund her research in the Turks & Caicos.

Prior to joining the Faculty Senate to represent Anthropology in 2024, I had served on or chaired a wide variety of departmental, college, and university committees. These include committees charged to hire or promote faculty, grant teaching awards, conduct program assessment, develop undergraduate and graduate curricula, refine faculty evaluation and workload equity policies, encourage student progress to timely graduation, and award internal research funding.

As a senator, I served as Vice Chair of the Budget & Administrative Committee in the 2024-25 academic year. I was elected Chair of B&A in Fall 2025, and led the committee's effort to improve the Classroom Assignment Optimizer process by working closely with administration, faculty, and unit scheduling staff. I also sat

on the Parking and Transportation Committee from Spring 2024 through Fall 2025. In Spring 2026 I have been on Professional Development Leave to write a book on the archaeology of the Turks & Caicos Islands.

**Priorities as Vice-Chair:** The Vice Chair assists Senate leaders and membership to craft and implement policies which address pressing faculty needs and interests. The Vice Chair also builds and leverages relationships across the university and the state to advance the ideal of shared faculty governance more broadly. I will partner with my Senate colleagues, UCF administration, staff, and other stakeholders to achieve the Senate's 2026-2027 goals and promote its wider strategic mission. Specifically, I am eager to work with you to operationalize Senate Resolutions 2025-2026-4 *Prioritization of Campus Safety* and 2025-2026-6 *Strategic Utilization of Auxiliary Funds to Support UCF's Research Mission*.

The Vice Chair plays a critical role as Chair of the Committee on Committees, which consults with senators, faculty, deans, and unit heads to match members of the UCF community with service opportunities on Senate and University committees and councils. Senate expansion introduces new prospects, and I will work with the Committee on Committees to identify and recruit a comprehensive pool of candidates. Shared governance works best when *all* voices are heard, and the perspectives, ideas, and concerns of people from all backgrounds, faculty ranks, units, departments, and academic disciplines will be represented.

## **Vice Chair Candidate: Nicole Lapeyrouse**

Nicole Lapeyrouse, Ph.D., is an Associate Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry. She earned her Ph.D. and M.S. in Chemistry from the University of Central Florida and holds a B.S. in Chemistry from Florida International University. At UCF, her research focuses on chemistry education, and she has mentored 15 undergraduate students and 1 graduate student.



Since joining UCF as a Lecturer in 2020 and advancing to Associate Lecturer in 2025, she has taken on multiple leadership roles while teaching and redesigning large enrollment ( $n \leq 300$ ) undergraduate courses. She has transformed foundational chemistry and geology courses by integrating active learning, adaptive technologies, and the development of open educational resources. Nicole's impact on education has been recognized through numerous honors, including the 2025 Dziuban Award for Excellence in Online Teaching, the Online Learning Consortium Award for Excellence in Instructional and Teaching Practice, the Undergraduate Research Mentor of the Year Award, and multiple university-level teaching and service recognitions.

At the university, Nicole has served on a wide range of committees both at the university and departmental levels. She currently serves as a Faculty Senate Senator, Co-Chair of the Undergraduate Course Review Committee, Co-Chair of the Undergraduate General Chemistry Committee, and Chair of the Chemistry Department's Engagement and Retention Committee.

Beyond UCF, Nicole has demonstrated significant professional and community leadership through the American Chemical Society. At the local level, Nicole has held multiple elected leadership roles within the ACS Orlando Section, including Chair-Elect (2022), Chair (2023), Immediate Past Chair (2024), Alternate Councilor (2025), and Councilor (2026-present). In her roles, she helped organize the 2025 Southeastern and Southwest Regional Meeting of the American Chemical Society (SERMACS) in Orlando. This conference served more than 1,200 attendees across diverse chemistry disciplines and required coordination among institutional, professional, and volunteer stakeholders. In addition to helping plan SERMACS, Nicole served as the Chair of the Graduate Fair and coordinated with 48 graduate programs to showcase their programs during the event. At the divisional level of ACS, Nicole has served since 2019 as an International Activities Committee Member within the ACS Division of Chemical Education. In this role, she has also helped evaluate and award travel funding for early-career researchers to attend international conferences.



Danny Seigler is an Associate Lecturer and Director of the Master of Research Administration program in the School of Public Administration at the University of Central Florida. With over a decade of academic experience at UCF, he has demonstrated a deep commitment to faculty governance, student success, and institutional service.

Dr. Seigler earned his Ph.D. in Public Affairs, MPA, and BA in Public Administration from UCF, establishing a lifelong connection to the university and its mission. His research focuses on social media responsiveness in the public sector, citizen trust in government, and online engagement strategies. His work has been published in leading peer-reviewed journals and presented at national and international conferences.

Beyond research and teaching, he has been an active participant in faculty leadership. He currently serves on the UCF Faculty Senate and its Steering Committee as the Senate Secretary. His previous service includes membership on the Faculty Senate Graduate Council Appeals Committee and the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee.

His dedication to faculty advocacy and shared governance makes him an excellent candidate for Faculty Senate Secretary. In this role, he aims to enhance communication, transparency, and efficiency in Senate operations, ensuring that faculty voices are heard and represented in university decision-making.

As a proud UCF Knight and dedicated alumnus, he views this opportunity as another way to give back to the institution that has shaped his academic and professional journey. His passion for UCF's mission and commitment to its faculty and students make him eager to serve and contribute to the university's continued success.

He looks forward to continuing his service to the UCF community and would be honored to serve as Faculty Senate Secretary.