



# Faculty Senate

## Steering Committee

Agenda for meeting of Thursday, September 18, 2025, 3:00 – 5:00 p.m.

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

1. Call to Order - 3:00 p.m.
2. Roll Call via Qualtrics
3. Approval of Minutes of August 21, 2025
4. Recognition of Guests -

The following were In-Person Guests:

John Buckwalter, Provost

Joel Cramer, Interim Vice Provost for Faculty Excellence

Adrienne Frame, Vice President for Student Success and Well-Being

Marc Mendonca, Associate Vice President for Research and Scholarship

Joe Adams, Senior Executive Writer, Provost's Office

Katy Miller, Associate Librarian, Faculty Senate Student Success Council Chair

5. Announcements –

Chair King shared the following announcements at the meeting:

- a) The next Board of Trustees meeting will be held on September 22 at the FAIRWINDS Alumni Center
  - i) Meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. sharp with a report from the President and Board Chair, which will include an unspecified announcement
  - ii) All meetings are open to the public, and attendees are welcome
  - iii) Breakfast and lunch will be served
- b) Reminder about the AI for All initiative:
  - i) An email was sent with details and a link to the website
  - ii) The site includes a wide range of resources, including many AI apps that are listed and color-coded for usage
  - iii) Members are encouraged to review the website
- c) Update on Interfolio and Annual Evaluations:
  - i) Faculty received emails about the need to download Annual Evaluations
  - ii) The deadline is September 19th

## 6. Report of the Senate Chair –

Chair King focused his report on discussion held at the Board of Governors meeting held on September 10–11, at New College in Sarasota and shared three points of interest from that meeting:

### a) Point of Interest #1: New Syllabus Regulation

- i) There is a new BOG regulation that all 12 SUS institutions must post syllabi for all classes 45 days before the semester begins
- ii) The ACFS raised concerns about this, but most points remained unchanged; three clarifications/modifications were secured:
  - (1) Updating syllabi: Universities set their own procedures, but updated versions must be posted in the repository, so students have current information the following year (clarification from BOG staff)
  - (2) Instructional materials defined: Includes required and recommended textbooks and readings, but does not include teaching materials such as PowerPoints, notes, or lesson plans (clarification from BOG staff)
  - (3) Student assignments removed: ACFS amendment to strike “student assignments” from required syllabus content was approved

### b) Point of Interest #2: Fiscal Predictions for Florida

- i) The following are approximate changes forecasted for the state budget:
  - (1) 2026: +\$3.7B (increase)
  - (2) 2027: –\$1.5B (decrease)
  - (3) 2028: –\$6.5B (decrease)
- ii) The implications are that the state legislature is unlikely to fund large recurring projects, but may approve one-time projects
- iii) Chair King reminded us about funding from a national perspective: for example, the University of Oregon is facing \$29M deficit, layoffs, and hiring freezes; other institutions also experiencing fiscal cliffs
- iv) Relevance for UCF:
  - (1) Trustees have a fiduciary responsibility to prevent UCF from financial crisis (e.g., bankruptcy)



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- (2) Current outlook is stable, but fiscal uncertainty (state + federal changes) requires cautious planning
- (3) UCF has been good stewards, but there will be some headwinds to consider in future planning

## c) Point of Interest #3: Free Speech and Civil Discourse

- i) Context: Impact of Charlie Kirk's murder on higher education and campus free speech
- ii) Chair King shared a directive from the Chancellor to SUS presidents; here are the three key points in that directive:
  - (1) Free expression is paramount but not absolute
  - (2) Excusing or celebrating campus violence will not be tolerated
  - (3) Presidents must review and enforce policies on civil discourse, social media, and employee/student conduct
- iii) Chair King noted the difference between the Chancellor's directive and the BOG's own previously "recommended" free expression statement
- iv) Implications:
  - (1) Universities, including UCF, must follow the Chancellor's directive
  - (2) Growing trend of doxxing, investigations, and faculty/staff discipline for speech-related issues (5 known cases at FAU, others possible across SUS)
- v) Takeaway for the Senate:
  - (1) Importance of Robert's Rules of Order as a protective mechanism for civil discourse in Senate meetings
  - (2) Senate leadership and ACFS continue monitoring and providing input on emerging issues

- d) In closing, Chair King recognizes the challenges and uncertainty ahead, and emphasis maintaining civil discourse during disagreements

## 7. Report of the Provost –

The provost thanked Chair King for his report and shared the following report:



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- a) The provost acknowledged that Higher Ed is challenging right now, and events of the past week didn't make it any less challenging
  - i) We have the "Campus Free Expression Act" in 2018 to expressly protect the right of free speech activities at universities
  - ii) UCF must remain a place where ideas are tested, challenged, and debated with a strong foundation of respectful dialogue
  - iii) However, while the right to free expression is paramount, it is not absolute and where it crosses over, we have existing policies that can be enforced
  - iv) The provost expressed confidence the faculty will model the pursuit of knowledge and the corresponding responsibility we share to foster a safe and respectful community and thanked the faculty for continuing to lead with wisdom and care for our university community
- b) The provost also provided highlights from the Board of Governors meeting last week
  - i) The first day of the meeting was about the metrics for performance-based funding and the attempt to align them with SUS 30 goals
  - ii) Some metrics will stay the same; others will be modified
  - iii) Metrics around degrees of strategic emphasis, post-graduation employment, and affordability are all likely to be updated
  - iv) The provost expressed confidence given UCF's current efforts that the institution should do well with these metrics
- c) The provost also talked about the Legislative Budget request passed by the BOG
  - i) None of these are certain to be funded but UCF could see additional funding should they be enacted
- d) The provost talked about progress to Higher Learning Commission accreditation and expressed that UCF's application has been well received and will be reviewed by HLC at their board meeting in November
- e) The provost concluded by thanking the faculty for all that they do for UCF and our students, and took questions on the following:
  - i) The loss of access to annual evaluations from Interfolio



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- ii) Confusion over whether UCF did reach the metrics needed for preeminence – at this time it looks like UCF has met the metrics, but we have to wait until everything is confirmed officially
  - iii) HSI designation and McNair Scholarship funding – the provost has not received notice that we have lost either of these at this time
8. Unfinished Business - There was no unfinished business
9. New Business -
- a) Resolution 2025-2026-3:
    - i) Bylaws Amendment: Faculty Senate Student Success Council
    - ii) Motion to approve the resolution to the Faculty Senate (does not need 2<sup>nd</sup> because it came from a committee)
    - iii) Motion passed
  - b) Ad Hoc Faculty Collaboration and Engagement Committee
    - i) Vice Chair Kauffman presided over this part of the meeting so Chair King could share this update and take questions
  - c) Senate Agenda for October 2<sup>nd</sup>
    - i) Resolutions on the agenda:
      - (1) Resolution 2025-2026-2 – will be up for debate and vote
      - (2) Resolution 2025-2026-3 – discussion only
    - ii) Campus Climate Report:
      - (1) Topic: Discussion of the Faculty and Staff Experience Survey
  - d) Collaboration & Engagement Committee and Faculty Focus Group
    - i) A big takeaway from both groups is how we're getting input from faculty
    - ii) In the past, feedback often went from deans to chairs and then to just a small group of faculty
    - iii) Chair King has been pushing for more direct and meaningful input from faculty themselves
    - iv) The Faculty Senate is a perfect place for this; it's made up of faculty elected by their peers, so it's a great group to represent the wider faculty voice
10. Committee Reports – The following committees had potential liaisons identified:
- a) IT Committee – The Chair is Glenn Martin (IST in OR) – Crystal Maraj was suggested to be the Steering liaison, Chair King will contact her
  - b) Personnel Committee – The Chair is Matthew Mosher (NSCM in COS) – Nicole Lapeyrouse agreed to be the Steering liaison
11. Other Business - None
12. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 4:32

Daniel Seigler

9/10/2025

Daniel Seigler

Date

Secretary, Faculty Senate

September 18<sup>th</sup> steering committee chair announcements and report

### **my Announcements:**

**First,** The next Board of Trustee meeting is on September 22<sup>nd</sup> here at the FAIRWINDS alumni center. We will start the meeting at 8:30 am with a report from the president and Board chair, for some unknown and unnamed announcement. All meetings are open to the public and you are welcome to attend!

Second: I hope you saw the email about the AI for All initiative. There is a website that has a wealth of useful knowledge. I'll point out that many AI apps are listed and color coded. Please check the website out when you have the chance.

Third: I want to mention the emails we received about interfolio and the need to download Annual Evaluations within just over ten days before they are no longer available. Well, the window to do this is tomorrow, so I am mentioning this now as I plan to ask the first question to the provost about this topic

### **Chair's report**

I'm going to focus on events at the Board of Governors meeting that occurred September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> at the New College campus in Sarasota.

I'll talk about 3 different things of interest:

#### **1<sup>st</sup> of three topics from the BOG: new syllabus regulation**

There will be a new BOG regulation requiring all 12 SUS institutions to have syllabi for ALL classes posted 45 days ahead of the semester.

At the ACFS, we had several issues with this, and for most we were not able to get the BOG to budge.

But there are three points where we got public clarification and a key change made

**1<sup>st</sup>** ACFS chair Kim Dunn Question 1: what do faculty need to do to update a syllabus if there are changes?

Answer: Emily Sikes: up to each university to set details...but would need to update syllabus in the repository after changes occur so that the following year students have current syllabus information on hand.

**2<sup>nd</sup>** ACFS chair Kim Dunn Question Can you give a definition of "Instruction materials"?

Answer : Emily Sikes: instructional materials are required and recommended textbooks and reading materials.

Steve Note: There was no mention of teaching materials like PowerPoints, class notes, personal lesson plans, etc.

**3<sup>rd</sup>** ACFS chair Kim Dunn Amendment:

Strike “student assignments in the regulation. This was approved and effectively removes student assignments from the required portion of the syllabus.

**Next topic from the BOG: fiscal predictions for Florida**

BOG following state budget forecast w grain of salt:

2026 3.7B increase                      2027 1.5B decrease

2028 6.5B decrease

Why is this relevant: the state legislature is unlikely to fund large recurring projects as they worry about the predicted decrease in the state budget, but may fund one-time projects.

I will also note that just recently the University of Oregon ran into a \$29 M dollar hole and is having to layoff faculty, not fill faculty openings, and take other drastic measures to stay solvent.

They join a growing list of higher education universities and systems that are running into a fiscal cliff all across the country over the past few years.

As a UCF Trustee, my number 1 fiducial responsibility is to make sure UCF does not go bankrupt or otherwise get into extreme fiscal trouble. What may seem like a far-fetched problem is creeping up on other institutions all across the country. So far we are OK here at UCF, but the entire situation, especially when you add federal changes into the fiscal issues, means there is uncertainty in our future fiscal planning and we need to be smart and cautious.

**OK third event from the BOG:** the impact of the Charlie Kirk murder on a higher education campus.

Do not discredit the impact this event is already having on free speech on campuses and across the entire country. The SUS presidents have all been directed by the Chancellor of the SUS regarding civil discourse, free expression and debate. I will quote a section of his memo

*“...while the right to free expression is paramount it is not absolute. Celebrating or excusing campus violence—and in this case, the murder of Charlie Kirk— by members of our university system will not be tolerated. Such behavior is abhorrent, has the deleterious effects of breeding further violence and undermines efforts to promote civil discourse. Accordingly, Presidents are directed to review policies, procedures and codes of conduct for employees and students regarding social media postings and other related communications and ensure such measures are deliberately enforced.”*

I will acknowledge the differences between that statement from the BOG Chancellor and the BOG’s own statement of Free expression that we, as the UCF steering committee, have been “recommended” to endorse for the last three years.

Whatever you think of the Chancellor's interpretation of free speech and precedent, this is what all of the state universities, UCF included, are now required to follow.

I sincerely hope none of us here push the free speech envelope and find ourselves as a test case for brand new interpretations of the limits of first amendment free speech protections. What we are seeing is that....although people have been allowed to speak freely, ....employers have taken actions based on their viewpoints of that free speech.

You are likely aware of the public doxxing of people, including faculty and staff at State of Florida Universities, that has resulted in firings or forced administrative leave while investigations are occurring.

This is real and does not appear to be slowing down. I am aware of 5 cases at FAU, and I would not be surprised if other cases become public across the SUS.

So it is on this environment, that I will come back to something we talked about a month ago at our first steering and senate meeting:

how we conduct our faculty senate meetings, using Roberts Rules as a protective mechanism to promote civil discourse even if we vehemently disagree with a different viewpoint being expressed.

I will say in this new free speech environment, adhering to the tenets of civil discourse are more important than they have likely been in our lifetimes.

I want to clearly let you know that the senate leadership and the ACFS is following and providing input where we can on different issues that arise at any time, and this year some unexpected things have already occurred and I worry what else is going to surprise us.

Thank you.



1 **Resolution 2025-2026-3**  
2 **Bylaws Amendment: Faculty Senate Student Success Council**  
3

4 **Whereas**, student success encompasses a broad array of departments, programs,  
5 initiatives, and policies that require administration and faculty working together to help our  
6 students complete their studies and prepare for the future; and  
7

8 **Whereas**, the faculty at UCF have a critical role in guiding and enhancing the success of  
9 our students as they take classes and progress through degree programs; and  
10

11 **Whereas**, the Faculty Senate Student Success Council that was created in Spring of 2023  
12 had a large membership, with 36 council members, of which only 12 were faculty; and  
13

14 **Whereas**, the original Duties and Responsibilities of the Faculty Senate Student Success  
15 Council included areas that were already the focus of other Faculty Senate committees;  
16 and  
17

18 **Whereas**, the voting members of the Faculty Senate Student Success Council have  
19 considered and debated how changes to the Council Bylaws could enhance the  
20 consideration and open discussion of issues and ideas between faculty and the Vice  
21 President for Student Success and Well-Being; therefore  
22

23 **Be It Resolved**, that the Bylaws of the Faculty Senate Student Success Council be  
24 amended as detailed below:  
25

26 1. Duties and Responsibilities

27 a. To promote the development and implementation of programs, policies, including  
28 admission policies, and practices that help students succeed in their academic pursuits  
29 and personal wellbeing.  
30

31 b. To advise and assist the Division of Student Success and Well-Being (SSWB),  
32 and other relevant councils/committees/units/ departments/ individuals in developing  
33 student success and well-being focused initiatives and recommending actions to meet  
34 student success goals.  
35

36 c. To review and monitor the performance and progress of state performance-  
37 based funding, preeminence, and other strategic student success metrics that are  
38 important for UCF and its students.  
39

40 d. To serve as an advisory and recommending body for the Faculty Senate on  
41 strategies and procedures that relate to student success and well-being.  
42

43 e. To support and collaborate with programs, units, initiatives and offices across  
44 UCF to help facilitate student success and well-being efforts.  
45  
46

47 2. Membership  
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49 The voting members of the Faculty Senate Student Success Council shall consist of at  
50 least one faculty member from each academic unit (selected by the Committee on  
51 Committees), at least two of whom are current members of the Faculty Senate.

52  
53 The regularly invited ex officio (non-voting) members of the committee will include, 2  
54 students (nominated by the President of UCF Student Government), the vice president for  
55 Student Success and Well-Being, the Vice President for Access & Community  
56 Engagement or designee, one representative of the Student Success and Well-Being  
57 Executive Team (selected by the vice president for Student Success and Well-Being), one  
58 representative from the College of Graduate Studies (appointed by the Dean of the  
59 College of Graduate Studies), and one representative from the Office of Undergraduate  
60 Studies (selected by the senior vice provost of academic affairs or designee).

61  
62 The vice president for Student Success and Well-Being (or designee) shall invite others  
63 from SSWB or other entities to participate in meetings when their presence is germane to  
64 the topics of discussion for a particular gathering.

65  
66 The chair and vice chair shall be elected annually from the council's faculty membership.  
67 Terms of service shall be two years, staggered.  
68

## CURRENT

### 1. Duties and Responsibilities

a. To promote the development and implementation of programs, policies, including admission policies, and practices that help students succeed in their academic pursuits and personal wellbeing.

b. To advise and assist the University Student Success Steering Committee, the vice president for Student Success, the vice provost and dean of the College of Undergraduate Studies, the dean of the College of Graduate Studies, and other relevant committees, units, and individuals in developing student success initiatives and recommending actions to meet student success goals.

c. To review and monitor the performance and progress of state performance- based funding, preeminence, and other strategic student success metrics that are important for UCF and its students.

d. To support and collaborate with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning and the Center for Distributed Learning to create professional development for faculty to facilitate student success.

e. To serve as an advisory and recommending body for the Faculty Senate on strategies and procedures that relate to student success.

f. To support and collaborate with professional advising offices across UCF to help facilitate student success.

g. The chair of the Faculty Senate Student Success Council will serve as a member on the University Student Success Steering Committee.

## PROPOSED

### 1. Duties and Responsibilities

a. To promote the development and implementation of programs, policies, including admission policies, and practices that help students succeed in their academic pursuits and personal wellbeing.

b. To advise and assist the Division of Student Success and Well-Being (SSWB), and other relevant councils/ committees/ units/ departments/ individuals in developing student success and well-being focused initiatives and recommending actions to meet student success goals.

c. To review and monitor the performance and progress of state performance- based funding, preeminence, and other strategic student success metrics that are important for UCF and its students.

d. To serve as an advisory and recommending body for the Faculty Senate on strategies and procedures that relate to student success and well-being.

e. To support and collaborate with programs, units, initiatives and offices across UCF to help facilitate student success and well-being efforts.

## CURRENT

### 2. Membership

The Faculty Senate Student Success Council shall consist of at least one faculty member from each academic unit (selected by the Committee on Committees), at least two of whom are current members of the Faculty Senate, the vice president for Student Success (ex officio), one representative from the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning, four students, with at least one undergraduate student, one graduate student, and one international student (nominated by the president of the Student Government Association), one representative of the Student Success & Well-Being Leadership Council Team (selected by the vice president for Student Success), one representative from UCF Global (appointed by the vice provost for Academic Affairs), one representative from the College of Graduate Studies (appointed by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies), and one representative from the College of Undergraduate Studies (selected by the vice provost and dean of the College of Undergraduate Studies). A representative from the professional advising office for each college or unit may serve as a non-voting committee member. The senior vice president for Student Success (or designee) shall identify additional ex officio members, making every effort to ensure that areas relating to student success are represented.

The chair and vice chair shall be elected annually from its faculty membership. Terms of service shall be two years, staggered, except for the student members, who shall serve for one year.

## PROPOSED

### 2. Membership

The voting members of the Faculty Senate Student Success Council shall consist of at least one faculty member from each academic unit (selected by the Committee on Committees), at least two of whom are current members of the Faculty Senate.

The regularly invited ex officio (non-voting) members of the committee will include, 2 students (nominated by the President of UCF Student Government), the vice president for Student Success and Well-Being, the Vice President for Access and Community Engagement or designee, one representative of the Student Success and Well-Being Executive Team (selected by the vice president for Student Success and Well-Being), one representative from the College of Graduate Studies (appointed by the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies), and one representative from the Office of Undergraduate Studies (selected by the senior vice provost of academic affairs or designee).

The vice president for Student Success and Well-Being (or designee) shall invite others from SSWB or other entities to participate in meetings when their presence is germane to the topics of discussion for a particular gathering.

The chair and vice chair shall be elected annually from the council's faculty membership. Terms of service shall be two years, staggered.