



Faculty Senate

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SENATE MEETING
HELD ON OCTOBER 24, 2025
HYBRID: 805 21st STREET NW/MPA 309 & ZOOM**

Present: President Granberg; Interim Provost Lach; Parliamentarian Binder; Registrar Cloud; Senate Office Staff Liz Carlson and Jenna Chaojareon; Deans Ayres, Bass, Gebo, Henry, Matthew, Riddle, Wahlbeck, and Yeltekin; Interim Dean Howard; Professors Akman, Badie, Bamford, Belenky, Borum, Briggs, Brinkerhoff, Cheh, Cohen-Cole, Cottrol, Crandall, Cseh, Eakle, El-Ghazawi, Engel, Fagan, Feldman, Gore, Hernandez, Kay, Kieff, Kulp, Liu Markus, McAlister, Mendelowitz, Merluzzi, Mylonas, Orti, Rain, Rigg, Sarkar, Schwindt, Trangsrud, Vyas, Warren, White, Wilson, and Wirtz.

Absent: Dean Kelly-Weeder; Interim Dean Zara; Professors Callier, Core, and Schultheiss.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:01p.m. President Granberg welcomed the group back to the Senate's temporary home while the State Room is under renovation. As MPA 309 is an active classroom, she asked that attendees be sure to remove any trash when leaving. She also reiterated last month's request that in-person attendees be extremely careful about sidebar conversations. The ceiling microphones will pick up all audio and transmit it over Zoom, and virtual attendees last month reported having difficulty hearing the meeting proceedings as a result. Those needing to communicate with a neighbor during the meeting are asked to either text or pass notes.

MINUTES APPROVALS

The minutes of the September 12, 2025, meeting were approved without objection.

UPDATE: GW PROVOST SEARCH (John Simon, Education Executives)

President Granberg noted that she has engaged John Simon of Education Executives to run this search for GW. John is a former president of Lehigh University and a former provost of the University of Virginia with a proven track record of successful placements for positions like this one.

Dr. Simon thanked the Senate for the opportunity to update the Senate on the Provost search. He noted that Professor Schultheiss, co-chair of the search committee, conveyed her comments on the search committee's work thus far for Dr. Simon to share today:

The Search Advisory Committee is co-chaired by Katrin Schultheiss and former trustee Madeleine Jacobs. The Advisory Committee consists of 23 people including faculty from all ten schools as well as administrators, and staff and student representatives.

The Provost Position Profile, which is now complete and is awaiting final formatting by Marketing and Communication, was developed by a subcommittee consisting of the co-chairs along with three faculty members and a trustee. The profile was developed after a number of in-person and virtual forums with various constituencies, including faculty, staff, and students. The members of the Search Advisory Committee led and were present at all of these sessions. Based on the feedback we received, the subcommittee crafted the position profile which was edited and amended by the entire advisory committee as well as the president.

The profile, which should be publicly available shortly, stresses the following qualities as critical for the position:

- a record of distinguished scholarship, research, and teaching excellence requisite for a tenured appointment as a full professor; and
- a demonstrated ability to work to build community and trust across the university by listening, engaging thoughtfully, communicating transparently, and maintaining a visible and approachable presence on campus.
- Additional experience ideally includes:
 - An understanding of the role of research in top-tier institutions, with a track record of measurable success in research growth;
 - An understanding of, and commitment to, shared governance;
 - Demonstrated ability and vision to lead through change;
 - Experience in a university environment with multiple schools and/or campuses and complex budgets
 - Proven ability to build consensus and facilitate collaboration among stakeholders; and
 - Experience in promoting a student-centered environment that supports a robust undergraduate student experience.
- The profile also notes the desirability of the following qualities:
 - A leadership style that is open, transparent, and courageous;
 - Unwavering integrity, a strong moral compass, and humility;
 - A deep understanding of the role of academic freedom in creating education and scholarly excellence;
 - Strong emotional intelligence/known for being gracious, warm, and having a sense of humor; and
 - A record of visionary leadership centered on innovation, creative thinking, and open dialogue.

Dr. Simon, having attended all of the listening sessions, agreed with the points Professor Schultheiss conveyed. He noted that the search advisory committee originally met and was charged by President Granberg on August 22nd. Public listening sessions were held over the next month. Position advertisements were placed in October in the Chronicle of Higher Education, Higher Ed Jobs, Diverse Issues in Higher Education, and Hispanic Outlook on Education. The position description was written by the committee and was informed by the listening sessions and discussions with the president. It is now in the final stages of production, and Dr. Simon hoped it would be posted to the search website next week.

He stated that nominations have been received as well as potential candidates who are being sourced. He noted that anyone interested in the position must submit to the committee for their consideration a letter of interest, a complete CV, and a detailed document describing the accomplishments and the leadership positions that they have held.

Currently, to date (and since the placement of the advertisements), 15 applications have been submitted from individuals who have provided all of the materials requested. Dr. Simon noted that he and his colleague, Anda Webb, have reached out to 141 people as of this morning. Contact has been by either text, phone call, email, with many via private email given the confidentiality of the search. So far, 8 have expressed interest in being a candidate, and 34 people are considering the position. By the end of the first week of November, Dr. Simon noted, he will have had at least one phone or Zoom call with all 34 of those individuals to discuss the job, the university, any concerns they have, and what they want to learn about GW and the position. Thirteen additional people who he feels are highly qualified for the position have been contacted. Those individuals indicated that they wanted to read the position description before having a conversation; Dr. Simon will send them the description and the strategic framework next week and will then follow up with phone and Zoom calls. He noted that 70 of the 141 people he contacted are still in play, with a variety of responses about timing. Sixteen people have declined. Dr. Simon noted that he would continue to work to build the pool.

The candidate file review, which is the meeting of the search committee to evaluate and determine those who will be invited to the first round of Zoom interviews, will take place early in 2026. It is the intent and design of the committee to determine who the finalists are by mid-spring of 2026. Once the committee identifies and recommends finalists to the president, the official work of the search advisory committee ends, and the finalist interviews will be handled by the Office of the President. The goal is to have someone in place by the early summer; President Granberg affirmed this timeline.

INTRODUCTIONS (Ellen Granberg, President, & John Lach, Interim Provost)

Interim Provost Lach introduced Kelly Gebo, the new dean of the Milken Institute School of Public Health, who started her tenure at GW on October 1st. Dean Gebo is an accomplished physician-scientist who joins us from Johns Hopkins University, where she spent over two decades in various roles. She also holds a professor of epidemiology appointment at GW. Dean Gebo expressed her appreciation to all who have welcomed her to GW, adding that she is very much looking forward to meeting more of the community and becoming part of the Revolutionary family.

President Granberg welcomed the new Senate member from the Columbian College of Arts & Sciences (CCAS), Meina Liu, who was elected to fill the vacant seat in that school late last month.

RESOLUTION 26/1: OF APPRECIATION FOR CHRISTOPHER ALAN BRACEY (Katrin Schultheiss, Faculty Senate Executive Committee)

Professor Brinkerhoff read [Resolution 26/1](#) into the record; the resolution was adopted by unanimous consent.

PRESIDENT'S & PROVOST'S REPORTS (Ellen Granberg, President, & John Lach, Interim Provost)

The [President's and Interim Provost's reports, along with the FSEC report](#), were pre-circulated to save agenda time.

President Granberg made the following remarks:

Considering the later start time of today's Faculty Senate meeting and the compressed timeline of the meeting due to Alumni & Families Weekend, Interim Provost Lach and I shared written versions of our reports as pre-reads earlier this week. We hope that this saves us meeting time and gives us additional time for deeper, more strategic conversations with the Faculty Senate.

I would appreciate hearing from the Senate if you have a preference on how we deliver our reports moving forward. Candidly, I think this format is a more efficient way to use our time together and creates more time for questions and discussion. But we defer to your preference. Feel free to let us or Liz and Jenna know after the meeting.

As you'll recall from the pre-reads, the topics on my report included the following:

- Compact for Excellence in Higher Education
- Fall 2025 Enrollment Update
- Budget Update
- MFA Update
- Faculty Excellence
- University Leadership Update
- U.S. News and World Report Rankings
- Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) Platinum Rating

Interim Provost Lach's report included the following items:

- Middle States Re-Accreditation Update
- Research Update
- Office of Access and Opportunity Update
- Federal Matters Engagement Update
- Budget Model Update
- Comment on Senate Resolution 25/9
- Comment on Academic Freedom
- Community Engagement Update

I would like to take this opportunity to reflect on the successful launch of the new Strategic Framework this week. I want to thank everyone who has helped shape this roadmap for GW's future. This milestone represents the collective vision of our community—shaped by the ideas and insights of hundreds of people, including members of the FSEC and Faculty Senate. I'm grateful to everyone who was involved in the communication around the launch, including the new website, the messages that were shared, and the other strategies that we've used to communicate about the framework.

I'd also like to thank those who are serving on the first working groups convened to advance specific goals in the Strategic Framework, including the Working Group on Building an Interdisciplinary Research Ecosystem, co-chaired by Dean Dayna Matthew and Interim Vice Provost Bob Miller, the Working Group on Expanding and Embedding D.C. Experiences, co-chaired by Dean Alyssa Ayres and Vice Provost and Dean Colette Coleman, and the Working Group on Enhancing Career and Academic Advising, co-chaired by Vice Provost Jay Goff and Dean Paul Wahlbeck. You can see a full list of the working group rosters and their charges on our new strategic framework website.

All three working groups have already had initial meetings, and I look forward to hearing more about their progress. As these groups proceed, they will develop methods to engage campus stakeholders in their work, and you will hear more about those opportunities in the weeks to come.

This feels like a moment to pause and celebrate a job well done. But what I find incredibly exciting is that this is just the beginning. With the working groups as well as teams across the university focused on student success, the research enterprise, and GW's foundations of excellence, we will be bringing this framework to life, and I look forward to working together with all of you on this important effort.

I would also like to mention that this is an incredibly busy week with the Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics' State of Our Democracy event on Tuesday, the 3rd Annual Business and Policy Forum hosted by the GW School of Business on Wednesday, and the 10th Anniversary of the GW Cisneros Institute—and Apple Day!— just yesterday.

And today Alumni and Families Weekend starts. I am excited to welcome alumni and families to campus and am looking forward to the alumni reunion tonight, to the 15th Anniversary of the Honey W. Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service on Saturday, and lots of other events. I want to thank the faculty who are involved in these events and extend a thank you to deans for hosting college open houses on Saturday. It's going to be a great weekend!

Interim Provost Lach offered these remarks:

I would like to echo President Granberg's gratitude to the GW community for its enthusiastic support during every step of the Strategic Framework process, from participation at the town halls to the rollout of our communications earlier this week. The framework's release is a moment of true pride for GW and an indication of the possibilities ahead for our community. GW's greatest strength is our people, and this process will continue to be driven by our incredible faculty, students, and staff. I am very much looking forward to what comes next.

Finally, I would just like to make a note that the Federal Matters Working Group kickoff meeting I referenced in my pre-read has been scheduled for October 31st.

BRIEF STATEMENTS & QUESTIONS/PRESIDENT'S, PROVOST'S, & FSEC REPORTS

Professor Wilson asked for the identities of faculty members serving on the various working groups. Dr. Lach noted that, as part of their first meeting, he will talk with members of the federal matters working group about how comfortable they are with their committee membership being made public. He wanted to

respect their agency on that, particularly as the public nature of their membership was not made clear when recruitment was happening. Given the sensitive nature of the topics being handled by this working group, Dr. Lach stated that he did not want to expose participation without the members' voluntary consent; this will be discussed on October 31. The strategic framework working group membership lists have all been posted, and the budget matters working group membership will be posted.

Professor Wirtz expressed some reservation around keeping the membership of the federal matters working group, who are presumably representing the views of the academic community, quiet. He noted his understanding that the objective was to try to capture as best as possible the sense of the community. Especially when considering something as important as current federal matters and their effects on diversity, he could not think of anything more important than making sure that the entire university community might have their views represented. If the membership of that working group is kept private, there is really no way for the campus community to provide feedback to those people, which is illogical.

Dr. Lach understood the point and responded that, when the leadership was conceiving of this working group, there was not a decision to keep that membership private. After the group was formed, they heard some concerns. He noted that this issue came up during the last FSEC meeting, with concerns about whether these working group members would be exposed to external scrutiny (e.g., doxing). This led to the determination that the working group members should be consulted to make sure that they're comfortable with their membership being public. He added that another opportunity for feedback on federal matters was provided via the session on October 13 for the Appointments, Salary, and Promotion Policies (ASPP) committee, the Professional Ethics and Academic Freedom (PEAF) committee, and FSEC with Interim Vice Provost Hammond and Deputy General Counsel Weitzner. This included the same set of materials (the resolution agreements from other universities and the Federal Compact) that the working group is studying. In addition, on October 17, FSEC held its regular joint meeting with the Board of Trustees Executive Committee (BoTEC) and discussed these issues. Ultimately, if the members of the Federal Matters Working Group are comfortable releasing their names, leadership will do so; Dr. Lach felt it was important to give them the opportunity to make their own judgment about this.

Professor Wirtz noted that he participated in the October 13 session and was aware of these other feedback opportunities. He hoped that the university is not moving to an environment in which its working groups are so worried about possible blowback that they want to keep their names private. Dr. Lach reiterated that this is not a decision that university leadership has made but is rather about respecting the agency of individual faculty members. He added that, going forward, the leadership may decide that informing certain working groups about the public nature of their membership will be made clear right from the beginning. In the case of the federal matters working group, however, he felt that leadership needs to give the members an opportunity to back out of their participation if it is required that their membership be known. This is ultimately a matter of respecting the rights of individual faculty members on that particular decision. He noted again that the federal matters working group was engaged in its process before this became an identified issue. With the benefit of hindsight, he likely would have put in the working group invitations and indication that their membership would be public. Because that point was not clear, however, the working group members need an opportunity to weigh in on this.

Professor Crandall noted that, in the era of doxing and similar behaviors, he appreciated this sentiment. He noted that there is a reasonable compromise. There are two different audiences: the GW audience that should have this information in order to provide appropriate feedback, and the external audience that is not relevant to the work. The list could therefore be placed behind the firewall, allowing the community to log in and access the list. Dr. Lach responded that this is an option he can discuss with the group. He added

that there are a couple of other options, too, just to put some on the table, including having a group of Senate representatives who know the working group membership and can represent to the rest of the Faculty Senate that they're comfortable with the composition of the committee.

Professor Warren noted that, while he is in favor of transparency, he concurs with this approach that, under the present circumstances, allows faculty members decide if their working group membership will be made public. These are extraordinary times, and he noted that, in this case, it is not the university community going to extreme measures but rather the external world.

Professor Wilson noted that not publishing the membership of the working group makes it very difficult for the community to relay to them their thoughts on the issues. He suggested that one solution might be to ensure that each school has one publicly-identified member on the group.

Professor Cohen-Cole referenced the responses to FSEC's prioritized questions that were pre-circulated along with today's FSEC report. He raised two questions, one related to #11 and one related to #4.

Question #11 relates to central units and their oversight, an issue related to the Educational Policy & Technology (EPT) committee's work. The response to this question states that there should be faculty oversight of these kinds of units; however, EPT has understood that these areas don't have faculty oversight. For example, it is not clear which department has responsibility for hiring, firing, and other academic decisions within the Food Institute. Dr. Lach responded that there is a change in philosophy indicated in this response—namely that, as academic programs are developed anywhere at the university, they should be overseen by faculty. Which group of faculty gets more complicated when talking about interdisciplinary programs. As the response indicates, this is something that needs to be figured out because everyone wants to do what's in the best interest of GW's students and programs. He noted that part of what the leadership is trying to convey in this response is that, going forward, and especially within the context of the strategic framework that talks about the potential for interdisciplinary programs, they want to do so in a way that the faculty are maintaining ownership and oversight of those programs.

Professor Cohen-Cole thanked Dr. Lach for this response and moved to his question about the response to Question #4 on administrative costs. He noted that the response is that salaries for upper administrative positions are benchmarked against AAU institutions. He wondered if, in the next core indicators report, the plan is to benchmark faculty positions against urban AAU institutions as well. President Granberg responded that the benchmark used by the compensation committee for administrators is set by the Board, but she indicated she would take this reasonable question back for comment. Dr. Lach noted that the AAU benchmarking response relates to the ratio of total enrolled students per senior administrator, not salaries. Professor Cohen-Cole noted that similar benchmarks would be acceptable, and President Granberg noted that, while she thought the market basket is very close to this benchmark already, this would be checked.

Professor Orti referenced Dr. Lach's comment in his pre-circulated report on [Senate Resolution 25/9](#), adopted by the Senate in April of this year, and which addresses tenure and the *Faculty Code*. The resolution calls for a change to the *Faculty Code*; this amendment, now approved by the Senate, now goes to the next meeting of the Assembly and eventually to the Board. He was puzzled by Dr. Lach's comment on this resolution, as he did not understand the intention behind discussing the resolution's underlying values now that it has been adopted by the Senate. He asked Dr. Lach to elaborate on his report comment on SR 25/9.

Dr. Lach responded that he should have included more information on this in his report. He noted that he was in no way trying to impede the progress of this resolution. The question in the resolution is on the ratio

of tenured faculty, and the broader issue that should be discussed as a faculty is about faculty composition. He has been talking with Interim Vice Provost Hammond about meeting with ASPP and PEAFF on how faculty composition is determined; e.g., the role of department chairs, deans, etc. The issue, he stated, should not be left only at a threshold number and how it is calculated, and this resolution offers an opportunity to start a bigger conversation that should involve faculty. He noted that SR 25/9 will follow its regular course, and this process would be independent of that. He reiterated that how the tenure ratio is calculated is a valid question to raise, but there are bigger conversations to have with individual departments about the best decision for each academic area. These conversations should be driven by discussions on what serves each area's mission most effectively.

Professor El-Ghazawi thanked Professor Orti for his question and Dr. Lach for clarifying his report comment. He underscored the fact that it is one thing to determine faculty ratios around teaching needs and another thing to set a department's vision, given that any faculty hired will be part of the governance process. If the vision is to assert the university's position in the AAU, for example, and be a leading university with research preeminence, then that sets other parameters beyond satisfying teaching needs. Any faculty hired will be part of the university's future decision-making and vision-setting, and more of those faculty being on the tenure track, for example, could help a great deal in helping the university achieve its big goals. Dr. Lach responded that this is a very good comment that should be part of conversation. He recalled conversations with Dr. El-Ghazawi when they were dean and department chair on, given a set of resources and decisions about faculty hiring, how to advance research in a particular area. One solution might be to make a teaching hire in order to free up research time for tenured faculty. He noted that there is no right or wrong answer and discussion at every level should address this for individual departments.

Professor Bamford thanked Dr. Lach for wanting to raise these larger issues, which drove SR 25/9. She clarified that one of the resolution's aims was transparency in the *Faculty Code* to ensure that the calculation of percentages was accurately representing tenure faculty numbers.

Professor Cohen-Cole agreed that it makes sense to have conversations about how best to advance the needs of individual units. Beyond this, he wanted to register the importance of having long-term institutional memory for the sake of students, who need to return to universities following their degree completion for recommendations. Asking a more global question, he wondered what the core indicators will say about tenure percentages when they are reported to Senate. Historically, there are a number of misses under the current calculation with the Provost reporting that the leadership is aware the numbers are out of compliance. It would be good to hear along with this report how the university plans to come into line with the *Code*, for example by filling empty tenure-track positions.

Dr. Lach affirmed that, with the next core indicators report, some units will be out of compliance with the *Code* and that his point in raising these broader issues is that he does not want the conversation to stop there. It may not be realistic to say the university will come into compliance and assume that is in the best interest of the university. Rather, a conversation is needed about what *is* in GW's best interest. For example: What is the role of non tenure-track faculty at GW? Many have been here for decades and care deeply about and are invested in the university. How are these faculty appreciated? Does the university treat them like it wants them to be part of the long-term faculty? Dr. Lach stated that are many ways GW could empower and engage with contract faculty more effectively and have them feel that they are as critical as they are. All of that is not to say GW should necessarily hire more of them, but many contract faculty have been at GW for a long time, care deeply about the university, and probably write at least as many letters of recommendations for students as many other faculty.

Professor Brinkerhoff was happy to hear this valuation of contract faculty. She noted that, some years ago, a former provost made the decision to limit the terms of contract faculty. There had previously been a point when contract faculty were on 3-3-5 contracts. She stated she would like to see a reinstatement of this practice considered and even enhanced, noting that contract faculty are very valuable contributors to GW. Dr. Lach responded that there are many ways GW could value its contract faculty better, and this is an area meriting investigation.

Professor Wilson seconded Professor Brinkerhoff's comment. He added that, were he a Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD) contract faculty member, these comments would ring hollow. It is not a good situation, he said, to have a large number of faculty on short-term contracts who can be so easily dismissed. Another consideration relates to the question some years ago about whether Senate membership might be opened to non-tenure track faculty. At that time, the faculty largely felt that tenure was required in order to be able to openly disagree with the university administration without fear of reprisal.

Dr. Lach responded that the leadership is still looking at the GSEHD situation; how it came to be is still being discussed, especially in relation to financial planning. Regarding contract faculty involvement in faculty governance, he understood the history of that argument and noted that this is an interesting thing to think about and reflect on as a university community. It is unfortunate, he stated, to think that this may be a community where individuals cannot speak up about something they care about without fear of retribution. He hoped that contract faculty feel empowered to speak about academic issues and can be part of governance process; he hoped that this is the community GW aspires to be. He added that were he to hear about instances around the university where contract faculty were being targeted for expressing a sincere position on an academic issue, he would take significant issue with that. He understood the concern, but, in terms of the community that everyone here aspires to be, he hoped that the university can work toward ensuring that a fear of retaliation against a contract faculty member does not exist and does not determine their ability to fully engage in shared governance.

Professor McAlister appreciated these comments and agreed that the university needs to think about how to better integrate its contract faculty. As a member of the American Council of Learned Societies board, she noted that she spent her day discussing the silencing effect of the current environment on faculty—work being banned, talk invitations being rescinded, topics being self-censored in classrooms, etc. GW is deeply committed to academic freedom and is well protected when faculty have tenure and aren't as easily dismissed from their positions. More than ever, the university has to be able to say that it needs the vast majority of its faculty to be protected and to do the work they have been hired to do. The 80% threshold isn't a random number but rather sets a protective bar. Dr. Lach thanked Professor McAlister for her comment and noted that he looks forward to talking with ASPP, PEAFF, and anyone else about this and to breaking out of the core indicators reporting cycle on tenure percentages without resulting in intentional action on our faculty composition.

Professor El-Ghazawi noted that the *Faculty Code* used to have a provision that, if the university does not take action, a faculty member's contract would be renewed automatically. This was removed from the *Code*.

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS TO BE REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

None.

GENERAL BUSINESS

- I. Nominations for Senate Standing Committee Membership
The attached [nominations for standing committee membership and Joint Committee of Faculty and Students membership](#) were approved as a whole by unanimous consent.
- II. Senate Standing Committee Reports
No standing committee reports were received prior to today's meeting.

BRIEF STATEMENTS AND QUESTIONS

Professor Akman referenced President Granberg's comments, noting that, having been at GW for over 40 years, he sees Honey Nashman as the role model for faculty collegiality, kindness, and warmth, consistently engaging people across the university. In this light, he observed that the Professor Schultheiss is not in attendance today; she had planned to announce her resignation from the FSEC chairship. He stated that he feels FSEC is in an embarrassing crisis at the moment. Based on an email that was sent out by a subgroup of the executive committee, he noted, Professor Schultheiss was pushed out of the chair role by a subgroup that chose not to bring that issue to FSEC for a vote. This was out of order, as it did not come through the committee, and, those members of the committee who did not have a chance to opine and vote—representatives of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), the Elliott School of International Affairs (ESIA), and the Columbian College of Arts & Sciences (CCAS)—were disenfranchised. He added that this goes beyond the fact that he, as an individual, was not allowed to vote on such a recommendation to the fact that he represents his faculty. If he does not have a voice at the executive committee, he noted, then his faculty doesn't have a voice.

Professor Akman stated that the thing that upsets him the most—and it speaks to Honey Nashman—is the notion of faculty collegiality. He noted that he has not seen a faculty member treated so poorly by other faculty members. This went beyond being pushed out as chair to the email that went out to the Senate membership yesterday. In all his time here, he said, he has never seen a faculty member's reputation so damaged and integrity so questioned. He noted that he had no recommendation, other than to say the group can and must be better than this. Everyone on the Senate and FSEC volunteers for these efforts. These positions are very difficult and challenging, and everyone has a lot to say, we all want to say a lot. Chairing FSEC is not for the faint of heart. He didn't know Professor Schultheiss before serving on FSEC, he said, but he respects her and knows she worked extremely hard with nothing but the best interests of this university in mind. He expressed his concern about where this FSEC goes from here, as a lot of trust has been broken.

Professor Warren stated that he concurred completely with Professor Akman. He noted that he was not even invited to be in the discussion and to this day does not know what the egregiousness was toward the Chair. He understood that other FSEC members were not happy with the way things were going, but it wasn't made clear to the committee what those issues were, and it did not seem to him that the Chair had a chance to respond or defend herself. This is why the group meets as a committee and not behind closed doors and in secret, like, a cabal; that is not the way to do things. Like Professor Akman, Professor Warren did not know Professor Schultheiss before serving on FSEC but had respect for her and thought no colleague should be treated that way. He expressed his respect for the other members of the committee but

noted that his trust has been lost, and, as Professor Akman said, this is not about him as an individual but rather the school. The College of Professional Studies (CPS) membership is not voting members of the Senate, but he hoped their voice could still be heard. He added that he hoped he was not alone, too, in being embarrassed by the way some FSEC members have responded to the administration, including in the BoTEC-FSEC meeting last week. This is a critical time to collaborate and not be confrontational. People can disagree from time to time, but this is the time that everyone has to try to come together and work together; that is how the institution will survive.

Professor Cohen-Cole noted he did not understand how a small group of FSEC members could push out the FSEC chair: was that a meeting? He wondered if those actions are binding if other members of FSEC are not invited to the meeting. He also asked whether it is not the case that FSEC is elected by, or could potentially be removed by, the Senate but not by other members of FSEC.

Professor Brinkerhoff responded that she conferred with the Senate Parliamentarian about this, and technically there was no formal meeting, and there was no formal vote. What did occur, she noted, was a threatening email that said 6 out of the 9 voting members of FSEC felt that the Chair needed to step down, and, wanting to save face for the Chair, were asking that she voluntarily step down within three hours or they would call a formal meeting with a no-confidence vote. She thought anyone in that position, reasonably, would wonder whether this was worth her time. These actions were not a parliamentary maneuver that could be contested because no formal meeting took place.

Professor El-Ghazawi noted that yesterday's message to the Senate was his first knowledge of this situation. Professor Schultheiss was very active on FSEC when he served, as was everyone else on the committee; everyone served with professionalism. He observed that this is a very critical time for FSEC, and there seem to be so many issues for the Senate, the faculty, and the university that FSEC should be concerned with; he wondered whether he and other mediators might be brought in to help FSEC get back on track.

Professor Akman agreed that some kind of mediation could help but was not sure how to proceed, as he has never been on a committee with this kind of issue. He noted that he was asked to join the effort to remove the Chair and declined, learning two weeks later that the "coup" had in fact happened. He stated that he wouldn't mind if each school put a new representative on FSEC and started over. He added that it would be a little self-serving for someone to come out of the current group and serve now as Chair. The present situation felt to him to be too personal. There may be other issues that the group was concerned about regarding FSEC's leadership, but he did not know what they were because this matter was not brought to FSEC in formal way. Sometimes, he stated, a clean slate is needed.

President Granberg observed that the next FSEC meeting is on October 31, and, while she is not able to be there, this would be an appropriate topic. She added that if there are resources that would be helpful, the administration would cover that cost, and she asked the group to think creatively about what steps would be helpful moving forward.

Professor Schwindt appreciated the questions being shared; they are relevant and important, and she noted she is open to the differing perspectives. While not trying to speak for the group of six, she offered what she believed to be an accurate recalling of events, as she was intimately involved and was sure any of the others could speak up and correct any misstatements. She first noted that it would be helpful to dial the temperature down a bit; words such as "cabal," "coup," "threatening," and "pushed out" do not accurately depict the months of processes that took place, and the group sent a very clear email to FSEC that outlined all of those situations.

She noted that the first email sent to FSEC, and then the email that was sent to the broader community, the group went step-by-step through the process that it followed. There are areas in which details were not provided, and the reason for that is that the group wanted, to the best of their ability, not to get into a listing of transgressions out of respect for their colleague. She added that it is important to keep in mind that six individuals with no previous relationships or connections, over time and independently, shared concerns about what they were experiencing on the committee. She emphasized that work was still being accomplished on the committee; it was challenging, but FSEC was not so dysfunctional that nothing was accomplished for the benefit of the Senate and the schools it represents. Over time, she noted, concerns developed; as a new FSEC member it took her longer to develop concerns as she was still gaining a sense of the history of where different ideas came from. There was no colluding behind closed doors, and there were no secret meetings. Professor Schwindt noted that she was called by another member of the committee, which is a normal occurrence at the university when one faculty member wants another to be a sounding board. She noted that the process was not in any way disparaging and that she has not heard a single word from any of the six that has in any way demeaned their colleague. What the group learned over a period of time is that the concerns were the same, even though the individuals came from very different perspectives.

Professor Schwindt relayed that the group requested, and the Chair readily agreed to, a meeting. She noted that this approach was taken in order to be as private and respectful as possible. This was not a formal meeting to take a vote or to put a colleague on the spot where they had to defend themselves. It was a very collegial conversation designed to make the Chair aware of the group's concerns. Professor Schwindt felt the Chair was engaged, taking notes and asking important questions. It was not a confrontational meeting, and before it concluded, the group asked the Chair to respond to the group's suggested pathways to success. The Chair agreed to respond to the group in a week in order to keep moving forward. Two weeks passed, and the primary concerns that the group believed were making the conduct of the meetings increasingly challenging had continued.

Professor Schwindt noted that this was the point when the group asked—not threatened, not pushed out—if the Chair would be willing to step aside, and she agreed. She added that, when the meeting with the group of six took place, the Chair was fully aware of who was attending and what people would not be there. There were no stipulations to meeting. Professor Schwindt stated that she perfectly understood, when reading that email that asked the Chair to resign and gave a deadline, why it might seem shocking. No one wants to get an email of that nature. The deadline was in place because the group had agreed to a week and waited an additional week. Heading into the third week, with the Senate meeting coming up and agendas would be due, if the decision by the Chair was to resign, there would be enough time for the school to nominate a new FSEC representative ahead of the October 31 FSEC meeting.

From the outside looking in, Professor Schwindt stated, she could see why it seemed like a 2-hour turnaround. However, she stated, it was months of conversations and patience after discussing the concerns that the group thought was of importance. She added that there was never any time since the group started together that she ever heard the words “toxic” or that the committee was “dysfunctional.” When this took place, the group made it clear that they were not going to discuss this outside their committee, wanting this to be very, very private. Nobody, herself included, wants to be called out in front of their colleagues. The group never wanted to do that, and she thought this was clear in the group's email to the Senate body. The group did not make this issue public; it had already been made public. There are several examples, she noted, but it is difficult to share some of those because that would call out other people, and she was not prepared to do that. She was confident and stood by the fact that the information was already widely

known, and that information did not come from the group of six. She added that what was being shared about what took place was not accurate.

Professor Schwindt noted that she was asked yesterday by a faculty member who is a Senate member whether FSEC is a dysfunctional group. She stated that she responded by asking how many times anyone has been in a workplace situation where they see something happening that they know is making work more challenging. There is risk in saying something, so often those situations continue. In this case, a group of six individuals identified a several concerns and talked directly with the individual, offering solutions for success. Those solutions were not responded to, so the group was left with the solution of asking, not demanding, for the Chair to step aside.

As of today, Professor Schwindt continued, a new FSEC representative from CCAS is on the committee and is ready to attend the October 31 meeting. FSEC is fully aware of how to elect an interim chair; the Parliamentarian has done a beautiful job of preparing the group for that, and FSEC is prepared as a committee to do that next Friday. The group is also aware of the next steps to take place at the November 14th Senate meeting. FSEC is prepared to continue to function as a group.

In terms of the Board of Trustees meeting, Professor Schwindt noted that the incident previously referred to was the most shocking thing she had seen happen in her 33-year career as an academic. Coming into this as a new FSEC committee member, she thought those meetings were private and meant to be candid. She relayed receiving a call from someone from a different school to whom she had not spoken before; that person shared perceptions of what had taken place and that one or more members of FSEC had done something terribly embarrassing. This was, she said, the first she had heard of such a thing, and she noted that her primary concern was that someone who attended that meeting was sharing information about a meeting and about colleagues in that meeting with people who had not been in attendance.

President Granberg departed the meeting at this point for an Alumni & Families Weekend commitment, and Interim Provost Lach assumed the chair role for the meeting.

Professor Wirtz expressed that it would be appropriate to move into executive session in order to continue this discussion; Professor Brinkerhoff seconded the motion. Unanimous consent was not obtained, and the motion carried with 22 votes in favor (a majority of the voting Senate membership).

Professor Cohen-Cole moved a time limit of 30 minutes for the executive session, and the Interim Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs, Chief of Staff, Provost, Senate staff, and Registrar were invited to attend the session.

The executive session was convened at 4:40pm, and the Senate returned to open session at 5:20pm.

Professor Cohen-Cole suggested that the current FSEC should step down so that the whole community can have confidence that FSEC internally will be able to function effectively as a whole. At the moment, he noted, he does not have confidence that he has heard the whole story. Professor Schultheiss is not in the meeting to represent her side of the events, nor has the group seen multiple emails on one side or the other, and it sounds as though process has not worked well, beyond the question of whether FSEC has managed to be effective or not.

Professor Cohen-Cole moved that the Senate reverse a previously adopted measure, specifically, the election of the 2025-2026 FSEC. Professor Orti seconded the motion. The Parliamentarian noted that, as it was not

previously on the agenda, the motion would require a 2/3 vote **or** 21 votes (a majority of the full voting membership) to pass.

Professor Wirtz stated that he was not comfortable voting in favor of this motion without a more complete Senate presence.

Professor Crandall noted that it does not seem wise to disband FSEC and have no one communicating with the administration for at least a month, given that the Senate would need to confirm a nominating committee as part of the process. The Parliamentarian agreed—there would need to be a process for generating a nominating committee, but the Senate could do so, acting without a recommendation from FSEC. Professor Crandall observed that there are highly capable individuals, although with differing opinions, on FSEC, and he would rather see them struggle with one another for a month and help the Senate reach a reasonable resolution, rather than disbanding.

Professor Cohen-Cole suggested that FSEC could serially resign; each school could then select a new FSEC member as CCAS did this week.

Professor Kieff stated that he is on the Senate and FSEC because he understands his school wants him there, and he understands he can still offer something helpful in the realm of problem solving and collaborating; that is what he is here to try to do. He noted that he and the Senate would be fine if he stepped aside or was replaced by a mechanism, but he asked the group to keep in mind that FSEC takes quite a bit of work and has a learning curve. He stated that he would do his best to bring a replacement up to speed if that comes to pass. He added, though, that if this is about registering dissatisfaction, he hears that message. If this is about getting the work of the Senate and the schools done, there will not be forward motion during the inevitable churn that would necessarily be associated with replacing the majority or entirety of FSEC.

Professor Orti noted that he seconded the motion because his sense is that confidence in the current FSEC is diminished and because assuming the committee will now work just because some of the present issues have been aired is ill-advised. The motion's nuclear option is extreme and perhaps unprecedented in the history of the Senate, but it may be the fastest way to go forward.

Professor Kieff added that the voices being heard today do not reflect a scientific survey of the faculty, the Senate, or the schools. He cautioned the group that the loudest voice in the present discussion may not represent what the faculty and schools want.

Professor Akman noted that the Senate is a deliberative body representing the schools to the best of its ability. He stated that he wants to agree with the motion, having put the idea out earlier in today's meeting, despite being concerned about a period of limbo. His concern is that the majority of FSEC does not see that this was problematic; that is the biggest problem going forward. He did not want to set a precedent that this behavior was okay on multiple levels. He stated that he was happy to consider other options but resonated strongly with the motion.

Professor Crandall asked if the motion is to have a serial recusal and then replacement by school vote, then those who are currently serving could possibly be voted by their school to go right back to FSEC. Professor Cohen-Cole stated that his current motion is a nuclear option—what he was trying to articulate is that he was convinced by Professor Crandall's earlier point about a vacuum in FSEC. He suggested that, when his motion is likely voted down, then his request or suggestion would be that the current members of FSEC be

asked by the Senate to step down serially so that their school delegations can replace them should they so choose.

Professor Cohen-Cole proposed an amendment to replace his original motion: to request the serial resignations of the current FSEC members from FSEC with replacements to be identified by each school's Senate delegation. Professor Akman seconded the motion.

Professor Kieff asked Professor Cohen-Cole to consider sending him an email with text that he can use to tell his colleagues in the Law School the reason they should be accepting that they are now going to be asked to spend this time rather than him. He expected they may be concerned that another school is setting the agenda of their time use. Having spoken with other Law School Senate members, he has gotten the sense that they find the level of time commitment on the Senate to be less appetizing than others might think, and they may not feel enticed by the appearance that another school is setting their agenda for them. He noted that Professor Cohen-Cole did not have to answer this question now, but he invited that text, and he authentically promised to forward it.

Professor Markus requested clarification on whether the motion is a request to resign from FSEC or the Senate as well. Professor Cohen-Cole responded that the request is to resign from FSEC. He added that the Law School delegation could choose to send Professor Kieff back to FSEC; the motion is not a request from the Senate to set the Law School's time use.

Professor Wilson asked whether the motion is a request or a demand, noting that if his school feels he is doing a good job he would not be inclined to step down. He noted that the FSEC subgroup chose to act as it did because they thought it was the right thing to do, given the options. It was not perfect, but neither was the status quo.

Professor Eakle noted that this situation involved a great deal of suffering and hardship over the last five months. He reiterated that the committee spent an enormous amount of energy, with 700+ emails exchanged since last May, trying to bring order, sanity, and goodness to the shared governance structure. It would be very difficult to resign at this point without conferring with his school and the responsibilities they gave him. He added that there has been an enormous amount of partial information shared. There is a lot more that could be discussed, and the group is trying to restrain itself on some of those points in order not to expose some very egregious activity by faculty colleagues that have been sent to the group. He stated that there is hard evidence of this. He recommended that FSEC, as presently constituted with its new CCAS member, meet together and discuss some of these issues in confidence.

The amendment to the motion failed, 6-12.

Professor Schwindt noted that all of FSEC, including the ones that the subgroup has not been in agreement with, have all done to the best of their ability a good job of representing their schools during a very difficult time at the university. She stated that she wants to remain on FSEC. However, if that would require her to expose all the things that were said and done, for which there is written documentation, she expressed that she would not do so in order to remain on FSEC. She thought that doing so would make a difference, but if the Senate wants FSEC to step down based on the current information that they have, then people have to vote their conscience. She stated that it is unfortunate that a group of dedicated colleagues would not be allowed to work together after voting in a new temporary representative. Some will agree or disagree with the subgroup's actions, but it concerned her that the consequence of six faculty leaders speaking up would be for them to be asked to step down. She stated that she would not resign and reiterated that it is

unfortunate that the discussion has reached the level of six people having to state their unwillingness to expose private communications and behaviors.

Professor Akman noted that he respects everyone on FSEC and that the last two sets of comments were news to him. He expressed his view that, if there is egregious conduct, it should absolutely be brought to a group to be discussed, but the Senate floor is not the place to do it.

Professor Eakle stated that there was an attempt to form agendas. The majority did this and were ignored; this happened on multiple occasions, most recently at the last FSEC meeting.

Unanimous consent was requested but not obtained on a motion to call the question. A quorum was lost during the vote to call the question.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 5:53pm.



Faculty Senate

Nominees for Standing Committee Membership October 2025

Appointment, Salaries, & Promotion Policies

Jamie Cohen-Cole (CCAS), voting

Meina Liu (CCAS), voting

Athletics and Recreation

Markus Jennings (Deputy Athletics Director), nonvoting

Fiscal Planning & Budgeting

Jonathon Keeney (SMHS), voting

Michael Massiah (CCAS), voting

Faculty Nominees for the Joint Committee of Faculty and Students

Karan Jatwani, (SMHS), faculty co-chair

Barbara Benetiz-Curry (CCAS)

Jihae Cha (GSEHD)

Alyssa DeSimone (SEAS)

Leonard Friedman (GWSPH)

Daisy Le (SON)

Amita Vyas (GWSPH)