

Special Senate Meeting to further discuss the outcomes of the 2025 session of the WV legislature.

Date; May 5th, 2025 10am to Noon

Attendance: Rob Anthony (CAHSS at large), Joshua Beck (CBRE at large), Denis Berenschot (EHML), Courtney Campany (NAPS), Craig Cline (SABS), Chris Coltrin (CACT), Larry Z. Daily (CAHSS at large), Rhonda Donaldson (LIB), David Gordon (CAHSS at large), Jeff Groff (STEMN at large), Max Guirguis (ACF), Osman Guzide (CSME), Melissa Hall (RSES), Brenda Johnston (NURS), Stacey Kendig (CBRE at large), Amanda Mandzik (BAEF), Sytil Murphy (STEMN at large), Tracy Nichols (EDUC), Laura Robertson (STEMN at large), Austin Showen (MUSC), Cindy Vance (CBRE at large), Jennifer Yablonsky (CAHSS at large)

Officers: Larry Daily (President), Brenda Johnston (Secretary), Craig Cline (Parliamentarian)

Agenda Items.

Presidential Proclamation for Dr. Karen Green read by Senator Daily

Salary Increases: Discussed the preliminary stages for addressing salary increases for faculty and staff. Senator Daily is on this committee. “salary compression” is an initial goal.

Legislative issues: BOG Bill and the DEI Bills have been signed by the Governor. Effective dates are in question

AAC&U Statement:

Senator Daily read an email from Dr. Hendrix regarding AAC&U Letter. She suggested that the Senate consider creating our own letter for Shepherd or sign the AAC&U Statement or both? Below is the AAC&U Statement that as of May 3, 2025 the statement has been signed by 607 University and college Presidents.

See the AAC&U Statement below:

This statement was developed in collaboration with university and college presidents and other educational leaders across the country, after national meetings convened by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

As leaders of America’s colleges, universities, and scholarly societies, we speak with one voice against the unprecedented government overreach and political interference now endangering American higher education. We are open to constructive reform and do not oppose legitimate government oversight. However, we must oppose undue government intrusion in the lives of those who learn, live, and work on our campuses. We will always seek effective and fair financial practices, but we must reject the coercive use of public research funding.

America’s system of higher learning is as varied as the goals and dreams of the students it serves. It includes research universities and community colleges; comprehensive universities and liberal arts colleges; public institutions and private ones; freestanding and multi-site campuses. Some institutions

are designed for all students, and others are dedicated to serving particular groups. Yet, American institutions of higher learning have in common the essential freedom to determine, on academic grounds, whom to admit and what is taught, how, and by whom. Our colleges and universities share a commitment to serve as centers of open inquiry where, in their pursuit of truth, faculty, students, and staff are free to exchange ideas and opinions across a full range of viewpoints without fear of retribution, censorship, or deportation.

Because of these freedoms, American institutions of higher learning are essential to American prosperity and serve as productive partners with government in promoting the common good. Colleges and universities are engines of opportunity and mobility, anchor institutions that contribute to economic and cultural vitality regionally and in our local communities. They foster creativity and innovation, provide human resources to meet the fast-changing demands of our dynamic workforce, and are themselves major employers. They nurture the scholarly pursuits that ensure America's leadership in research, and many provide healthcare and other essential services. Most fundamentally, America's colleges and universities prepare an educated citizenry to sustain our democracy.

The price of abridging the defining freedoms of American higher education will be paid by our students and our society. On behalf of our current and future students, and all who work at and benefit from our institutions, we call for constructive engagement that improves our institutions and serves our republic.

Motion:

Senator Vance made a motion that in addition to requesting that President Hendrix sign the AAC&U letter, that we should also have our own letter. The motion was 2nd and past by the Full Senate.

Federal Funding WVU

Discussed a previous Senate meeting on April 21, 2025, where a statement was made regarding a substantial loss of federal funding for WVU that appeared to be the result of political issues. Currently, WVU's federal funding has been reinstated.

Shared Governance Discussion.

Discussed faculty voice concerns and administrative decisions that lack transparency.

Motion:

Senator Murphy made a motion that the Senate request results of Last year's Great Colleges to Work for Survey (GCWS). These results have been provided in previous years, and it is unclear as to why the information has not been shared or why we have not been asked to participate in the survey. The motion was seconded and passed the full Senate.

Restructuring:

Discussed the possibility of re-restructuring in lieu of the differences in processes regarding the Academic Restructuring (AR) compared to the Administrative Prioritization (AP). AR appeared rushed and lead to changes that were not supported by most of the faculty. The AP process has proceeded much more slowly and appears to have less urgency and less transparency. The Senate has requested reports on AP multiple times this year and witnessed the dismantling of the AP committee and multiple edits and changes to the reports. The financial savings from both AR and AP have not been clearly communicated. There was a 6-million-dollar deficit and cuts had to happen, however, despite the financial crisis the BOG would not authorize an increase in student tuition or reduce waivers during AR. The waivers for athletics are disproportionate to honor's waivers. Athletic waivers are currently being evaluated and it was acknowledged that athletics

are important for Shepherd. The director of athletics has made multiple cuts this year especially in the area of travel expenses.

Discussion ensued regarding the rationalization behind potential salary increases given Shepherd's financial struggles. Senator Daily reminded the Senators that there is a renewed awareness that Shepherd needs to "invest in its people." Senators expressed frustration with the lack of compensation for earning Merit.

Meeting Adjourned 11:45