

Faculty Senate Minutes
Regular Meeting
Monday, October 20, 2025 at 3:10 p.m., Blue Gray Room

Attendance:

Rob Anthony (CAHSS at large), Joshua Beck (CBRE at large), Denis Berenschot (EHML), Courtney Campany (NAPS), Tara Carlisle (Library), Craig Cline (SABS), Larry Z. Daily (CAHSS at large), David Gordon (CAHSS at large), Jeff Groff (STEMN at large), Max Guirguis (ACF), Osman Guzide (CSME), Melissa Hall (RSES), Brenda Johnston (NURS), Matthew Kushin (CAHSS at large), Sytil Murphy (STEMN at large), Tracy Nichols (EDUC), Laura Robertson (STEMN at large), Austin Showen (MUSC), Cindy Vance (CBRE at large), Jennifer Yablonsky (CACT)

Excused: Amanda Mandzik (BAEF), Stacey Kendig (CBRE at large),

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

I. Approval of Minutes from October 06, 2025 Amendments added.

II. HLC Q&A Session (Assistant VP Jason Best)

Dr. Best provided an overview of the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation process. He currently serves as the University's HLC Accreditation Liaison Officer, appointed by the President, and has held this role for three years. Dr. Best attended the meeting to answer questions from the Faculty Senate regarding the upcoming HLC visit.

Discussion:

A question was raised about the types of questions faculty might expect during the HLC visit. Dr. Best explained that while the exact format and approach are not yet known, it is anticipated that the HLC team will conduct group sessions based on specific review criteria, including sessions with faculty, staff, and students. Questions are likely to focus on faculty governance, levels of engagement, and evidence of institutional effectiveness. The visiting team will have access to Senate and committee minutes.

Dr. Best noted that Shepherd University will provide a summary demonstrating compliance with HLC criteria. The site visit is scheduled for March 9th and 10th 2026. The members of the visiting team have not yet been identified. In February, Dr. Best will distribute a packet of information, including a proposed review schedule and preparation materials.

A question was raised regarding current initiatives to update course syllabi to reflect the new Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs), replacing the former LEAP Goals. Dr. Best explained that the HLC review team will likely inquire about these curriculum changes, request documentation demonstrating their implementation, and assess the extent of faculty and staff awareness and engagement in the transition process.

Dr. Best advised the Senate to ensure that meeting minutes demonstrate active faculty engagement. He noted that the absence of committee reports, or evidence of participation

may raise concerns during the accreditation review, as HLC reviewers closely examine such documentation to assess institutional involvement and shared governance.

Dr. Best recommended creating a centralized digital repository to house PDF versions of Faculty Senate and committee reports, promoting accessibility and consistent documentation for accreditation review purposes. He encouraged Senators to collaborate within their departments to advance this initiative and discussed the potential use of SharePoint as a platform for this purpose. Dr. Best emphasized the importance of maintaining vigilance with institutional data to prevent loss due to factors such as personnel changes or retirements.

Dr. Best also emphasized the importance of faculty and staff being prepared to respond to questions in a professional, confident manner that demonstrates engagement and awareness of institutional initiatives. He reminded Senators that the HLC review is meant to help the University to be better.

Dr. Best reminded Senators that Shepherd University's previous HLC visit was highly successful. He noted that he is currently serving as a reviewer for a comparable institution, which provides valuable insight into accreditation expectations and review processes. Dr. Best encouraged faculty to meet with him individually if they have questions or would like additional guidance regarding the upcoming HLC visit.

III. Committee Reports

Assembly Committees and Representatives

A. Admissions & Credits (Senator Nichols) Two recent reviews conducted at the last meeting.

B. Curriculum & Instruction (Senator Cline):

The C&I Committee met yesterday to discuss the possible adoption of the AAC&U Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) and VALUE Rubrics as a replacement for the LEAP standards. Committee members received the VALUE Rubrics several weeks in advance and had begun reviewing the materials prior to the meeting. During the meeting, Dr. Stevens presented information about the VALUE Rubrics and responded to questions from committee members. This presentation was helpful in understanding how we could use the VALUE rubrics to assess learning outcomes in our individual course, with a goal of addressing all 16 VALUES across a program.

The committee recognizes that the LEAP standards are no longer used by AAC&U and that Shepherd will need to identify an appropriate alternative. While the VALUE Rubrics appear to be a promising option, the committee is not yet ready to endorse their adoption. Members agreed to consult with their respective departments to gather input on the potential benefits, challenges, and implementation considerations associated with adopting the VALUE Rubrics.

Once committee members have gathered feedback from their departments, the C&I Committee will be better positioned to make a recommendation to the Faculty Senate. Members will report back at the November meeting to continue the discussion regarding potential adoption of the VALUE Rubrics.

The C&I Committee recognizes that the VALUE Rubrics represent a substantial amount of material to review and implement, and they go beyond simply cutting and pasting a statement into a course syllabus. The Committee agrees with Dr. Stevens that a realistic timeframe for full implementation across courses and programs, if adopted, would be approximately two years. Senator Cline Reminded Senators Reminded Senators that when a proposal is submitted and there was no presenter available to answer questions.

- C. Core Curriculum (Sam Greene)
- D. Interdisciplinary Curricular Committee (Senator Groff) No proposals submitted
- E. Advisory Council of Faculty (Senator Guirguis) They are meeting November 7, 2025

Faculty Senate Committees and Representatives

- F. Library Liaison (Senator Carlisle) No report
- G. Professional Development, Faculty Salary, and Welfare (Senator Anthony) Provided an opportunity overview and reported that the President donated \$4000.00 for the mini-grants. If Create the Future Summer Stipend January 19th due date. Decisions will be made in March
- H. Scholarship & Awards (Senators Vance and Murphy)
Polling voting members for the last Lecture due by November 3rd, 2025. The Provost is currently working on Venues for events.
- I. Senate Bylaws (Senator Cline) No report
- J. Washington Gateway (Senator Yablonsky) No report
- K. Honors Advisory Board (Director Brasher) No report

External Committee Representatives

- L. Calendar Committee (Senator Groff)

The 2026–2027 academic calendars were endorsed, and the Registrar’s Office will finalize specific dates. It was noted that, at times, the Provost establishes priority deadlines for graduation applications, which can create challenges for the Registrar’s scheduling and processing timelines. Senator Groff presented the changes to the priority deadlines which included changes to graduation application deadlines made by the Provost. Senator Nichols reported that this issue has been discussed extensively in the A&C Committee. The Senate discussed ongoing challenges related to timing and process efficiency, particularly when students submit graduation applications late, resulting in their omission from the commencement program. The number of petitions to A&C does tend to increase significantly in the weeks leading up to graduation, and many have been overturned by the Provost after confirming that students met all graduation requirements. The discussion also addressed the intended purpose of the graduation application process and the need to streamline procedures to prevent future conflicts.

Senator Groff made a motion to change the advisement schedule for Fall 2026 from October 21st to October 19th. Motion Seconded. The motion passed.

- M. Success, Engagement, Accessibility, and Transparency (Senator Hall) An email went out to locate a new Chair.
- N. Enrollment Management Committee (Senator Campany) Has not met this semester.
- O. Graduate Council

- P. Student Success Committee (Senator Johnston) The student handbook and attendance policies are being reviewed for updates

- Q. Technology Oversight Committee (Senator Guzide) Meeting scheduled for 23rd.

Other Committees

- R. Budget Advisory Council (Senator Beck, Senator Berenschot)

Has not met this semester

- S. Internationalization Advisory Council (Senator Yablonsky) No report

- T. Threat Assessment Task Force (Senators Yablonsky and Murphy)

No reports of threats

IV. Updates/Progress on Senate Actions/Discussions

- A. LEAP, ELO's, and Value Rubrics (reports from C&I and Core)

Value rubrics are being discussed by the committee. Senators are encouraged to remind constituents to review the rubrics. See the previous C&I report.

- B. Committee review report (Senators Vance, Anthony, and Cline).

The committee provided an overview of its processes, assessments, reviews, and analyses (see attached reports). They recommended consolidating certain committees and adjusting meeting schedules to reduce redundancy and enhance overall productivity. Some discussion regarding the impact of changes on schedules and commitments.

Motion introduced by Senator Vance to eliminate the Senate Washington Gateway Committee so the program can be reconstituted by other interested parties outside the Faculty Senate. Motion was seconded; Motion carried.

- C. Updates from the Great Colleges to Work For Committee (Senator Daily)

All "Sources of Friction" are being addressed.

- D. Faculty workload guidelines (Senator Daily).

The guidelines remain under review. Developing a quantitative method to accurately calculate faculty workload continues to present challenges. It was noted that collecting data directly from faculty regarding the time devoted to various professional responsibilities may provide the most reliable foundation for determining equitable workload metrics. At this time, the Faculty Senate is not yet ready to endorse the guidelines. Senator Daily will meet with the Provost to discuss Senator's concerns.

V. New Business

VI. Announcements

- A. Board of Governors Meeting Schedule (Storer Ballroom of the Student Center)

November 6, 2025 at 4:15 p.m.

December 18, 2025 at 4:15 p.m.

February 19, 2026 at 4:15 p.m.

April 16, 2026 at 4:15 p.m.

June 11, 2026 at 4:15 p.m.

Meeting Schedule (2025-2026): The regular meetings of the Faculty Senate shall be held every first and third Monday at 3:10 p.m. during the academic year when classes are in session. Dates

(bold is current meeting, italics are special meetings): *08/25, 09/15, 10/06, **10/20**, 11/03, 11/17, 12/01, 02/02, 02/16, 03/02, 04/06, 04/20*