



April 25, 2025  
Meeting Minutes

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- I. CALL TO ORDER – Nicholas Rhew, Chair, called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm.
- II. ROLL CALL – Susan Ely, Secretary
  - a. *Faculty Senators Present: Peter Whiting (At-Large), Jiaying Liu (Romain College of Business), Nicholas Rhew (Romain College of Business), Todd Schroer (College of Liberal Arts), McManus Woodend (College of Liberal Arts), Brett Anderson (College of Liberal Arts), Jessica Mason (College of Nursing and Health Professions), Jenna Thacker (College of Nursing and Health Professions), Susan Ely (Pott College of Science, Engineering and Education), Guoyuan Huang (Pott College of Science, Engineering and Education), Kyle Mara (Pott College of Science, Engineering and Education) and Kate Sherrill (Library)*
  - b. *Alternates: Sri Dandotkar (for Amie McKibban, At-Large)*
  - c. *Faculty Senators Absent without Alternate: Nancy Kovanic (Romain College of Business) and Zachary Ward (College of Nursing and Health Professions)*
- III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – The minutes of March 21, 2025 were approved as distributed through unanimous consent.
- IV. PRESIDENT, PROVOST, AND OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS
  - a. President Bridges stated that he appreciated the support from the USI community upon his appointment as President of the University. He announced that there is an anticipated 5% reduction across all line items for Indiana Higher Education institutions, including USI, due to the budget shortfall projected at the Indiana State House. There will be more information to follow as updates are available. The final budget bill is expected to be signed next week.
  - b. Provost Office – Dr. Jason Hardgrave, Associate Provost – Dr. Hardgrave thanked the faculty for 100% completion of the FAR. It was noted that Watermark has a product that can be used for Student Perception Surveys, which integrates into Blackboard which has shown higher student participation. This would also mean that the results from the CPS would import directly into Watermark for the FAR and Promotion and Tenure processes. It was also noted that the Core Curriculum assessment was piloted this past semester and does not require the use of TK20. Next Wednesday is the Late-Night Breakfast event and the Provost has asked for support.



- c. Ms. Sarah Will – Executive Director of Human Resources – mentioned that there are additional trainings on the new WebTime Entry system before the end of the semester. There is also an Adobe form that will need to be completed by all faculty to select their salary payment plan. Faculty can choose between 20 biweekly pays or 26 deferred biweekly pays. The form must be completed by August 11, 2025.

## V. FACULTY SENATE CHAIR REPORT

- a. The Faculty Senate Chair noted that there were 5 formal charges over the past academic year. The disposition of the charges are as follows:
  - The charge to revise the Incomplete Grade Policy – complete.
  - The charge to examine the Add/Drop process – the form may be integrated into Dynamic Forms, which would complete this charge.
  - The charge regarding Dependent Tuition Benefits was sent to the Economic Benefits Committee and was captured in their 2024-2025 annual report.
  - A request was made from the College of Nursing and Health Professions for additional degree conferral dates. This would also be helpful for the Accelerated MBA program. The Provost is investigating how to proceed and is working with the Registrar's office to establish additional degree conferral dates. The Registrar has requested standardized dates for issuing degrees. It was noted that Parchment can be used for degree conferral at non-traditional graduation dates, as the digital degree can be conferred at any time. No further action from the Faculty Senate is required.
  - An informal charge was made about the accrual of sick leave over sabbatical. Currently no sick leave is accrued because sabbatical is already a type of leave. The Provost is working with Human Resources about any changes to the accrual of sick leave.
- b. The chair noted he has continued to work with the President about issues including faculty raises and overall campus morale.
- c. The chair requested all senators to encourage their colleagues to vote in the Ad Hoc Faculty Senate elections.
- d. It was noted that there may be a special meeting called over the summer due to potential implications of the pending budget bill or other legislation that could impact faculty. Information will be provided as it is available.



- e. The chair noted that while he had proposed reforms to the structure and procedures of Faculty Senate, work had not been completed over the past academic year. The chair has proposed that he would begin work on senate reform in coordination with past senate chairs during the Fall 2025 semester.
- f. The chair noted that it was a pleasure to work as Faculty Senate Chair for the 2024-2025 academic year.

#### VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS –

- a. The University Core Curriculum Committee report was accepted by the Faculty Senate as submitted by unanimous consent.
- b. All other committee reports (other than the Economic Benefits Committee) were also accepted by the Faculty Senate through unanimous consent.
- c. Economic Benefits Committee report – Dr. Cody Strom presented the 2024-2025 Economics Benefit Committee (EBC) report. Dr. Strom spoke about the impact of the EBC report on the faculty as a whole. He said since the report has been sent out, many faculty have spoken to him about financial struggles they have faced. It was noted that the Library faculty should be added to the report next year, as they are also ranked as faculty, but were not included on this report. It was also noted that it is the job of the Faculty Senate to elevate the results of this report to the administration. The report recommendations for action by the faculty senate were reviewed. It was noted that the first two recommendations will involve ongoing discussion of the faculty senate in the 2025-2026 term. The third recommendation, regarding the changing to the dependent fee waiver, will be addressed as a charge for the first meeting of the 2025-2026 academic year. The fourth recommendation was regarding a personal day for faculty. It was noted that both HR and the Provost's office are open to the idea but the logistics of course coverage needed to be addressed. The Provost also noted that there would need to be guidance over the use of personal days. This will also be addressed in the 2025-2026 term. The report was received into the record through unanimous consent. Dr. Strom was thanked for his leadership on this committee.

#### VII. OLD BUSINESS – None.

#### VIII. NEW BUSINESS –

- a. Nicholas Rhew moved to create an ad hoc committee to evaluate and revise the academic integrity policy and closely related policies, processes, and forms. The ad hoc committee will consist of one Faculty Senate appointee from each college, one appropriate assistant or associate dean from each college, a Provost's Office designee, and one representative from the Dean of Students Office. The ad hoc



committee will report on its activities and provide recommendations to Faculty Senate for action by the end of the Fall 2025 semester. The motion was seconded. Through discussion it was added that the Faculty Senators will be responsible for finding an appointee from their college. It was noted that appointees should be established prior to the end of the Spring 2025 term. The motion was unanimously approved.

- b. b. Nicholas Rhew moved to create an ad hoc committee to 1) evaluate the course perception survey and propose adjustments, if deemed necessary, and 2) evaluate and recommend changes, if necessary, to policies and practices around incentivizing CPS completion. The ad hoc committee will consist of five Faculty Senate appointees and will report on its activities and provide recommendations to Faculty Senate for action by the end of the Fall 2025 semester. The language was modified to reflect a committee of 5 or more Faculty Senate appointees, appointed by the executive committee of faculty senate. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

#### IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GOOD OF THE ORDER

- a. The Board of Trustees meeting will be held on May 9<sup>th</sup>, which includes the promotion of many faculty and instructors.
- b. Commencement is upcoming and all faculty should be encouraged to attend. Either the senate chair or vice-chair will be on the dais for all commencement ceremonies.

X. ADJOURNMENT at 4:21pm.

XI. Next meeting: Fall 2025