Fifty-Third Faculty Senate
Northwest Missouri State University
Full Senate Meeting Minutes

October 07, 2026
3:30 p.m.
310 Admin Building

Members in Attendance:

Officers	
☒ Luke Campbell	President
☒ Peter Adam	Vice President
☒ Cindy Tu	Parliamentarian
☒ Jesse Lane	Secretary
☒ Mike Miller	Past President
College Senators:	**Alternates:**
College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences	
☐ TBD (1st term, 1st year)	☐ TBD (1st term, 1st year)
☒ Ahmed Malkawi (1st term, 1st year)	☐ Mohammed Meziani (1st term, 1st year)
College of Arts, Communication, and Social Sciences	
☒ Kim Casey (1st term, 2nd year)	☐ Brett Chloupek (1st term, 2nd year)
☐ Devlin Scofield (1st term, 1st year)	☒ Ashley Davis-Black (1st term, 1st year)
College of Business, Mathematics and Technology	
☒ Casey Abington (1st term, 2nd year)	☐ Ajay Bandi (1st term, 2nd year)
☒ Laura Kauzlarich (1st term, 1st year)	☐ Tiebing Shi (1st term, 1st year)
College of Education, Health, and Human Services	
☒ Linda Gray Smith (1st term, 2nd year)	☐ Joel McCormick (1st term, 2nd year)
☒ Machelle Skinner (1st term, 1st year)	☐ Shelley Hiatt (1st term, 1st year)
School Senators:	**Alternates:**
☒ **Agricultural Sciences**: Jason Holderieath (1st term, 1st year)	☐ Ronda Driskill (2nd term, 1st year)
☒ **Business:** Kyungjoong Kim (1st term, 1st year)	☐ Weiping Wu (1st term, 1st year)
☐ **Comm. and Mass Media**: John Katsion (1st term, 2nd year)	☐ Adam Whiteside (1st term, 1st yr)
☐ **Computer Sci & Info Sys:** Ratan Lal (1st term, 1st year)	☒ Gary Yu Zhao (1st term, 1st yr)
☐ **Education:** Cindy Schairer-Kessler (1st term, 2nd year)	☐ Travis Dimmitt (1st term, 2nd year)
☒ **Fine & Performing Arts**: Joseph Tomasso (1st term, 1st year)	☐ Rachel Day (1st term, 2nd year)
☒ **Health Sci & Well**.: Jacob Tengelsen (1st term, 1st year)	☐ Damon Leiss (1st term, 2nd year)
☒ **HSS:** Travis Surprise (1st term, 2nd year)	☐ Clay Awsumb (1st term, 1st year)
☒ **LLW**: Luke Rolfes (2nd term, 2nd year)	☐ Heather Hill (1st term, 1st year)
☒ **Math and Statistics:** Taylor Harrison (1st term, 1st year)	☐ Sara Sony (1st term, 1st year)
☒ **Natural Sciences:** Luke Monroe (1st term, 2nd year)	☐ Tish Warner (1st term, 2nd year)
***Note**: An X next to the name indicates they were present	

I. **Call to Order**
   a. President Campbell called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm
II. **Approval of Agenda**
   a. Motion to approve agenda as amended: Jacob Tingelson
      i. Seconded by Linda Smith
      ii. Approved
III. **Approval of Minutes**
   a. Motion to approve: Travis Surprise
      i. Seconded by Jacob Tingelsen
      ii. Approved
IV. **Reports**

a. Special Guests
    i. Dr. Lance Tatum – University President
        1. Dr. Tatum addressed the Faculty Senate to discuss institutional priorities, outline administrative strategies, and address faculty inquiries. He emphasized transparent governance, accessibility, and proactive collaboration across university constituencies, reaffirming his commitment to meet regularly with the Faculty Senate and Staff Council upon invitation. He then discussed the following points.
        2. Employee Satisfaction Survey & Strategic Pause
            a. The university has paused its annual employee satisfaction survey, scheduling the next administration for Fall 2027. Rather than distributing annual surveys without sufficient time to execute solutions, this pause provides administration the time needed to build, implement, and evaluate targeted action plans based on prior feedback. Furthermore, survey results were cross-referenced with SWOT analysis sessions during strategic planning, confirming three primary recurring themes: communication and collaboration, compensation, and succession planning paired with professional development.
        3. Communication and Integration Framework
            a. To address feedback regarding executive visibility and campus collaboration, the administration launched a comprehensive Communication and Integration Plan. This initiative features written monthly updates from Dr. Tatum's office detailing executive activities, legislative visits, and university initiatives. Additionally, the university launched "Tuesday with Tatum," a bimonthly open forum for students to meet directly with the President to discuss campus topics such as dining services and infrastructure projects. The administration also established a "Faculty Circle" for non-Senate faculty members to hold open discussions regarding institutional developments, state budget impacts, and academic initiatives. For staff recognition, quarterly welcome receptions were introduced to mirror the annual new faculty welcome reception. Finally, regular divisional newsletters were introduced by Provost Dr. Ward, Vice President of Student Affairs Dr. Bruce Skinner, and Human Resources under Ms. Barkas.
        4. Multi-Phase Compensation Model & Compression Strategy
            a. Upon Dr. Tatum's arrival in June 2023, the institution's pay structure was pegged to a 2017 market benchmark paid at 92% of market value, creating significant recruitment and retention challenges. An initial compensation report from external vendor Evergreen was rejected because its recommendations did not align with actual institutional peer groups. In response, a joint faculty-staff Compensation Task Force spent a year developing a new model guided by three principles: fairness across market bands, keeping pace with inflation, and mitigating salary

compression. Market comparisons are drawn against regional peer institutions such as UCM, Emporia, and Missouri Western, explicitly excluding flagship institutions like Columbia. Between 2019 and 2025, average faculty salaries rose 11.7% from $64,376 to $72,910. While Instructors saw a 14.1% increase, Full Professors 11.8%, and Assistant Professors 11.1%, Associate Professors experienced an 8.1% increase, making them the rank facing the greatest compression and falling farthest below market midpoints. Phase 1 of the compensation model was implemented on January 1, 2026, reallocating resources to 133 employees—including 113 staff and 20 faculty—with a focus on trade and support staff like electricians and painters where market non-competitiveness caused critical turnover. Phase 2, targeted for January 1, 2027, aims to impact 377 employees (115 faculty and 262 staff) at an annual recurring cost exceeding $1 million. Across all phases, roughly 48% to 50% of faculty and 53% to 55% of staff will receive salary adjustments. However, recent enrollment declines across all sectors may delay execution or necessitate a third phase.

5. Succession Planning & Selective Professional Development
    a. Human Resources introduced a framework for succession planning using a nine-square matrix model that blends corporate and higher education approaches to guide employee progression and organizational continuity. The plan acknowledges that internal leadership positions are limited, aiming to support employee growth even if individuals eventually advance outside Northwest. The strategy also incorporates emergency replacement protocols to handle sudden leadership vacancies. Regarding professional development, the university is transitioning away from uncoordinated self-selection toward a more selective, supervisor-aligned approach tied to clear career goals, institutional capacity, and available funding.
6. Enrollment Trends, Demographics, and Recruitment
    a. During the fall census, enrollment was recorded at 7,923 students, later reaching 8,023, reflecting lower overall figures across undergraduate, graduate, on-campus, and online sectors, with dual enrollment remaining the sole growth area. High completion rates, with over 2,000 students graduating annually, create a high annual threshold for replacement. Compounding this, Missouri's high school graduate population declined nearly 6% statewide last year, signaling the arrival of a demographic cliff expected to persist until 2030 or 2031. Furthermore, U.S. international student enrollment dropped by 110,000 nationwide, reducing international applicant pools across all institution tiers. In response, recruitment shifted from purchasing broad contact lists to targeted outreach using

the Element 451 CRM. Positive indicators have emerged, as yield rates improved, retention increased by 0.5%, and campus Preview Day attendance rose substantially from 57 students the prior year to 93 registered students.

7. State Budget Deficits & Financial Reallocation
    a. The State of Missouri projects a $1.2 billion budget deficit, anticipating core higher education cuts between 8% and 12%, which totals roughly $100 million in reductions across the sector. A proposed state reallocation of core higher education funding based on FTE metrics would have granted Northwest a 5.9% core increase amounting to over $1 million, but the overarching state deficit has stalled this reallocation plan.
8. Fiscal Management & Capital Strategy
    a. To offset potential budget shortfalls, uncommitted capital and infrastructure projects, such as early roof replacements, are being deferred. The administration is also reviewing open position vacancies to verify if they are mission-critical before refilling. Crucially, no employee layoffs are planned, protecting a workforce that accounts for over 60% of the institutional budget. Additionally, operational preservation measures remain in place, with travel, operations, and professional development budgets left unswept.
9. 90-Hour Degree Programs & Academic Innovation
    a. Dr. Tatum characterized 90-hour degree programs as a specialized tool for degree completion—particularly beneficial for adult or transfer students—rather than a universal cure for enrollment declines. He cautioned against converting standard 120-hour programs to 90 hours without addressing root causes of low enrollment. While supporting the Professional Studies 90-hour degree option in partnership with RisePoint, he emphasized

ii. Dr. Rose Marie Ward – Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs

1. Dr. Ward opened her report by highlighting key grants and applied learning initiatives, including a $2.1 million Department of Labor grant to expand “earn while you learn” registered apprenticeships led by Hannah Christian and increase paid profession-based learning opportunities for students. In addition, the university was recommended for funding by the National Science Foundation (NSF) in a top-ten state partnership alongside Mizzou to advance AI workforce development, with plans for a second grant submission in November to broaden the campus AI footprint. Academic Affairs is also preparing for a Northwest Vanguard think tank session on October 14th and inviting faculty proposals for evidence-based teaching presentations during the January Professional Development Days.
2. Regarding curriculum innovation and 90-credit hour degree programs, Dr. Ward shared updated guidelines from Working Group 90 establishing a reduced degree framework ranging from 90 to 119 credit hours. Legal analysis by Dr. Tapps confirmed that

Missouri statute permits an abbreviated general education core across degree categories, including traditional Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts programs. Employer feedback collected at spring career fairs, market research through RisePoint, and internal evaluations from graduate program deans revealed strong openness to reduced-credit degrees across various fields, such as criminal justice and applied science, though adoption remains voluntary for individual academic departments.

3. Dr. Ward also outlined the six core goals of the university's strategic plan, soliciting feedback ahead of an open forum on October 28th and formal submission to the Board of Regents in December. The plan prioritizes advancing student success and career readiness through transformative learning experiences and faculty mentorship, as well as leading rural workforce development and healthcare innovation centered around the Rural Health Center hub. Remaining strategic goals focus on innovating academic degree programs to align with emerging workforce needs, cultivating faculty and staff excellence through leadership pathways and interdisciplinary scholarship, expanding regional community and K-12 partnerships, and improving institutional effectiveness through predictive analytics and data-driven decision-making.
4. Finally, the report emphasized shared governance and inter-campus collaboration, noting monthly joint meetings between executive leadership from the Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Student Senate. Student leaders have shown high enthusiasm for partnering directly with faculty on academic projects and AI working groups. Faculty were also encouraged to participate in upcoming campus prospective student events to help build personal connections with incoming candidates.

iii. Dr. Elise Hepworth – Dean, College of Arts, Communication, and Social Sciences

1. Dr. Hepworth reported that evaluating general education options (Core 42) is currently complex due to several overlapping initiatives taking place simultaneously. To keep everyone informed, detailed communications will be distributed to committee members and chairs outlining the scope of the work, what is and isn't included, and the specific options under consideration. Once finalized, formal recommendations will be presented to the body through standard DCM and CDR channels. Dr. Hepworth encouraged members to read the email, share it broadly—including with Luke—and submit any feedback.

iv. Chief Amanda Cullin – UPD

1. Chief Amanda Cullin provided several campus updates regarding ongoing infrastructure projects, student support reporting protocols, and physical safety improvements. First, a sewer project behind the Wells Hall parking lot is scheduled to begin on Monday, weather permitting, and is expected to continue throughout the entire semester. Additionally, Chief Cullin shared an operational update regarding the campus crisis counselor, who is pregnant and due on October 31st. Although this will cause

minor procedural adjustments, well-being checks and emergency responses will continue to be answered immediately without disruption.
2. To ensure student concerns are handled efficiently, Chief Cullin clarified the specific uses for each university reporting channel. Matters involving academic performance or unexcused class absences without mental health indicators should be routed through Northwest 360. On the other hand, any mental health issues, safety checks, or well-being concerns must be submitted through the Concerning Behavior Report. Chief Cullin reassured everyone that regardless of which platform is used—including Maxient—police personnel will follow up and make contact with all reported individuals.
3. Finally, Chief Cullin highlighted recent physical safety enhancements across campus, specifically noting the **relocation of stop signs near the Fine Arts building. The signs were originally positioned behind a telephone pole to comply with MoDOT requirements, but police worked with Browns to move them to a significantly more visible and functional location. Chief Cullin expressed appreciation for community feedback and encouraged ongoing input regarding any campus safety or operational hazards to assist in future advocacy efforts.
    a. Question from the floor: There are several parking issues behind Valk, especially with contractors taking too much space. When the parking is full, we usually go to the overflow parking lot, but they have blocked those off too. Is there something that can be done about this?
    b. Response from Chief Cullin: UPD will have a conversation with the contractors.

v. Dr. Tyler Tapps - Associate Provost, Academic Operations and Assessment
    1. No report

vi. Ms. Krista Barcus – Vice-President of Culture
    1. No report
    2. Question from the floor: We were told that if we bring someone for an interview, they will need to pay for everything then submit a reimbursement form, due to changes in Workday. Is this true?
    3. Response from Finance: There should be an alternative. We will look into it.
    4. Q from the floor: There is a similar problem with student organizations. What can we do about that? And when will the money from our previous FOAPs be transferred to our account on Workday?
    5. Response from Finance: They are working on fixing some of these issues. There should be alternate options.

vii. Dr. Allison Hoffmann – Associate Provost of Enrollment Management and Student Success
    1. Please come to the Academic Showcase in the Student Union this Saturday.

b. Senate President – Luke Campbell

i. President Campbell opened his brief report by highlighting the need for faculty representation on two key committees. First, he noted that the Digital Accessibility Task Force—which is guiding the institution's transition toward broader ADA compliance—currently lacks a faculty representative. After consulting with Dr. Ward, it was agreed that faculty input is essential given how the transition impacts faculty work, and President Campbell asked senators to share committee details with their respective schools to recruit at least one faculty representative. Second, President Campbell distributed the charter and information for Dr. Ward's Academic Policy Review Committee. Senators were requested to share these materials with their schools and direct interested faculty members to reach out to either President Campbell or Dr. Ward to get involved. Finally, President Campbell noted that while there were no new business items or specific proposals up for immediate action during the meeting, 11 pages of proposals are currently logged in the system and will likely come forward for Senate review in the near future.

c. Committee Reports

i. Academic Petitions – Ahmed Malkawi

1. The committee had a quick urgent meeting yesterday. The case was tabled, pending further information from the advisor and the school chair. They will be meeting again tomorrow to discuss the case.

ii. Assessment and Retention – Linda Gray Smith

1. Dr. Smith reported that the Assessment and Retention Committee is currently reviewing the draft of the 2022 Northwest Performance System to ensure its accuracy and update it to reflect current practices. Additionally, the Teaching and Learning Subcommittee is preparing to select upcoming professional development sessions, having successfully secured a valuable incentive for faculty presenters.

iii. CDR – Joseph Tomasso

1. Dr. Tomasso highlighted ongoing discussions within DCM regarding options for a reduced Northwest Core, including the specific justifications required when seeking a reduced core. Additionally, a catalog language change has been proposed to insert a formal philosophy and mission statement into the Northwest Core. On the CDR side, while no proposals have been approved since the previous meeting, ten proposals are set for review on October 13, 2026. The committee is facing a substantial workload, with 102 proposals currently in the pipeline as of October 7, 2026, and that total is projected to double by the end of the month. To ensure timely processing, any curriculum proposal requiring review by DCM or COTE must be submitted by November 2, 2026, whereas all remaining proposals must be submitted by February 1, 2026.

iv. Research – Kimberly Casey

1. Dr. Casey summarized the committee's October 1st meeting and outlined key deadlines, initiatives, and meeting schedules. The committee hosted its first grant information session on October

1st, with a second session scheduled for October 9th at 2:00 p.m. via Zoom. Faculty research grant proposals are due to Kelley O'Riley in the Graduate Office by October 19th. The committee will commence proposal deliberations on October 29th and aims to finalize funding decisions on November 5th. Currently, there are no reports or updates from the IRB or Animal Welfare committees.

2. Regarding administrative discussions, the committee met to prepare for upcoming sessions with the Provost on October 8th and 15th concerning research impact metrics and promotion and tenure guidance. While members informally agreed that setting official promotion and tenure guidance falls outside the committee's current scope, they assented to engage in discussions with the Provost as a faculty group and offer individual feedback. Additionally, the committee voiced support for collaborating with Laura Kauzlarich's team and the Celebration of Scholars Committee on Research Week enhancements, emphasizing that event planning should be integrated gradually as full organizational structures are established.
3. Finally, the committee addressed journal publication challenges, noting that Kayode Ayinde will draft a formal proposal regarding journal subscription and publication costs. Dr. Casey will submit this proposal to Faculty Senate President Luke and the Executive Council for consideration. The committee will continue meeting on designated Thursdays at 3:30 p.m. via Zoom and in Valk 14, with a planning survey slated for distribution in the coming weeks to prepare for the spring semester.

v. *Faculty Welfare, Budget, and Finance – Casey Abington*
   1. Dr. Abington said that they will meet on Monday with Dr. Ward and provide more information at the next meeting.

vi. *AI Committee*
   1. Dr. ward will sit in on the next AI meeting to make sure that there is progress on the charges and details to help clarify the committee's purpose. The committee work to create deliverables for faculty. Additionally, a number of faculty are participating in an AI webinar tomorrow.

vii. *Shared Governance Committee*
   1. The committee will meet Friday; more information to come

V. <u>Old Business</u>

a. Alternate for College of Agriculture and Natural Sciences
   i. Agriculture does not currently have any volunteers for College Senator and Alternate because it has been difficult to find a tenured faculty members willing to take the position. A senator said that we can relax the requirement, have Provost twist arms, or leave the positions empty. Emails will be sent out to see if non-tenured faculty are interested. Once we hear back, we will vote to waive the tenured requirement.

VI. <u>New Business</u>

a. No new business

VII. <u>Items from the Floor</u>

a. A senator mentioned that volunteering for Missouri Hope will close Wednesday. Please get your students involved.

b. Comments from the Graduate Council: The Council has asked schools to submit requests to change any undergraduate class that is listed as 500-level course to a 400-level course. They are working to cross list courses that may contain both undergraduates and graduate students, but ask that schools make the change in the course number so that undergraduates register for the 400-level course and graduate students register for the 500-level course.
c. A senator provided a brief report about Celebration of Scholars. Planning is almost complete and the new submission form is ready. The senator asked that faculty send their students to the submission form as soon as possible. Additionally, the senator mentioned that Recruitment will be working with the Faculty Showcase to attract new students to Northwest.

VIII. <u>Closed Session</u>

a. No closed session

IX. <u>Adjournment</u>

a. The meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm CDT

Submitted by,

Dr. Jesse M. Lane
Faculty Senate Secretary