

# **Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes**

## **February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025**

### **Library 237**

#### **Call to Order**

Dr. Murray Skees (chair) called meeting to order at 4:42pm once quorum of 9 was reached.

#### **Welcome to Visitors and Special Acknowledgements**

Victoria Neff

#### **Approval of the Minutes of the December 13th, 2024, Meeting**

Chair called for motion to approve minutes

**MOTION** put forward by Su Gibson: approve December 13 minutes

Seconded and carried

#### **Administrative Report – See Appendix 1**

#### **Committee Reports – See Appendix 2**

Chair recognized Kim Kelley and moved to receive report by general consent – Additional Report: 3927 in the house exceptions today added for research – see appendix 2 for fully updated report.

#### **Unfinished Business**

Chair called for a motion to support of the merger of the Department of Business & Communications with the Department of Hospitality Management.

**MOTION** put forward by Su Gibson: vote to support or not support

Chair called for motion to table this vote

**MOTION** put forward by Beth Hammond: table this vote until March to get more information to fairly vote on the floor. The results of the departments' faculty vote on this as well as their answers to why they voted the way they did need to be shared. This needs to be shared with the senate prior to the senate voting on this.

Seconded and carried.

#### **New Business**

***C3 Committee – voting; See Appendix 2 for full report***

*Chair recognized C3 Committee and moved to receive their recommendation by general consent*

***Committee Recommendation:*** *The Courses and Curricula Committee recommend the following proposals for the Faculty Senate's approval.*

#### **Proposals**

Dept. of Education Program Modification:

Ed. in Literacy (merge 2 required courses, remove an additional required course)

New Course: EDRM B626 (Research for Literacy Education)

Dept. of Computer Science & Mathematics:  
New Course: CSCI B514 (Monte Carlo Methods)  
Dept. of Hospitality  
Course Change: HRTM B355 (Revise Name & Bulletin Description)  
Dept. of Biology  
Course Change: BIOL B244 (Revise Prerequisites)

Chair called for motion  
**MOTION** put forward by Libby Ricardo: approve the education program modification  
Seconded and carried

Chair called for motion  
**MOTION** put forward by Sarah Swofford: bundle two new course proposals  
Seconded and carried

Chair called for motion  
**MOTION** put forward by Sarah Swofford: approve bundled course proposals  
Seconded and carried

Chair called for motion  
**MOTION** put forward by Davide Fusi: bundle two course changes  
Seconded and carried

Chair called for motion  
**MOTION** put forward by Davide Fusi: approve two course changes  
Seconded and carried

## **For the Good of the Order & Announcements – See Appendix 3**

### **Adjournment**

Chair called for motion to adjourn  
**MOTION** put forward by Deb Cohan: adjourn the meeting  
Seconded and carried by unanimous consent at 5:50pm

## **Administrative Report – Appendix 1**

### *Report from the EVCAA (from our cancelled January meeting)*

Happy first Faculty Senate meeting of Spring 2025. I appreciate the chance to share a few items of note...

**Cyber Boat Challenge** – This inaugural event (Dec. 17-19) supports the USCB South Coast Innovation Engine NSF initiative, focusing on advancing cybersecurity in maritime transportation. Objective: Establish a maritime cybersecurity community to build a skilled workforce for the industry. Collaborators included Colorado State U, Clemson U, South Coast Cyber Center, Maritime Cybersecurity Institute, and Beaufort Water Search and Rescue. Participating students came from universities in California, Texas, Michigan, Colorado, Mississippi, Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina, and many were accompanied by their professors or mentors.

**Adjunct Orientation** – (Update from Kim Dudas) We had a very successful Adjunct Orientation last evening with 21 new and returning adjunct faculty in attendance! Thanks to those Dept Chairs (Brugler, Canada and Cavanagh) who were able to attend the Meet & Greet as well. Anecdotal feedback was that it was a great way to connect and that the attendees found the warmth and genuine care for its adjunct faculty to be heartwarming [...] I wanted to share that the CTL Microsoft Team has a great set of resources we developed for the adjuncts... please remind adjuncts about these resources. We also have a series of workshops planned and that is attached. We expect they will be webinars to help accommodate schedules and travel. These are optional but we certainly hope they will take advantage of a few. Actual dates and times with links will be sent in the coming days. \*Kim Dudas, Sarah Swofford, and Lori Vargo were instrumental in executing the event and building/ delivering content.

**Larry Rowland Professorship** - One of South Carolina's highest honors and USCB's first endowed professorship came to Dr. Larry Rowland, Distinguished Professor Emeritus of History at the University of South Carolina Beaufort, at a luncheon and ceremony at Dataw Island Club. The Lawrence S. Rowland Professorship and the Order of the Palmetto recognize Dr. Rowland's outstanding contributions as a South Carolina historian and to the university. During his distinguished career as a scholar and author, he has spent decades writing, teaching, and advocating for preserving Beaufort County's rich history, including Santa Elena, the Reconstruction Era and much more.

**Supporting Neurodivergent Students on Campus** –Guest Speaker Tom Beeson, Spectrum Program Coordinator at Clemson University. Thursday, February 13<sup>th</sup>, 9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M. (Refreshments available starting at 8:30am). Technical College of the Lowcountry 100 Community College Dr., Bluffton, Room 126. Seating is limited. Please RSVP at <https://forms.office.com/r/1HeVtnEgTx> . \*This is a good professional development opportunity for those interested.

**EAB: Four Forces Shaping Higher Ed's Future** – I attended this webinar on Wednesday 1/15. The four forces were: 1) Declining College Enrollment Nationally, 2) Academic Preparation is Down [for example, ACT scores in all areas—English, Math, Reading, Science—are down compared to pre-pandemic]; 3) Sustainability (increasing demands for institutions to prioritize environmental practices and social responsibility), and 4) A.I. (for example, Khan Academy

launching conversational AI tutor personalized to students, and ways in which AI can reduce redundant administrative tasks). All this to say, we have our work cut out for us, but there are opportunities as well. EAB should be sending the slide deck, which I can share when I receive it.

## Committee Reports – Appendix 2

### *USC System Faculty Leadership Council*

**Rob Kilgore:** The Council met on February 17<sup>th</sup> and a verbal report will be given at the Faculty Senate meeting on Friday, the 21<sup>st</sup> of February.

Kim Kelley additional report: The SFLC had a conversation with Interim VP for System Affairs, Julian Williams.

The USC System is evaluating Federal Executive Orders with regard to grants, and the [Federal Department of Education Dear Colleague Letter](#) that was recently released.

The USC System is directly engaged with legislators about [SC House Bill 3927](#). The bill poses potential problems for teaching and learning. For example, what would it do to university contracts? Could we have Black history month?

It is Important for faculty and the SFLC to make their thoughts known about the implications of this bill.

It appears legislators are still writing the bill. The house wants to get it passed soon. We will have additional opportunities in the Senate. The SC House is mirroring what is happening in Washington. We have an opportunity to provide guidance and educate through the process.

**Ombuds:** The SFLC asked VP William about the USC Columbia Ombuds. A faculty member wanted to know if faculty had access to an ombuds. The Ombuds on the Columbia campus said they couldn't help. Dr. Williams stated he will sit down with the Columbia ombuds and with leadership from campuses to discuss. In the meantime, he is willing to talk to people who may have issues and want to speak with someone. He is also interested in getting additional information about why the change was made.

Dr. Williams will also work with HR and the President's office to figure out how to fund an ombuds position. He wants to learn more. He indicated he would be happy to report back on what he learns about the ombuds to SFLC.

**Distance Learning Policies:** The SFLC members discussed the current structure at the campuses and whether any campuses have ombuds. Only USC Upstate currently has an ombuds in addition to USC Columbia. The next step is to check back with VP Williams and see what he learns about whether the USC Columbia ombuds would be available to the other USC campuses.

The SFLC is reviewing current policies for faculty teaching through distance education. A report was provided by Wren Bareiss on what the SFLC learned about each campus's policies.

**Summary of Distance Education Report:** Online vs. in-person course requirements vary widely from campus to campus. It does not seem as if there are any firm ratios of online vs. in-person teaching among the campuses. Some campuses have expectations that are articulated in some capacity but are also flexible. Other campuses have no policies at all.

The SFLC will seek a discussion with VP Williams to see if a policy that is acceptable to all and consistent and could be formulated in a way that doesn't infringe on local salutory differentiation and is not obtuse.

### *Academic Steering Committee*

**Lee Johnson:** The Academic Steering Committee met last month to discuss the questions that were raised at the December Faculty Senate relating to the review process for program changes. While we see that there are a couple of extra steps in the initial review process for USCB that go beyond the requirements put in place by USC ACAF 2.02, we feel that these extra steps are appropriately aligned with the process set forth in ACAF 2.02 and ensure that each proposal is given thorough review and consideration.

### *Budget Committee (from our cancelled January meeting)*

**Davide Fusi:** The Budget Committee has created a budget visualization for the benefit of the Faculty Senate. The committee collected items from the "Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Position" for the last 9 years from the Audited Financial Statements that can be found in the USCB website (<https://www.uscb.edu/controller/index.html>). In the last two pages are listed all the sources (including the pages containing the data used).

The committee put everything in one place (Jupyter Notebook) and then ran some data visualization based on items that were mentioned the most during meetings. Our findings are in the Appendix.

### *Courses and Curricula Committee*

**Ron Erdei:** The Courses and Curricula Committee (C3) met on Friday January 17, 2025, and bring the following proposals for the Faculty Senate's approval under New Business.

Proposals are organized by department so representatives can readily address questions should there be any.

#### Proposals

Dept. of Education Program Modification:

Ed. in Literacy (merge 2 required courses, remove an additional required course)

New Course: EDRM B626 (Research for Literacy Education)

Dept. of Computer Science & Mathematics:

New Course: CSCI B514 (Monte Carlo Methods)

Dept. of Hospitality

Course Change: HRTM B355 (Revise Name & Bulletin Description)

Dept. of Biology

Course Change: BIOL B244 (Revise Prerequisites)

Next C3 Meeting: Friday March 7th, 2025, at 3:00 PM (1 week prior to Spring Break)

Deadline for Submitting Proposals: Friday February 28th, 2025, at 5:00 PM (1 week prior to C3 meeting)

## **USCB 2024-2025 ACADEMIC YEAR IMPORTANT DATES**

2024-2025 Courses and Curricula Meetings			2024-2025 Faculty Senate Meetings		
DATE	TIME	LOCATION	DATE	TIME	LOCATION
August 30, 2024	3:00 pm	TEAMS	September 6, 2024	3:00 pm	LIBR 237
October 4, 2024	3:00 pm	TEAMS	October 11, 2024	3:00 pm	LIBR 237
November 1, 2024	3:00 pm	TEAMS	November 8, 2024	3:00 pm	LIBR 237
December 6, 2024	3:00 pm	TEAMS	December 13, 2024	3:00 pm	LIBR 237
January 17, 2025	3:00 pm	TEAMS	January 24, 2025	3:00 pm	LIBR 237
February 14, 2025	3:00 pm	TEAMS	February 21, 2025	3:00 pm	LIBR 237
March 7, 2025	3:00 pm	TEAMS	March 21, 2025	3:00 pm	LIBR 237
April 11, 2025	3:00 pm	TEAMS	April 18, 2025	3:00 pm	LIBR 237

### *Faculty Grievance Committee*

No report.

### *Faculty Library Committee*

**James Shinn:** The Faculty Library Committee met on 1/23/2025 at 9:30am over Teams.

Kim Kelley (ex officio), Members present were Brian Canada, James Shinn (chair), Najmah Thomas, and Morgin Jones Williams

Dr. Kim Kelley, Director of Libraries, updated the committee about renovations to the Bluffton and Beaufort Campus Libraries. The main study space in the Bluffton Library reopened to students on the first day of class. Librarians are now working to return the books to the shelves in time for the grand reopening on February 19. Making sure the shelved books are in proper order will take longer.

The Beaufort Campus Library will relocate to a temporary location in the VAD building over Spring Break. Librarians are working to prepare the VAD space to house the temporary

collection, which will consist of books reserved by faculty, the art collection, and the Beaufort College Collection. All other books will be placed in storage.

Dr. Kelley then shared that the cost of institutional membership in PASCAL (Partnership Among South Carolina Libraries) is expected to increase 4% in the next year and 18% in the next four years. This will be a significant expense for the library. Offsetting it may force cuts to other Library services (hours, database subscriptions, etc.) Members expressed concern and discussed ways to ensure that funding PASCAL membership in the near future would not affect other Library services.

Finally, the Library Committee would like to remind everyone about the Grand Reopening of the renovated Bluffton Campus Library, which will take place on Wednesday, February 19 at

### *Faculty Manual Review Committee*

**John Thrasher:** The Faculty Manual Review Committee met on 2/12 and made final edits to the current draft of the Faculty Manual and officially approved submitting the manual to the General Faculty for their review and approval. The vast majority of the changes were to address the move from our old Faculty Senate to the new representative Faculty Senate and General Faculty format for faculty governance, although there are a few other pieces as well. The major sections of changes are detailed below, but throughout the manual there were several places where Faculty Senate was replaced by General Faculty (or other similar small changes) that will not be explicitly mentioned here.

The first major changes you will see are in the preamble. In the second paragraph, the method of amending the Faculty Manual was changed to go through the General Faculty instead of the Faculty Senate. After that, two statements were added to the preamble. Both of these statements are similar to those found in the Faculty Manuals of our peer institutions and reflect principles that are important to successful universities. The first is a statement on academic freedom. This statement largely matches the AAUP 1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure. In the numbered list, the 1940 statement refers to faculty as “teachers” but we have updated it to reflect “faculty members” so that it is clear it applies to all faculty. This matches changes made at some other institutions in the system in their statements on academic freedom. Additionally, a statement on shared governance was added to the section of the preamble on faculty powers.

The other major changes are found in Appendix I, which used to describe the Faculty Senate and now describes the General Faculty and Faculty Senate. Where possible, the language here matches the language in the previous version of the Faculty Manual but updated to represent our new governance structure based on the changes voted in by the Faculty Senate last year. Where the language could not be similar to the previous language because of substantial changes (such as the membership of the Senate), the language follows the updated by-laws and standing rules of the Senate as voted in last year.

The only change not related to faculty governance in the manual is a single sentence added to the section on termination. In the section “Complaints of Violation of Academic Freedom or of



Discrimination in Non-reappointment” (if track changes is on, it should be on the page labeled 65), there is a paragraph that discusses what happens if a faculty member alleges that a decision against reappointment was based on prejudice. The final sentence of that paragraph was added to indicate another option that the faculty member has for reporting these allegations in addition to referring it to the campus Civil Rights & Title IX Coordinator. This change does not remove any language or change the available options, it just provides additional information.

These changes will be voted on by the General Faculty in the March 2025 meeting of the General Faculty. Please review them at your convenience and if you have any questions or concerns, please email John Thrasher in his capacity as Chair of this committee or discuss with another member of the committee as you feel is appropriate.

### *Faculty Welfare Committee (from our cancelled January meeting)*

**Jayne Violette:** The Faculty Welfare Committee will soon be meeting to discuss faculty needs and assistance when there are student disruptions in the classroom or around classroom areas. We’ll also be discussing what can be done, from a faculty welfare standpoint, when learning discrepancies continue to noticeably widen, impacting rigor of learning experiences. If you share in these concerns, the committee invites you to speak, in confidence, with one or more Welfare Committee members. Your experiences will serve as the basis for committee discussions in February.

Members of the Faculty Welfare Committee include Rick Heiens, Joanna Angell, Deb Cohan, Eric Montie, and Jayne Violette.

### *General Education Committee*

**Emily Smith:** The General Education Committee met on Friday, February 14th and discussed the status of the Student Learning Objectives report due to SACSCOC for the 5-year mid-year report for accreditation, due early March.

Dr. Pate is currently waiting on feedback on revisions from the department of Planning, Analytics and Compliance. Kim Dudas provided an update on the ongoing effort to expand the list of transferable courses statewide. The goal is to increase the number of transferable courses from 86 to 100 over the next two years. Dr. Dudas also briefed the committee on a state recommendation to waive general education requirements for incoming students holding AA/AS degrees. Three South Carolina institutions have already adopted this change, and 26 states currently implement similar policies at the state-mandated level.

We will bring forward the following items for consideration under New Business during the General Faculty Meeting:

Proposal to Include the General Education Director as an Ex Officio Member of the General Education Committee

- Description: It is proposed that the person in the position of General Education Director serve as an ex officio member of the General Education Committee to enhance communication and coordination between the committee and the General Education Office.

Proposal to Include a Representative from the Office of Institutional Assessment as an Ex Officio Member of the General Education Committee

- Description: It is proposed that one representative from the Office of Institutional Assessment be included as an ex officio member of the General Education Committee to ensure alignment of assessment efforts with general education goals and initiatives.

Proposal to Provide General Education Committee Members Access to Past General Education Reports via the K Drive

- Description: It is proposed that members of the General Education Committee be granted access to past General Education reports through the K Drive. This access would facilitate informed decision-making and a better understanding of past assessments, improvements, and trends, thereby enhancing the committee's ability to work effectively on current and future general education initiatives.

### *Promotion and Tenure Committee (from our cancelled January meeting)*

**Sean Barth:** The the only outstanding T&P meeting (as of our faculty senate meeting on 1/24/25) is the Associate to Full (Feb 7th). Letters will be forthcoming and T&P business will be concluded by the end of February.

### *Committee for Academic Integrity (Ad hoc)*

No report.

### *Honors Steering Committee (Ad hoc)*

No report.

### *International Programs Committee (Ad hoc)*

No report.

### *Student Research and Scholarship Day Committee (Ad hoc)*

**Beth Hammond:** The Student Research and Scholarship Day committee met on January 21st. This year's event will be held on Monday, April 21st. Abstract submission begins on March 16th and closes April 6th. Poster submission closes April 13th. The keynote speaker for the event will be Peter Piccione (College of Charleston). If you are available to judge the day of the event, please

email Beth Hammond at [ejh49@uscb.edu](mailto:ejh49@uscb.edu). Questions may be directed to Kim Cavanagh ([kcavanagh@uscb.edu](mailto:kcavanagh@uscb.edu)) or Beth Hammond ([ejh49@uscb.edu](mailto:ejh49@uscb.edu)).

April 21, 2025, is Student Research and Scholarship Day!

Members: Beth Hammond (co-chair), Kim Cavanagh (co-chair), Brian Canada, Joanna Angell, Richard Osbaldiston, Joe Staton, Lukasz Pawelek, Ashley Shroyer, Morgin Jones Williams

### *Student Scholarship and Fellowship Committee (Ad hoc)*

**Carmen Farrell:** The Student Scholarship and Fellowship committee is thrilled at the success of the Stand Out Students event from 1/29. Many thanks to all the faculty nominators and all who supported the event and create opportunities for our students.

**Do you have a student who is participating in study abroad that is connected to a summer course?** Study Abroad grant funding requests will be evaluated for any students who are traveling abroad in connection with a summer course. The due date for all applications is **March 15<sup>th</sup>**. Updated guidelines and submission form can be found on this website in the “USCB Study Abroad Grants” link *\*new this year a LOR from a faculty member not affiliated with the study abroad trip must be submitted with the students’ application\**: <https://www.uscb.edu/academic-affairs/international-programs/study-abroad.html>

**Do you have a student who is participating in research over the summer that is *not* connected to a summer course?** The Summer Research Experience is a \$1000 award for students who are working with faculty mentors on a research project over the summer months that is **not** part of any course requirements. Applications for this will be reviewed with a deadline of **March 31<sup>st</sup>**. Updated guidelines and submission form can be found under “Summer Research Experience Grant” on this website: <https://academics.uscb.edu/research/student-research/index.html>

**Do you have a student who is traveling to present research at a conference?** Our Sand Shark Voyager Award is a \$500 award for research related travel. If you have a student who will be traveling for research between July 1<sup>st</sup> and September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the application for that cycle will open from May 1 through May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2025. Information about this award, application cycles, rubric, and the submission form can be found under “Sand Shark Voyager Awards” on this website: <https://academics.uscb.edu/research/student-research/index.html>

If anyone has any questions or concerns, please reach out to Carmen Farrell at [cf28@uscb.edu](mailto:cf28@uscb.edu).  
SS&FC Committee – Carmen Farrell (chair), Dave Hall (ex-officio), Kim Cavanagh, Tye Pettay, Jim Sidletsky, Babet Villena-Alvarez

### *Committee for the Creation of Guidelines for Faculty Governance at USCB (Ad hoc)*

No report.

## **For the Good of the Order & Announcements – Appendix 3**

*Murray Skees:* There are proposed committee guidelines and an end-of-the-year committee report template in the Appendix that I would like to discuss before I send it on to the chairs of the committees.

*Lynn Hutchinson:* Melody Reibel replaces Christiana Beall as senator for Nursing.