

MINUTES OF THE UNLV FACULTY SENATE

Date: 10/14/2025

Location: Student Union Room 208 B & C and via Zoom

Senators Present: Cheryl Abbate, Rabea Alhosh, Djeto Assane, Bobbie Barnes, Wolfgang Bein, Satish Bhatnagar, Tirth Bhatta, Sheila Bock, Dan Bubb, Tim Bungum, Jaime Carbajal, Donovan Conley, Patience Crowder, Honghui Deng, Zhonghai Ding, Marni Dow, Nancy Esposito, Jordan Fischette, Jorge Fonseca Cacho, Paul Forster, Kerie Francis, Gina Gamble, Patrick Griffis, Neamat Hassan, Isabel Herrera Pedro, Jason Hortin, Yvonne Houy, Jill Humphrey, Alethea Inns, Taro Ito, Margarita Jara, Lori Johnson, Tracy Johnson, Barry Kamen, Julian Kilker, Keoni Kins, Necole Leland, Macario Llamas, Scott Loe, Susanna Newbury, Michael Nussbaum, Rafael Oganessian, Neil Opfer, Jennifer Pfannes, Daniel Proga, Paysha Rhone, Bill Robinson, An-Pyng Sun, Jesse Taylor, Nicole Thomas, Craig Topple, Sue Wainscott, Dana Moran Williams, Monica Williams, Minnie Wood, Hassan Ziada

Senator Proxies: Bobbie Barnes for Amanda Belarmino; Sheila Bock for Kaitlin Clinnin; Patrick Griffis for Samantha Godbey; Jorge Fonseca Cacho for Neil Opfer; Bill Leavitt for Mahzarine Irani Rohani

Senators Absent: Monica Brown, Tracy Spies, Alex Talonov

Executive Committee Leadership Present: Debbie Arteaga, Michael Kagan, Maria Roberts

Ex-Officio Present: Lorena Giese, Nic Irwin, Kate Korgan, Devin Lopez, Kelechi Odunze

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Chair Roberts at 12:05 p.m. Chair Roberts announced that at 1 p.m. the Faculty Senate will transition into a closed session for Senators only. Per an opinion by Nevada's Attorney General, Faculty Senates are exempt from the State of the Nevada Open Meeting Law.

II. Public Comment

- Senator Robinson: I wanted to recognize Bob Maxson who passed away in September. Who we are today is largely due to Bob. He has been the #1 fundraiser of all UNLV Presidents constructing seven buildings without state funding at a time when UNR received most state resources. Bob initiated UNLV's path to R1 status with a strategic focus on limited doctoral programs based on demand and departmental funding. He also integrated research as a core component of UNLV, earning national recognition from US News. After leaving UNLV, he served as President of Long Beach State, transforming it from the lowest to highest fundraising institution in the Cal State system; subsequently trained incoming presidents across the Cal State system for 20 years. Despite Maxson's departure under difficult circumstances, his legacy continues to shape UNLV today.
- President Heavey: (1) President Maxson was a great man and role model. (2) We are all in this together to support our students and our community. I am not excited about the closed session. I think it creates paranoia and an "us versus them" mentality. (3) The intent of the recent memo on free speech was to let faculty and staff know that we have their back. We are preparing a new draft to address concerns that have been brought forward.
 - Past Chair Arteaga: (2) We are the only Faculty Senate with open meetings. I support Chair Robert's decision.
- Dr. Ariel Santos, Part-time Instructor for Women Studies: I come today to speak on the policy enforcement changes as it pertains to PTI workload. I have been a PTI since 2019, former GA, and an UNLV alumna. I love this campus. Adjuncts and PTIs get a raw deal. Many of us have the same credentials as everyone in this room. We deserve more than a casual announcement that we will be getting a 25% reduction. I consider it to be disrespectful. Cutting our ability even further to make a living is disheartening. Many PTIs that I have talked with share my outrage. I hope the Faculty Senate will be an advocate for us.

III. Minutes of the September 9, 2025 meeting

Approved with no changes.

IV. In Memoriam of Dr. Paul Burns

Chair Roberts provided an in memoriam for Dr. Paul Burns, emeritus professor of History and previous Faculty Senate Chair.

V. Bylaws Update and Templates

Dr. Nic Irwin, Chair of Bylaws Committee, provided the following information on the proposed bylaw templates:

- The most recent bylaw update was in 2019. College, school, and department bylaws are out of compliance. This is problematic as we can't enforce standards that are out of compliance. In addition, historical bylaws are difficult to locate.
- UNLV now has a stable set of university bylaws. Moving forward, the Bylaws Committee has created templates for colleges, schools, and departments to support the standardization across campus. The intent is not to take away a unit's freedom, but provide templates for standardization needed for compliance.
- Templates were not distributed at the meeting to ensure coordinated rollout and prevent confusion between department and college-level work.

Questions/Comments:

- Senator Robinson: The idea is to use Curriculog to manage bylaw updates so that we have a permanent record of the approval process.
- Senator Hortin: When is this rolling out?
 - Dr. Irwin: We are hoping to kick this off to colleges and schools by early November with a goal of completion by Spring Break 2026. Department bylaws will follow.
- Chair Roberts: President Heavey and Provost Korgan will send out the bylaw templates and steps to colleges and schools.

VI. Rebel Career Champion Network (RCCN) Steering Committee

Dr. Jake Thompson, Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education and High-Impact Practices, provided the following information on Rebel Career Champion Network (RCCN).

- Research shows that academic faculty are the most influential element in a student's career journey with 91% of students reporting that they connect with faculty about career decisions.
- The mission of the RCCN is to provide intentional, scalable career development resources and opportunities by building upon faculty, staff, administrators, and student leaders' relationships with students.
- The RCCN is composed of a network of trained Career Champions who provide career and professional development guidance to elevate student experiences and encourage successful transitions into post-secondary careers.
- RCCN objectives include the following:
 - Intentionally infuse scaffolded career conversations and professional development experiences into the curriculum and co-curricular activities across all stages of the student lifecycle.
 - Provide consistent, accessible, and engaging career readiness services and support to all students across campus in an inclusive and equitable manner.
 - Equip staff, student leaders, and faculty with career readiness resources, trends, and data so they can effectively support students' career exploration and preparation for career success.
 - Develop and share consistent language to use when discussing career-related topics, life design, and workforce-aligned academic experiences.
 - Promote and support career and professional development resources available to students.
- Benefits to faculty and staff include:
 - Help students succeed, change lives.
 - Access to resources to incorporate career readiness throughout your courses and conversations.
 - Community of like-minded faculty and staff who are dedicated to changing student lives.
 - Support in matching employers, community partners, and guest speakers for your class through the external engagement form.
 - Opportunity to engage in a campus-wide service initiative that can align with professional development and, potentially, promotion.
 - Impact UNLV's Top Tier 2.0 goal of "advancing student achievement through the integration of workforce readiness into all academic programs."
 - Celebrate student success through shared stories and testimonials.
- Engage with RCCN through the following actions:
 - Participate in events and meetings.
 - Share ideas, best practices, and career opportunities with other Champions.
 - Post upcoming events and career opportunities in the RCCN Google Group/Google Chat.
 - Stay informed by reading and responding to RCCN updates and information.
 - Serve as a primary contact for your unit and college/department's leadership team.
 - Raise awareness of RCCN within your unit and among colleagues.
 - Communicate essential information and updates in a timely manner.
 - Develop and implement an information-sharing protocol (e.g., staff meetings, Google Group, emails, newsletters, etc.).
 - Recruit and involve faculty and staff. Minimum requirements to be an RCCN champion are as follows: (1)

Complete the RCCN training course on Canvas (approximately 3-4 hours), (2) Attend the three celebration events per year, and (3) Share career advice and resources with students whenever possible.

- Help recruit faculty and staff for upcoming RCCN Champion cohorts.
- Develop strategies to connect students, faculty, and staff with RCCN events and resources.
- Share details about upcoming RCCN career and professional development events.
- RCCN's core mission is to bring the concept of "Career Everywhere" to life at UNLV. This means seeing every interaction with a student whether in the classroom, during office hours, or at a campus event, as a chance to help them think about their future career. We need your help to make this a reality by integrating career readiness into your daily work. The RCCN is powered by our Campus Champions. If you are passionate about student career success, we invite you to join us. To engage with the RCCN or to refer another faculty member, please complete the interest form:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfgWutzKuqTHUGKDI5iubci6B8FIVGxLMRm1Ln2gMCVha2l0w/viewform>

Questions/Comments:

- Senator Herrera Pedro: Are Administrative Faculty able to participate?
 - Dr. Thompson: Yes! All employees are welcome including Administrative Faculty and Classified Staff.
- Chair Roberts: Are there required meetings?
 - Dr. Thompson: We have three gatherings each academic year.

VII. Chair's Report

Chair Roberts provided the following updates:

- Provost and CFO searches are starting. We are still lacking one representative on our committee. Once the list is complete, we will send it to Tondra De.
- We will be using the same search committee for the CFO and Provost search. Individuals will be selected for each.
- Chancellor was on-campus last week participating in listening sessions. He wanted to learn about our aspirations and concerns. He also received a presentation from Dr. Heavey on budget items that will be requested in the next legislative session.
- Special Board of Regents meeting on October 17. The items that directly impact Faculty Senate are name, image, and likeness and its impact on collegiate athletics, honorary degree for Edward Smith, and the decodification of councils in the NSHE handbook including the DEI Council. This was expected given the current environment.
- December 6 Memorial Committee will be presenting updates during the November Faculty Senate meeting. An e-mail was sent asking for recommendations for the December 6 Remembrance Day. The Faculty Senate Executive Committee recommended that the remembrance take place on December 6 in the courtyard behind the Student Union.
- At future meetings, we will be having Faculty Senate committees present. The Academic Freedom and Ethics Committee will be presenting in November.

VIII. Future Action Items

- A. Academic calendar discussion
- B. By-laws template discussion and vote
- C. December 6 Memorial Committee
- D. DEI reorganization - new position update
- E. Workload Policy

IX. New Business

None

X. Public Comment

None

Closed Session Began at 12:45 p.m. Chair Roberts announced to the group that names would not be listed in the minutes to preserve anonymity and to foster discussion.

XI. Sense of the Senate Supporting Three-Year Contracts for Faculty in Residence

Past Chair Arteaga presented the draft Sense of the Senate supporting three-year contracts for Faculty in Residence once they have completed three years of employment within the Faculty in Residence classification.

**UNLV Faculty Senate
Sense of the Senate Supporting
Three-Year Contracts for Faculty in Residence
DRAFT**

Faculty in Residence (FIR) play a vital role in advancing student success, creating inclusive learning and enhancing the academic and co-curricular mission of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV);

FIRs contribute meaningfully to student retention, engagement, and overall well-being by fostering strong faculty-student relationships, offering programming, and serving as visible, accessible academic mentors at our university;

The current practice of annual contract renewal for FIR positions limits long-term planning, contributes to job insecurity, and may hinder recruitment and retention of highly qualified faculty for these critical roles;

Peer institutions often offer multi-year appointments for residential faculty roles to reflect the significance of the position and to promote continuity, stability, and professional development.

UNLV Faculty Senate expresses its strong support for the implementation of optional three-year renewable contracts after Faculty in Residence have successfully completed at least three years at UNLV. The Faculty Senate urges Interim President Heavey and Officer in Charge of the Provost's Office Korgan to ensure that three-year contracts be available for all current FIRs who are in their fourth year of employment or longer, by July 1, 2026.

Summary of Questions/Comments:

- Questions were asked of whether the delay was due to potential budgetary implications or the Administration's desire to retain flexibility when making budget cuts. Past Chair Arteaga attributed the delay to simple "inertia," stating that while the President and Provost support the initiative, it is not a top administrative priority, making a strong Sense of the Senate recommendation essential to provide a "needed push."
- The conversation also included a call for Administrative Faculty, who also lack job security, to lobby for similar three-year contracts. It was pointed out that the NSHE Code restricts Administrative Faculty contracts.

Motion to Approve Sense of the Senate Supporting Three-Year Contracts for Faculty-in-Residence.

Seconded.

Motion Approved (38-1-3)

XII. Sense of the Senate Supporting A Diverse and Inclusive Campus

Chair Roberts: We need to make sure that we equitably provide support to students and faculty. Through this proposed Sense of the Senate, we are reaffirming our belief that everyone should be supported.

- Past Chair Arteaga: President Heavey's e-mail did not specifically address undocumented students. Websites supporting them have been taken down. There is also an issue with reorganization of the Office of Diversity Initiatives to an entity under Human Resources.

**UNLV Faculty Senate
Sense of the Senate Supporting
A Diverse and Inclusive Campus
DRAFT**

UNLV is one of the most diverse universities in the United States. A large majority of our students identify as Hispanic, Asian, African American, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. Many of our students identify as LGBTQ. Many of our students are immigrants, some undocumented, and many more come from mixed status families.

The diversity of our campus and of the wider community of which we are a part make UNLV a special place. It should be clear that UNLV's support for all students from all backgrounds and statuses will not disappear or be obscured behind a more ambiguous organizational structure. While administrative divisions may be restructured, core principles must remain unchanged.

UNLV is diverse by default. UNLV will be at its best when we stand behind every one of our students, not regardless of their unique identities, but because their diversity is our strength. This is not a time for retreat from this fundamental principle.

The Faculty Senate believes that now is the time for all of us, including our university leadership, to show a renewed commitment to bedrock principles.

Our institution should continue to embrace diversity and inclusion. That includes hiring and retaining faculty and staff who reflect the diversity of our students and surrounding community. UNLV's support for diverse faculty and staff must be clearly reflected in its organizational structure.

We believe in a policy that is enshrined in Nevada law: "It is in the best interests of this State to make full use of the skills and talents of every resident of this State." That includes undocumented and other immigrant students. As administrative and academic faculty, we are proud to serve all of our students.

Summary of Questions/Comments:

- Many Senators expressed that saying something is crucial because silence is "deafening," interpreted as a "retreat" or "assenting" to the hostile environment, and contradicts UNLV's support of diversity and inclusivity.
- A counterargument, made by some Senators, is that a public statement "places a target" on the back of some students and faculty, especially given fears of "vigilante justice" and potential ICE raids on campus. They noted that some students find such statements as "not really helping."
- Several senators advocated for prioritizing "action plans" and "daily activities" over mere statements. Suggestions include developing a "tool kit" for faculty, having a plan for an ICE raid, and providing time and funds to existing support groups.
- Moving staff out of the Office of Diversity Initiatives and removing websites is viewed by students and many senators as "abandonment," and the new structure is seen as a "retreat".
- Some senators pushed for a more "strategic" "yes, and" approach, blending both public affirmation and concrete, community-based action.

Motion to approve that the statement is provided to Dr. Luna, Dr. Barlow, Professor Kagan, and Mr. Menendrez to edit and send out. Seconded.

Motion Denied (9-32-0)

Motion to Approve Sense of the Senate Supporting a Diverse Campus. Motion Withdrawn.

Motion to Approve Sense of the Senate Supporting a Diverse Campus with the following wording change to the third paragraph from "UNLV is diverse by default" to "UNLV is diverse because that is who we are." Seconded.

Motion Approved (34-4-0)

XIII. Sense of the Senate Regarding Freedom of Speech

**UNLV Faculty Senate
Sense of the Senate Regarding Freedom of Speech
DRAFT**

On September 30, 2025, Interim President Heavey and Acting Provost Korgan sent an all-campus email titled "Guidance on Free Speech, Academic Freedom, and Responsibilities." The email vaguely prohibits "political activities during work hours" and severely limits the discussion of "political issues" in the classroom. The e-mail may be interpreted as suggesting that the university might sanction faculty and staff for political speech off campus as well as on campus.

In the current political environment, a vast range of subject matters may be considered political. To discuss the effectiveness of vaccines may be political. To suggest that immigrants are people entitled to rights and respect may be political. To refer to a student by the pronoun of his or her choice may be political. To support scientific research may be political. To study lessons of history may be political. To teach students in healthcare how to effectively communicate with immigrant patients may be political. In short, the production of knowledge, teaching and service are all potentially political. Yet, these are the central missions of this university.

Rather than seeking to curtail political expression, political activity and debate are part of what has made American higher education great. We believe that the NSHE Code, Title 2, Chapter 2, already balances free speech, academic freedom and responsibility. In particular, the NSHE Code makes clear that members of the faculty have the freedom and the obligation to teach, research, and discuss subjects "even when the subject requires consideration of topics which may be politically, socially or scientifically controversial."

We are pleased that President Heavey and Provost Korgan affirmed "our shared commitment to open dialogue, the free exchange of ideas, civil and respectful debate, and the pursuit of knowledge." We share this commitment. The Faculty Senate asks President Heavey and Provost Korgan to send an all-campus email to clarify their September 30 statement to reassure the campus that there are no new policies limiting free expression on or off campus, including speech which some may view as political or controversial.

Motion to approve Sense of the Senate Regarding Freedom of Speech. Seconded.

Summary of Discussion/Questions

- E-mail was described by many as "badly worded," "chilling," and "extremely ambiguous," particularly in its use of the phrase "political" and the lack of clear instruction regarding on-campus vs. off-campus activity.
- Senators noted that their colleagues were asking for clarification because teaching is already a "minefield."

Motion Approved (37-1-1)

XIV. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:05 p.m.

Bobbie Barnes, Secretary