

MINUTES OF THE UNLV FACULTY SENATE

Date: 05/05/2026

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

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

Senator Proxies: Sheila Bock for Kaitlin Clinnin; Marni Dow for Jordan Fischette; Patrick Griffis for Samantha Godbey; Bill Leavitt for Mahzarine Irani Rohani

Senators Absent: Patience Crowder, Taro Ito, Tracy Spies

Executive Committee Leadership Present: Michael Kagan, Maria Roberts

Ex-Officio Present: Curtis Brown, Lorena Giese, Nic Irwin, Kate Korgan, Kelechi Odunze

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Chair Roberts at 12:03 p.m.

II. Public Comment

- Sue Wainscott: I'm speaking today in my role as President of the UNLV Nevada Faculty Alliance (NFA) Chapter. On behalf of the board, I want to express our appreciation for the leadership of Chair Roberts, and the courage of the entire senate board to engage with the whole faculty and NFA during a turbulent year. Chair Roberts faithfully represented the complex views of UNLV faculty to University leadership, NSHE system office, and the Board of Regents.
- President Heavey: Congratulations on the completion of another successful year at UNLV. It is a time of incredible change in higher education across the nation. Institutions are struggling to keep up with the pace of change. This is a thriving institution due to the hard work of all of you. I hope you finish the semester feeling proud.

My first year as Interim President has passed, and I've been honored to serve in this role. As I said to the Board of Regents on Friday, I'm eager to continue to serve in this role for as long as the board and faculty feel that I add value to this campus. During the May Board of Regents agenda, the interim status of my role was on the agenda. The regents asked me to move this discussion until September.

I would like to thank the following individuals for stepping up during a difficult year of transition for this campus: Kate Korgan, Elisa Bunkowki, Alison Netski, and Barb Roberts. I would like to thank Rhonda McElroy and Heather Torgersen for filling the shoes of Tondra De. I will be launching searches for both roles starting in the next few weeks.

III. Minutes of the April 14, 2026 Meeting

Motion to Approve: Senator Newbury; Second: Senator Herrera Pedro
Unanimous verbal approval.

IV. Dreamscape Learn

Aundrea Frahm, Director of Immersive Learning, provided the following information on Dreamscape Learn:

- Our goal is to integrate extended reality into a variety of areas throughout campus.
- Immersive learning encompasses AR (Augmented Reality - digital content from the virtual world on top of a real

environment providing information), MR (Mixed Reality - virtual and real environment mix and interact with each other, and VR (Virtual Reality - immersive virtual environments shut out the real world).

- Dreamscape Learn is a 4,000 square foot space located on the second floor of Lied Library. We have a 15-seat classroom for major and non-major courses with three classroom-deployable applications - Alien Zoo Biology (with eighteen modules suitable for both major and non-major courses, with an optional curriculum); an Art History experience focused on its transformations over time; and an Environmental Starter Pack in which a faculty avatar, wearing foot and hand trackers, leads up to fifteen students through twelve locations including the moon, the depths of the Colorado River, and the Oval Office. The space also houses a free-roam “quad” experience offering a 4D haptic environment with two applications: Alien Zoo and Curse of the Lost Pearl. The free-roam pod is open to students, faculty, and staff via reservation through LibCal or walk-in.
- The Immersive Learning Lab located in Beam Hall (BEH 114), opened in February 2026 in collaboration with the Office of Information Technology. It is an open computing lab with 30 XR headsets (25 Pico and five Meta, with additional Meta units planned). Hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and the lab is open to all students, faculty, and staff. Available applications include Archeo (mixed-reality archaeology), Body Swaps (skills practice for management, communications, and medical training), Virtual Human Anatomy, Gravity Sketch (3D sculpting), and the in-procurement Wander (location teleportation via Google Maps). Sound booths are being installed along the back wall in collaboration with the Communications Department to support public-speaking practice.
- Future plans include an innovation and faculty research space, integration into online learning, and licensure/certificate to fuel workforce alignment.
- Please reach out to Aundrea Frahm at aundrea.frahm@unlv.edu if you have questions or would like to engage with Dreamscape Learn.

Questions/Comments:

- Senator Fonseca Cacho: Dreamscape is an outside company. How does the licensing work? If I want to use it for my class, do I need to pay Dreamscape?
 - Aundrea Frahm: For our current experiences, faculty can use it without charge. For development, the current plan is to create on PICO or meta headsets versus Dreamscape Learn.
- Senator Bubb: I would like to personally endorse Dreamscape Learn. I first learned of this technology during a tour of the space at Arizona State University and have since had two global-issues classes utilize the UNLV space. I can see how this could nicely complement with getting students interested in joining United or American Airlines Pilot Training Academy. I could also see the potential of partnering with NASA.
- Senator Robinson: The classroom I teach in has 20-year old technology. My colleagues at other universities have much better technology. We have these two spaces with less than 50 seats and we have 30,000 students. Is there a bigger plan?
 - Aundrea Frahm: We are looking at content that has already been made, and adding multiple spaces that have VR and other immersive applications.
 - Provost Korgan: I recommend having Bob Soulliere and Kivunc Oner come to a Faculty Senate meeting next year to discuss classroom technology upgrades. We are traveling on two different paths. We have a seven-year contract with Dreamscape while we are in the process of upscaling our immersive learning platforms. This will be done in collaboration with Aundrea Frahm and IT with the goal to have more labs on-campus with immersive learning capabilities.

V. Action Item: UNLV Bylaw - Chapter 1, Section 2.33 Amendment

Chair Roberts: This amendment to UNLV Bylaw Chapter 1, Section 2.3.3 will officially assign the responsibility of updating the university's organizational chart to the President's Office. This change ensures that updates are made on a regular basis.

Discussion:

- Senator Opfer: Please add a hyphen so that “as needed” reads as “as-needed”.

Motion to Approve: Senator Opfer; Second: Senator Wainscott.

Unanimous verbal approval.

VI. Reduced-credit Baccalaureate Degrees

- Chair Roberts: This issue has been brought up with the Board of Regents and discussed at the April Senior Senator meeting.
- Vice Chair Kagan: The Chancellor's office is promoting a plan for select programs to have 90-credit degrees, essentially reducing the time of study from four years to three years. It is something happening at other institutions with accrediting bodies allowing it. In the Senior Senator meeting, there were only negative comments expressed. One of my jobs is to represent the Senate over the summer, so I would like to have the Senate's position regarding this. Voting on a message would require suspension of the bylaws.

Motion to suspend the bylaws: Senator Robinson; Senator Opfer
Majority verbal approval.

Discussion

- Senator Opfer: What degrees have only 90 credits? We have a 30-credits plus general education requirement that takes up a year. If you are specializing in an area, then I don't know how you fit everything in. How is this preparing our students for careers post-graduation?
- Senator Herrera Pedro: I attended Southern Utah University where 90-credit degrees were offered. There are multiple programs that offer this and produce career ready graduates. I am in favor of it.
- Senator Robinson: Great Basin is pushing this as they compete with the Utah system. Weber State University calls their 90-credit degree program a Bachelor of Applied Studies. I think we should push the three plus two model to the Regents where students' last year of a bachelor's program is the first year of the master's program.
- Senator Houy: (1) What is the expected timeline? (2) Do we have a sense of whether employers would accept reduced credit degrees?
- Provost Korgan: (1) I urge you to think carefully about blanket statements for or against as it is so much more complicated. NSHE already has applied bachelor's degrees that are skilled programs often building on an associate degree. Applied degrees often prevent students from moving into graduate or professional schools. The reduced credit degree is between 90 and 119 credits. Several states and all regional accreditation agencies have approved this option. If the Regents approve the framework, a couple of things will happen. We will have a proliferation of bachelor's degrees at NSHE community colleges creating competition across the state. Most students and families don't know the difference. We will need to work with high school guidance counselors to educate students on the differences. What this means for us is that we could offer Bachelor of Applied Studies (BAS) degrees. Another model is that we adapt to a 90-degree model by cutting electives. Opting out is not the option. Instead, leaning in and determining how to instill excellence would be better. The reduced-credit degrees are being targeted in disciplines that are specifically workforce aligned.
- Senator Wainscott: What are characteristics of a workforce aligned degree?
 - Provost Korgan: There isn't a fixed definition. Workforce aligned addresses specific skills employers are looking for now.
- Senator Newbury: This conversation has a lot of different elements. There is the ideological discussion on requiring learning outside of a discipline area. We are in parallel with offering micro-credentials that can be packaged into our bachelor's degrees. I think it would benefit us to develop a statement urging caution. The central question is the role of a four-year degree beyond workforce development. The 120-credit is about producing productive citizens.
- Senator Houy: This is a complicated issue. As we talk about faculty driven curriculum, I don't think we should not make a blanket statement against and instead make a statement that robust continued discussions with faculty are needed.
- Vice Chair Kagan: The issue here is the branding of the word "bachelor" degrees. It's like saying to a kid on the track field that they ran a 400-meter race when they only ran 300-meters. There is nothing wrong with a 90-credit, 80-credit, or 112-credit degree, but the difficulty arises when degrees of different lengths are all branded as "bachelor's degrees".
- Senator Bubb: What is the difference between us and a trade school?
- Senator Robinson: The Regents are going to do this. The question is when. Our statement needs to address specific faculty discussion points.
- Senator Proga: The statement needs to include the importance of a university having full-credit degrees providing opportunities for students to go on to graduate school.
- Chair Roberts: An e-mail was sent out for summer information sessions on this topic for faculty.
- Senator Opfer: What is the timeline?
 - Vice Chair Kagan: Within the next year.
 - Senator Robinson: These types of discussions typically occur at quarterly meetings. There is a meeting scheduled for the beginning of June.

Proposed Sense of the Senate: "At this time, the UNLV Faculty Senate opposes the authorization of a 90-credit bachelor's degree in the NSHE System. We do not oppose reduced credit degree where appropriate, but we oppose the dilution of the meaning of the bachelor's degree, which has traditionally required 120 credits."

Motion to Approve: Senator Opfer; Second: Senator Wainscott

Discussion:

- Senator Topple: I have worked in higher education for over 30 years with a quarter of that time in admissions. I think that UNLV will suffer greatly by taking this position. We should re-word stating that we support a 90-credit degree with a different name.

Motion to replace first sentence: Senator Topple; Second: Senator Wood

“At this time, the UNLV Faculty Senate supports the authorization of a reduced-credit degree that does not carry the name Bachelor of Science or Arts.”

Discussion:

- Senator Conley: In effect, are we calling for a separate degree?
 - Vice Chair Kagan: Yes.
- Senator Bock: I don't support it, although I know it is coming.
- Senator Robinson: I support this. We do need another statement that we need time to discuss the impacts.
- Chair Roberts: Based on what I was told by the Chancellor, the word Baccalaureate will be a requirement. I urge you to attend the information sessions that are coming up. It is important to note that this will be a unit by unit faculty discussion to determine the feasibility of a reduced-credit program.

Motion Approved (29-18-2)

Motion to incorporate additional language: Senator Nussbaum; Second: Senator Opfer

“At this time, the UNLV Faculty Senate supports the authorization of a reduced-credit degree that does not carry the name Bachelor of Science or Arts. We do not oppose reduced credit degree where appropriate, but we oppose the dilution of the meaning of the bachelor's degree, which has traditionally required 120 credits.

Given the complexity of this issue, and the need to produce well-rounded citizens and to appropriately brand the meaning of bachelor's degrees, the UNLV Faculty Senate calls for caution in adopting this change until there is extensive discussion with faculty and administrators across campus.”

Make a motion to amend further (revised statement below): Senator Robinson; Second: Senator Opfer.

“At this time, the UNLV Faculty Senate supports the authorization of a reduced-credit degree that does not carry the name Bachelor of Science or Arts. We do not oppose reduced credit degree where appropriate, but we oppose the dilution of the meaning of the bachelor's degree, which has traditionally required 120 credits.

Given the complexity of this issue, and the need to produce well-rounded citizens and to appropriately brand the meaning of bachelor's degrees, the UNLV faculty Senate calls for caution in adopting this change until there is extensive discussion with faculty and administrators across campus of:

- a. need to produce well-rounded citizens
- b. impact on General Education
- c. impact on the ability of students to be accepted to graduate schools
- d. mission alignment across NSHE
- e. impact on accreditation, excellence, and further opportunities for continuing education and employment”

Discussion:

- Senator Bock: I don't think we need “c” if we have “e”.
 - Senator Robinson: It is important that we keep graduate school, so it is clear to the Regents.
- Senator Proga: I think a reduced credit degree will result in reduced opportunities. I would like to see changes to include long-term career success.

Motion Approved (35-5-1)

Motion to amend deleting the first paragraph: Senator Fonseca Cacho; Second: Senator Opfer

Motion Approved (22-22-3)

Chair Roberts breaks the tie with the amendment carrying.

“The UNLV Faculty Senate supports innovation in curricular design. However, the Senate calls for extreme caution in adopting reduced-credit degrees until there is extensive discussion of (a) the need to produce well-rounded citizens, (b) the impact on General Education, (c) the impact on the ability of students to be accepted to graduate schools, (d) mission alignment across the NSHE, and (e) impact on accreditation, excellence, and further opportunities for continuing education and employment.

Fundamental changes to the curriculum should be driven by faculty.”

Motion to approve the statement above: Senator Wainscott; Second: Senator Opfer.

Motion Approved: (41-2-0)

Motion for final adoption: Senator Bubb; Second: Senator Herrera Pedro

Motion Approved: (45-2-1)

VII. Chair's Report

Chair Roberts provided the following updates:

- Yesterday, I received an e-mail from Carrie Parker, NSHE Assistant Council regarding proposed changes to Code, Title 2, Chapter 10, Section 10.2.1 - Rules of Code of Conduct and Procedures for Students. The proposed revisions impact the standard for whether nonphysical conduct by a student may be treated as prohibited conduct. These proposed revisions in subsection (d) are based on federal cases and are intended to protect speech consistent with First Amendment principles in relation to peer-on-peer harassment. Revisions to subsections (c) and (d) clarify that (c) addresses physical abuse and (d) addresses nonphysical abuse. The definition of “coercion” is a statutory definition (NRS 207.190), which is already incorporated into the Code. These amendments move the definition up to the first reference to “coercion” in this section of the Code. The definition of “intimidation” is based on federal case law defining speech that is not protected by the First Amendment and therefore may be prohibited. It is anticipated that these proposed amendments will be presented to the Board at the June 11-12 quarterly meeting. We need to make a motion to suspend the bylaws to vote on these changes (proposed changes included in the Faculty Senate meeting packet).

Motion to Approve Suspension of the bylaws: Senator Opfer; Second: Senator Leland.

Discussion:

- Vice Chair Kagan: My recommendation is to take no action. I wouldn't want to oppose it, as they are going in the right direction. There are some problems with the language. “Nonphysical abuse” is not given a clear definition because it says that it is “including but not limited to” intimidation, coercion or bullying. There are also issues that are not properly addressed. One calendar day to evaluate First-Amendment adjacent statutory text is insufficient. Chair Roberts and I will raise concerns through public comment at the upcoming Board of Regents meeting in early June.
- Senator Wainscott: The Regents need to stop bringing up issues like this at the end of the semester and during the summer.

Motion Withdrawn: Senator Opfer

Chair's Report Continued

- Four volunteers are needed for the Faculty Senate Bylaws Committee.
 - The following Senators volunteered to serve: Isabel Herrera Pedro, Rafael Oganessian, Bill Robinson, and Minnie Wood.
- The Fast Clinic is going back to their original decision to not accept minors. The reason is there are not enough patients (only 40 in a full year) to warrant bringing in specialized staff.
- Beginning in September, Human Resources is implementing background checks.
- UNLV will be the site for both primary and general elections. Volunteers are needed to staff these election sites.
- Commencement ceremonies will take place on May 15 and 16. We urge all of you to participate.
- Thank you all for a great year. I have given you “an arm and a leg” and feel we have accomplished much this year.

VIII. Notes from Incoming Chair

Incoming Chair Kagan provided the following comments:

- Chair Robert remains in the role until June 30, so please address any concerns with her until the end of her term. I want to thank her for a productive year with accomplishments including three-year contracts and a name change for FIRs.
- I also want to thank Kate Korgan for serving in the provost role. The Executive Committee has enjoyed working with her.
- Our Faculty Senate Kick-off Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 20 from 8 a.m. to Noon.
- Over the summer, I will be:
 - scheduling optional sessions to meet with senators. I would like to learn what is going on in the different

- units as well as establish channels of communication.
- examining committees and will be bringing proposals forward to make changes to faculty governance. We would like to be proactive versus reactive, requiring having the right structure in place.
- planning to meet with the regents and university leadership.

IX. New Business

None

X. Public Comment

- Provost Korgan: I wanted to say thank you to Maria. I think one of the toughest things we do is shared governance. Maria has done an extraordinary job. Trying to wrangle administrators and faculty is hard, but Maria made it look easy. I appreciate her leadership during a tough year.

XII. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:13 p.m.

Bobbie Barnes, Secretary