

Faculty Senate Notes

April 22, 2025

Henson Hall 103

<http://www.salisbury.edu/campusgov/facsenate/>

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Call to order (3:30 p.m.)

1. Approval of Minutes from April 8, 2025 meeting
2. Approval of Minutes from April 15, 2025 meeting
 - a. Approved with amendment
3. Announcements from Provost Couch
 - a. Addressing concerns of shared governance in the budget cuts process – envisions shared governance as people impacted by a decision have an opportunity to weigh in
 - i. Guidelines disseminated to departments
 - ii. Those departments with guidance from their chairs and deans are now engaging with this process related to their specific needs
 - b. Academic Affairs is not the only area undergoing budget cuts, each VP has received a target for their area. Other VPs are actively working on targets.
 - c. Communication – working with team to communicate quickly & effectively
 - i. Concerns about internal documents being shared with the press
 - ii. Balance between keeping SU folks informed without unnecessarily alarming broader community
 - iii. Provost's Ad-Hoc Budgetary Advisory Committee has now met several times and planning for a multiyear strategy
 - d. Upcoming opportunities for communication
 - i. Town Hall with the President and VPs: April 30 at 3
 - ii. Provost is meeting with multiple units – contact for a visit
 - iii. Provost virtual office hours: Friday April 25 8:30am-10am; May 1 time TBD; May 7 time TBD
 - e. Questions – contact Faculty Senate officers or email Provost
 - f. Q: Many people teach at 3, is there a way to schedule things at other times? A: April 30 meeting is scheduled but will pass along that feedback.
 - g. Comment: Seems more shared response rather than shared governance, particularly in setting the guiding principles

- h. Q: Can you clarify to what extent is their room to push back on guiding principles, particularly related to the academic mission, Academic Affairs, and participation in shared governance? A: Very short timeline for immediate cuts; doing this in waves with continued strategy from leadership team (Deans) and Ad-Hoc Budgetary Advisory Group
- i. Q: How set is the 60% cut to Academic Affairs? A: Planning for worst case scenario and if the predictions play out, we will have to meet that target. However, if worst case doesn't materialize there may be some wiggle room. Balancing instruction and student affairs – Academic Affairs have been more protected in the past. Some fixed costs such as utilities have no room to cut.
- j. Need to consider changes to our processes, procedures, and expectations while working to “do no harm” to students
- k. Approach this year is very different to past years because of legislature approach and battening down the hatches for years worse to come
- l. Comment: Worries about admin bloat, taking away function of the university (instruction), suggestion for admins to consider a pay cut. A: Will bring up
- m. Comment: Diminishing returns – why would students want to come here?
- n. Salary binder has now been updated
- o. Goal to prioritize things that set SU apart
- p. Comment: Would have liked to see values/principles/core tenants to protect in the guiding principles
- q. Q: How much have we considered the downstream effects, particularly related to sabbaticals and faculty retention? A: Considering tradeoffs but don't have the full picture yet
- r. Q: What was done with surpluses over the past few years? A: State had withheld money for COLA and finally released a few weeks before end of fiscal year, used that money to prepay high dollar items for this year such as making computers Windows 11 compatible
- s. If we end the year with a surplus, state will take it back
- t. Have asked Dean's Council for high-dollar items to add to prepay list, but this isn't a long-term solution
- u. “Scenario-planning” for multiple levels of cuts
- v. Comment: some guiding principles seem to go against each other and make it hard to weigh different choices
- w. Q: How are the 18 students per class being implemented? A: Goal to get each class as close as possible, but Deans have leeway to consider program completion and special cases. Consider course rotations, substitutions, program curriculum, averages across different types of classes

- x. Q: Have the guiding principles been used successfully elsewhere? A: Will pull together some data and evidence from other institutions
- y. Q: Why were furloughs dismissed so quickly when things like sabbaticals were cut? A: Labor issues are largely decided by the USM and we need permission to use those strategies
- z. Concern that student per class target will cause us to turn internally and take students from each other's classes
- aa. Q: How much do no sabbaticals save? A: Every case is different, depends on courses taught, load, hiring adjuncts, availability to teach other classes
- bb. Q: What to do if the program doesn't function without additional hires and cannot hire locally and what is the timeline? A: May budget proposals will give a clearer picture to our needs & wiggle room; will have answers in June
- cc. Comment: Faculty would like to see itemized budget
- dd. Q: Was there a model used to decide what students would come or leave over?
A: Assess fixed costs first; what could we change; USM and state guidelines; combing through as much data as possible; strategic priority
- ee. Q: What do F25 enrollments look like? A: First-year up slightly, graduate and transfer down, about flat overall
- ff. Comment: Will need to readjust our professional development expectations
- gg. Q: How long have we known about these budget cuts? A: A year, but didn't know the number until April 7 when legislative session closed

(Adjourn 5:01pm)