Missouri State University

Minutes of the May 2026 Session of the Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate held the May 2026 session on Thursday, May 7, 2026, in PSU Ballroom West. Chair Heidi Backes called the session to order at 3:30 p.m. Mike Hudson served as parliamentarian.

Substitutes: Jeff Loughary for Luis Lombilla, Senior Instructor Rep.; Indira Palacios-Valladares for Gabriel Ondetti, Political Science & Philosophy; Melinda Novik for Joshua Smith, Professor Rank Rep.; Leslie Baynes for Vadim Putzu, Languages, Cultures & Religion; and Amy Hulme for Scott Zimmerman, Health Sciences.

Absences: Alex Hamwi, Marketing; Melinda Hammerschmidt, Greenwood Laboratory; Leonard Horton, Communication, Media, Journalism & Film; Michael Jarvis, Greenwood Laboratory; Tasnuba Jerin, Asst. Professor Rank Rep.; Alana Mantie-Kozlowski, Health Care Professions; John Rose, Defense & Strategic Studies; Ryan Smith, History; and Beth Williamson, Health Care Professions.

Guests: Dave Richards, Library; Lance Renner, Library; and G.A. Schick, Graduate Council.

Roll call by the Secretary of the Faculty-Tracy Stout

Approval of Minutes
The April 2026 minutes were approved as posted.

Chair's Report
- **4/13 meeting with President Williams:** FSEC raised faculty concerns about budget cuts and constraints with hiring, ongoing low morale related to the budget and overworked faculty. Williams plans to submit a written response to the Faculty Concerns survey by Aug. 1.
- **Meeting with Provost Phillips.**
- **4/1 ALC meeting:** FSEC asked for clarification regarding the academic policy review process and how Faculty Senate can be informed of changes in academic policies; Ken Brown will now forward policies to FSEC before sending them to the President's Cabinet. Provost-led discussion about possibly reducing student service fees for distance ed students.

Announcements
- If necessary, a carry-over meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 12, at 3:30 p.m. (location TBD)
- Email from Financial Aid Office (4/27): Students must take 6 credit hours during the summer in order to apply for financial aid (up from 3 credit hours)
- New "Chair's Report" to be included in monthly agendas
- College Council audit of RTP guidelines
- Creation of ad hoc committee on Department Chair model
- Creation of ad hoc committee on Distinguished Professor requirements

Testing Center Director, Lance Renner, Introduction by Dave Richards, Dean of the Library
Lance Renner provided his background and expressed enthusiasm for working with faculty, staff, and students as the new Testing Center Director.

Report from SGA
Ruby Knight presented a report on activities as Director of Academic Affairs. Discussed resolutions passed by SGA related to topics involving OER, AI policy, and orientation courses.

Report from Committee on University Budget & Priorities
Beth Walker presented the report. Slides for the report can be found in the April 2026 Faculty Senate meeting documents.

RESOLUTION FOR THE 2025/2026 SENATE CHAIR, MICHEAL FOSTER
Heidi Backes, Chair of the Faculty Senate, read the resolution. Passed by unanimous consent.

RESOLUTION FOR THE 2025/2026 SECRETARY OF THE FACULTY, DR. KIM FINCH
Heidi Backes, Chair of the Faculty Senate, read the resolution. Passed by unanimous consent.

RESOLUTION FOR THE 2025/2026 PARLIAMENTARIAN, DR. MICHAEL HUDSON
Heidi Backes, Chair of the Faculty Senate, read the resolution. Passed by unanimous consent.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS
None

NEW BUSINESS
None

ADJOURNMENT
The meeting adjourned at 4:19 p.m.

Tracy Stout
Secretary of the Faculty

Senate Resolution 1-26/27 **Adopted by Senate on May 7, 2026**

Resolution in Honor of Micheal Foster, Faculty Senate Chair 2025-26

Whereas, Chair Micheal Foster has provided a model of leadership and dedication to shared governance across campus, and

Whereas, Chair Foster has run the Faculty Senate sessions in a professional manner, encouraging open dialogue and moderating discussions that are inclusive of multiple perspectives, and

Whereas, Chair Foster has repeatedly defended faculty interests in conversations with administrators at the college and university levels, and

Whereas, Chair Foster has continued these conversations with several new administrators this year, showing a continued commitment to faculty concerns while also establishing lines of communication between the faculty and these new administrators, and

Whereas, Chair Foster has notably demonstrated his ability to listen to colleagues' concerns by addressing them through the creation (or dissolution) of ad hoc committees,

Be It Resolved, that the Faculty Senate of Missouri State University expresses its sincere thanks to Chair Foster and commends him for his outstanding service as Chair of the Faculty Senate for the 2025-26 academic year.

Senate Resolution 2-26/27 **Adopted by Senate on May 7, 2026**

Resolution in Honor of Dr. Kim Finch, Secretary of the Faculty 2024-26

Whereas, Dr. Kim Finch has served as the Secretary of the Faculty for the 2024-25 and 2025-26 academic years, and

Whereas, in those two years, Dr. Finch has provided countless hours of service related to curricular matters and records of the Senate, and

Whereas, Dr. Finch has modeled confident leadership and great initiative in this role during a time when the university's curricular software and related processes changed, and

Whereas, Dr. Finch has also served on a number of Senate committees, contributing valuable insight and guidance, and

Whereas, in this role, Dr. Finch has shown a deep commitment to the faculty and to Missouri State University,

Be It Resolved, that the Faculty Senate of Missouri State University extends its sincere thanks to Dr. Finch for her dedication to faculty governance and for her excellent service as Secretary of the Faculty.

Senate Resolution 3-26/27 **Adopted by Senate on May 7, 2026**

Resolution in Honor of Dr. Michael Hudson, Parliamentarian 2025-26

Whereas, Dr. Michael Hudson has shown a notable dedication to the principles of shared governance at Missouri State University in his continued role as Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate, and

Whereas, Dr. Hudson has greatly assisted the Chair of the Faculty Senate in guiding the sessions of the Faculty Senate in an organized and informed manner, and

Whereas, Dr. Hudson's knowledge of the university's governing policies has been tremendously useful for ongoing conversations in Faculty Senate sessions and in committee meetings, and

Whereas, Dr. Hudson has also provided valuable service as an ex officio member of the Senate Committee on Rules and as a member of the Senate Executive Committee,

Be It Resolved, that the Faculty Senate of Missouri State University commends Dr. Hudson for his continued dedication to shared governance and thanks him for his service as Parliamentarian of the Faculty Senate.