Missouri State University

## Minutes of the October 2026 Session of the Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate held the October 2026 session on Thursday, October 15, 2026, in PSU Ballroom East. Chair Heidi Backes called the session to order at 3:30 p.m. Mike Hudson served as parliamentarian.

Substitutes: Kristy Thomas for Michelle Harvey, Theatre & Dance; Ralph Shain for William Harwood, Political Science & Philosophy; Kewman Lee for Elizabeth King, Teaching, Learning & Developmental Science; Kim Finch for James Sottile, Special Education, Leadership & Professional Studies; Sapna Chakraborty for Jennifer Yates, Health Care Professions; Joshua Lambert for Andrea Miller, Library; Megan Ramsey for Tony Na'ayem, Finance, Economics & Risk Management; and Ridwan Sakidja for Michael Reed, Physics, Astronomy & Materials Science.

Absences: Albert Barreda, Hospitality & Agricultural Leadership; Chris Ford, Defense & Strategic Studies; Alex Hamwi, Marketing; Razib Iqbal, Computer Science; and Ami Rohr, Nursing.

Guests: Richard Williams, Office of the President; Clarenda Phillips; Office of the Provost; Michelle Brown, B&P Committee; Katrina Chavez, Curriculum Planning & Management; Vicky Scott, EPPC; Kylar Sherman-Wilkins, SAG; Natasha Devan, CNAS; Egon Heidendal, Institutional Effectiveness; and Mary Bohlen, Assessment & Accreditation.

### Approval of Minutes

The September 2026 minutes were approved as posted.

### Chair's Report

Chair Heidi Backes presented the report. Review agenda for full report.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- If necessary, a carry-over meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 20, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. (location TBD)
- Please remember to share a summary of today's meeting with your colleagues; our goal is to enhance communication and transparency this year, and you play a vital role in that as elected representatives of your academic unit or rank.
- Upcoming Policy Change: 90-hour degrees (discussion and vote in November session) – (Attachment 1)
- President Williams will host a Town Hall on November 4 at 11:30 in the PSU Theater

### Presentation on Behavioral Intervention Team

The scheduled presentation did not take place. Rescheduling may be considered for a future meeting.

### Report on Curriculum

Katrina Chavez, Director Curriculum Planning & Management, presented the report.

### Report on Great Colleges to Work For Survey

Egon Heidendal, Associate Provost for Institutional Effectiveness; and Mary Bohlen, Director of Assessment & Accreditation presented the report. Discussion focused on survey participation, the usefulness and specificity of the survey, the potential for institutional change, the cost of the survey, and access to the results.

### CUPA Report from the Committee on University Budget & Priorities

Michele Brown presented the report. Discussion focused on various concerns in the faculty salary data, representation of non-tenure-track and instructional faculty, and the need for additional analyses to identify potential compensation and equity gaps.

### Report from the Committee on Rules

Joshua Lambert presented the report.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
None**.**

**NEW BUSINESS**

- A question was raised regarding increases in health insurance premiums. Clarification was requested regarding the reasons for and factors contributing to the rising costs.
- A concern was raised regarding Mercy as the only in-network hospital under our health insurance plan.
- President Williams encouraged faculty to attend or view the November 4th Town Hall, where rationale for the increases will be presented. He also encouraged questions to be submitted.

**ADJOURNMENT**
The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Tracy Stout
Secretary of the Faculty