

**Marshall University Faculty Senate
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 4, 2025, 4:00 PM
MSC BE-5 (Microsoft Teams Streaming Only)**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Nathaniel Ramsey, Briana Nannen, Leah Turley, Heather Stark, Phil Vallejo, Sandy York, Jamey Halleck, Kevin Levine, Uyi Lawani, Margie Phillips, Amanda Thompson-Abbott, Jerry Dooley, Mike Huesmann, Tim Melvin, Feon Smith, Tanvir Chowdhury, Ross Salary, Jodi Cottrell, Zach Garrett, Angela Graham, Shikeal Harris, Susanne Konz, Lisa Muto, Alysha Nichols, Shoshannah Diehl, Marianna Linz, Clinton Brown, Puspa Damai, Megan Marshall, Boniface Noyongoyo, Daniel O'Malley, Shawn Schulenberg, Jana Tigchelaar, Anthony Viola, Raid Al-Aqtash, Kelly Beatty, Rick Gage, Philippe Georgel, Sean McBride, Kyle Palmquist, Devon Wright, Stephen Young, Ji Bihl (substitute for Jessica Buerck), Jinju Wang, Ruhul Amin, Mindy Varney, Tom Hisiro, Kelli Johnson, Larry Sheret

MEMBERS ABSENT: Conrae Lucas-Adkins, Ammar Alzarrad, Simon Shim, Marybeth Beller, Jessica Buerk, Eva Patton-Tackett, Nitin Puri, Tiffany Davis, Michael Hambuchen, Mary Platz, Jen Sparks, Kari Mika-Lude

EX-OFFICIO, VOTING/NON-VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Connor Waller, Amine Oudghiri-Otmani

EX-OFFICIO, VOTING/NON-VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Richard Egleton

PARLIAMENTARIAN: Andrew Morelock

SENATE STAFF: Hailey Bibbee

GUESTS: In person – E. Del Chrol, Jim Denvir, R.B. Bookwalter, Brad D. Smith, Doohee Lee, Rohan Christie-David, Robin Riner, Maria Grindhart, Jerry Ross, Kateryna Schray, Jodie Penrod, Wesley Stites, Brandi Jacobs-Jones, Bruce Felder, Kelli Prejean

Virtual: Carlene O'Neill, Susan Tusing, Glen Midkiff, Teresa Eagle, Sonja Cantrell-Johnson, Gena Chattin, Sarah McCrackin, Eric Blough, Cara Bailey, Craig Kimble, Rich Jones, Billy Gardner, Jr., Marcie Simms, Julia Spears

The meeting was convened at 4:00 pm by Chair Shawn Schulenberg. Chair Schulenberg reviewed meeting procedures and expectations.

1. Approval of Proposed Agenda - approved
2. Approval of Minutes from April 24, 2025 - approved
3. Chair Announcements – Chair

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1. We are seeking liaisons for three standing committees: Athletics, Faculty Personnel, and Faculty Development. Any elected senator not already serving on a Faculty Senate Standing Committee is eligible.
2. An updated version of MU BOG Rule AA-1 (Sabbatical Leave) is in effect this year, with earlier deadlines. All applications were due to supervisors on Tuesday, September 2. For the first time, faculty will be notified of sabbatical approvals or rejections before the fall schedule is finalized.
3. Several important searches are completed or underway:
 - a. Gerald Harrison has been hired as the new Athletic Director.
 - b. The Provost Search Committee is currently conducting interviews; finalists will visit campus the week of September 22–26. Faculty are encouraged to attend the 10:00 a.m. student success forum and the 11:00 a.m. faculty forum.
 - c. The COLA Dean search is in process, with the first round of off-site interviews scheduled for next week.
4. The President has asked Robin Riner to convene the “Campus Live 365 Task Force,” an ad hoc group charged with reviewing how Marshall can remain agile and effective year-round, while balancing workload and compensation. The President will provide additional details in his remarks.
5. We completed our first full year using CIM, the catalog management system. In prior years, catalogs were often published mid-year; this year they are already live. CIM closes each summer but has now reopened and is accepting submissions. The Graduate Council Chair and I are working with catalog editors to develop an annual activity calendar to clarify deadlines and expected review times for program and course changes (including those requiring BOG or HLC approval).
6. The AI Task Force has updated its syllabus guidance. Best practices indicate that assignment-level guidance, rather than course-level policies, is most effective. Faculty can access the revised guidance on the Academic Affairs website. An AI Innovation Challenge will also be announced soon. Proposals for innovative uses of AI in higher education will be eligible for funding (software/licensing costs) and cash prizes for top projects.
7. Major items are expected this year:

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- a. The Faculty Personnel Committee will bring forward a proposal to consolidate MU BOG Rules AA-6, AA-7, and AA-9 (promotion and tenure). This work has been underway for three years, and the proposal is expected in October.
 - b. The ad hoc Post-Tenure Review Committee plans to present a proposal by the end of the semester, possibly for our November meeting.
 - c. The ad hoc Committee on Course Recommendations is preparing a proposal for review later this academic year.
 - d. We will also likely see proposals to amend course withdrawals, academic appeals, and grant compensation.
8. Faculty Senate reapportionment, adjusting the number of senators per academic unit based on full-time faculty counts, occurs every two years. I have requested updated numbers from Academic Affairs and will report the results at our September 25 meeting.
9. Then link for nominations for Spring Commencement speaker will be available soon.
10. Upcoming Meetings and Events
- a. The next Executive Committee meeting is September 15, to prepare items for the September 25 Faculty Senate meeting. All recommendations and resolutions are due to senate@marshall.edu by September 5. Senate meetings will return to the Don Morris Room for the remainder of the year.
 - b. The Fall General Faculty Meeting will be held October 15 at 4:00 p.m. in the Joan C. Edwards Playhouse.

4. Parliamentary Procedures Primer – Chair/Parliamentarian

5. Recommendations/Resolutions - None

6. Regular Reports

a) President – Brad Smith (15 minutes)

President's Report – September 2025

- Thank you, Mr. Chairman (Shawn).
- Good afternoon, everyone!

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- It's exciting to have our faculty and students back and to see the many signs of growth that surround us ... both in the community and on campus!
- In the community, we are seeing growth ... from cranes to concerts ... with no greater example being the Zach Bryan concert we hosted this past weekend at the Joan!
- On campus, the energy level is high as we continue to witness positive enrollment trends as well:
 - Our Fall 2025 enrollment is on pace to outperform internal projections, building on a 3-year trend that reversed a 13-year enrollment decline and has since increased more than 16% since 2023.
 - As we welcomed the Class of 2029, we continued to advance our vision of Marshall For All, providing access to an affordable, high quality education.
 - The Class of 2029 includes 734 students attending through the Tuition-Free WV program, where students from families with a household income of \$65,000 or less qualify to attend Marshall tuition-free.
 - 200 of these students are also participating in the next cohort of our Marshall For All Debt-Free Program where housing, books and food are also covered, building on 200 students from the previous years.
 - For all other students, Marshall continues to offer the lowest net tuition cost of any four-year institution in the state and surrounding region ...
 - While delivering the highest return-on-investment, as measured by net earnings upon graduation.
 - Net earnings measure the average earnings of a graduate 8 years after the start of their freshmen year, divided by the total cost of their college education.
 - Anything higher than a 1 is a positive return on investment.
 - Marshall currently delivers a net earnings ratio of 1.32 versus a national average of .85, and other R2 institutions across the nation of .72.

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- Collectively, our students continue to prove that Marshall For All is working, and that we are indeed a Prosperity Platform ... offering the most affordable, flexible and achievement-oriented education available.
 - And we're just getting started!
- With this backdrop, I'd like to focus my comments on 3 topics:
 - The strategic work we completed over the summer.
 - The efforts underway to build and strengthen our leadership bench.
 - And the opportunity to accelerate our momentum and unleash the power of shared governance year-around.
 - Let me begin with the first topic – the strategic work we completed over the summer:
 - In July and August, we hosted two strategic retreats – one with our Cabinet, and the second with our Shared Governance Leadership, which included the Board of Governors and the representatives from the Five Families.
 - This was the 3rd year where we've focused these retreats on future-back, outside-in trends ...
 - Assessing the capabilities we will need to navigate these trends ...
 - And then defining the actions necessary for us to capitalize on these trends moving forward.
 - This year, we placed a particular emphasis on one of our interdisciplinary centers of excellence – advanced manufacturing.
 - We developed a deeper understanding and appreciation for the 53% of West Virginians, and the roughly 40% of the nation who choose an alternative path to a four-year degree
 - We showcased the importance of skilled trades in our state and across the nation ...

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- We reviewed the current programs and capabilities we offer through our Marshall Advanced Manufacturing Center ... from apprenticeships, micro-credentials ... to joint offerings in partnership with our high school CTE and state-wide community and technology colleges ...
- And we discussed pathways to increase Marshall's impact by growing our outputs ten-fold ... increasing workforce participation, creating pathways to prosperity for all families, and showcasing West Virginia as a place that celebrates all contributions to a 21st Century Economy.
- We mean it when we say "Marshall For ALL" ... everyone matters and everyone has a role to play in West Virginia's future.
- To be clear, these retreats are hosted on campus to save money, and they are intense working sessions that lead to action:
 1. In the Summer of 2023, we:
 - Leaned into the use of **Design Thinking** ...
 - Invested the time to build our understanding of **large language models and artificial general intelligence** ...
 - And we engaged with experts including **Sal Khan**, founder of Kahn Academy, as well as local **high school students** to learn more ...
 - Coming out of that first retreat, we **formed the Presidential Task Force on AI** – focusing these emerging capabilities across **four key areas**:
 - Advancing innovation in teaching and learning
 - Accelerating research excellence and impact
 - Improving operational efficiency and sustainability
 - And providing access and making needed investments in leading technology and tools
 2. In the Summer of 2024 (last year), we applied design thinking to address the grand challenge of being an **R2 institution with community college acceptance**

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rates ... testing ways to provide individualized support for every student ...

- We invested time:
 - **Diving deeper into the progress being driven across the campus by the Presidential Task Force on AI.**
 - Each of us completed **an AI micro-credential**.
 - And then, we focused our efforts on **increasing student success for Marshall for All/Pell-Eligible students.**
 - That work diagnosed root cause reasons for why our 1st year retention had dropped from 78% to 72% ...
 - We engaged 1:1 with students ...
 - Developed hypotheses to test ...
 - And introduced a series of policy changes and new support services ...
 - I'm pleased to share that those efforts have strengthened 1st year retention once again,
 - With current trends on pace to improve Freshman to Sophomore retention by more than 400 bps (currently ~77%) for Fall 25.
 - Suffice it to say these retreats have proven to be hands-on and action-oriented ... translating ideas into impact.
- Which takes me to my 2nd topic ... building our leadership bench and capabilities as we seek to be the place where the world's top talent can do the best work of their lives ...
 - In August, we invested time learning and applying the leadership best practices that are evident in the most impactful leaders and innovative institutions.
 - The course focused on the Five Principles of Leadership – or the 5 P's:
 - **The first is Potential:** Good leaders focus on potential ... recognizing everyone has unique gifts to offer ... and investing time becoming a coach

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who helps unleash that potential.

- **The second is Purpose:** Good leaders define a purpose ... a grand challenge that everyone will be inspired to work together to achieve ... in our case, Marshall For All, Marshall Forever.
 - **The third is People:** Good leaders carefully select and develop their people ... seeking those who possess a high curiosity quotient, a healthy dose of humility, a commitment to “we before me”, and the grit to get back up after a setback and try again.
 - **The fourth is Paybook:** Good leaders then define a playbook ... focusing the team’s energy and resources on a critical few priorities ... the six or fewer things that really matter in advancing the mission.
 - **And the fifth is Pay-It-Forward:** Good leaders focus on paying it forward ... recognizing their true impact in measured after they are no longer in their position ... did they leave the people and the place better than they found them?
- Potential – Purpose – People – Playbook – Pay-It-Forward.
 - I had the privilege of conducting a workshop focused on these principles with our Cabinet, the Deans and all of the incoming freshman during the Week of Welcome.
 - My challenge to each of them was to teach these principles to their teams, so everyone has the opportunity to learn and grow in these areas.
 - These leadership principles will be critical as we continue to advance our strategic roadmap of M4A.
 - While I’m on the topic of building our leadership bench, let me provide a brief update on several of our key searches:
 - First, our Athletic Director Search.
 - We successfully completed our search for Marshall’s 23rd Athletic Director, naming Gerald Harrison on July 28th.

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- When we embarked on a national search on May 21st, we set the bar high.
- We were seeking a transformational leader ... someone who is purpose-built for this moment in time with the shifting landscape in NCAA Athletics.
- A leader with strong business acumen, an innovative spirit, and a commitment to academic excellence and competitive integrity.
- Someone who embodies the leadership attributes that deliver on the 5 P's we just discussed.
- We found that leader in Gerald Harrison.
 - Gerald brings over two decades of experience in Division I athletics ...
 - Including impactful tenures at Tennessee, Duke, and most recently as Vice President and Director of Athletics at Austin Peay State University.
 - At Austin Peay, he delivered:
 - Record-setting fundraising ...
 - Introduced groundbreaking partnerships ...
 - Hired 16 coaches, 6 of whom went on to receive Coach of the Year honors.
 - And led the university to win 13 conference championships, including 3 football titles in 5 seasons!
 - During his tenure, student-athletes thrived academically, maintaining a 3.0 GPA or higher for a record-setting 16 consecutive semesters.
- But what stood out wasn't just his record. It was the way he did it
 - With humility, discipline, and a deep commitment to the broader mission.
 - Gerald earned a reputation as bridge-builder across campus...

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- And as a winner across NCAA Athletics.
- We are excited to welcome Gerald, his wife Lisa, and their two daughters – Torri and Lorri to the Marshall Family.
- Shifting to our Provost search ... the quantity and quality of candidates has been very encouraging:
 - As you may recall, we purposefully used the summer to market this opportunity, awaiting the return of our campus community before beginning interviews.
 - Deadline for best consideration was August 19th, and we received 95 applications!
 - The Search Committee has narrowed this list to the 15 most qualified candidates who will participate in virtual interviews September 4-5th.
 - We are on pace to invite the top 4-5 finalists to campus the week of September 12th, with a goal to announce a final decision in late September.
 - Our anticipation is to name our next Provost in late September with a start date in January 2026.
- The search for our next COLA Dean is also on track, following a similar timeline ...
 - With off-campus interviews for semi-finalists occurring in the next couple of weeks,
 - And on-campus interviews to be scheduled in late September, early October ...
 - With a finalist to be named in October and a target start date in January.
- This takes me to my 3rd and final topic ... the opportunity to accelerate our momentum and capitalize on the power of our shared governance year-around.
 - As we engaged in our strategic planning over the summer, we paused to reflect on the increasing velocity of change and the need to ensure our shared governance model is fully-functioning 365 days a year, living up to our goal of

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being the most agile university in the nation.

- There are times when key decisions arise during Winter Break or over the Summer that warrant action and require, or would benefit from the engagement of our shared governance constituents.
- The shared governance advisory committee, also known as the heads of the five families, met with me over the summer to discuss this opportunity, and we agreed that we should convene an action learning team ...
 - To define the types of decisions that arise ...
 - Diagnose the current approach and policies in place at Marshall ...
 - Study the best practices of others to identify new approaches for consideration ...
 - And make a recommendation no later than December 2025 for how best to adapt our own operating rhythm.
- This action learning team – which we are calling Campus Live 365 - is being chaired by Robin Riner, who led our Shared Governance Task Force that led to our codified charter we use to guide our efforts.
- Robin has carefully selected 14 team members, 50% of whom represent faculty and chairs, and they are in the early stages of kicking off this work.
- You'll hear more about the findings and recommendations as Robin and team advance this work.
- Wrapping up ... our shared purpose of Marshall For All, Marshall Forever is working ...
 - We are inspiring hope and driving growth in the community and across our campus.
 - This excitement in building increasing interest to join our efforts ... as evidenced by the quantity and quality of those applying for our open leadership positions ...
 - As well as those on campus investing the time to strengthen their own leadership skills and capabilities ...

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- Our shared governance model is unleashing the wisdom of our collective campus, accelerating our velocity and translating ideas into impact ... with an opportunity to define new practices and policies through Campus Live 365.
- Together, we are increasing student success, accelerating our momentum, reducing our structural deficit and rewarding our employees with pay increases as we strive to deliver on our commitments of a positive financial position by 2027.
- We still have heavy lifting ahead of us, but it is important to pause and celebrate shining achievements.
 - We are making meaningful progress and providing a roadmap to future prosperity for our students, our employees, our communities and for the country.
 - **Marshall For All, Marshall Forever!**
 - And with that, Mr. Chairman, I'll conclude my comments.

b) Provost – Robert Bookwalter (15 minutes)

Thankful for serving as Interim Provost and excited about the fall semester

Enrollment is up which equates to increased revenue

Upcoming Green and White Days

HLC accreditation in January, 2026

c) Board of Governors – Robin Riner (5 minutes)

- BOG had its last meeting Aug. 5, 2025
- Prior to the meeting, we had a training with cabinet members and shared governance leaders that focused on how to best serve a variety of types of learners and contribute more to WV's workforce
- At the meeting, we voted on the following action items:
 - Rule GA-10 which lays out the roles of now non-voting members of the BOG (student, faculty, and staff representatives) in response to House Bill 3279 (approved)
 - Revisions to Rule FA-3 purchasing policy to better align with state code and HEPC policies relating to emergency and direct purchases (approved)

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- Revisions to Rule FA-5 capital project management re: emergency purchases and bid tasks (approved)
 - Reallocation of funds for deferred maintenance (approved)
- New members Carleen O'Neill (staff representative) and Conner Waller (Student representative) were sworn in
- Athletics updates:
 - 3rd party company brought in to aid with compliance
 - New revenue sharing rules and roster limits from NCAA began July 1
 - All events will now be cashless
- Academic affairs updates:
 - Search is underway for new provost, on-campus interviews should be early October and new provost should start in January
- Finance updates
 - Next year deficit is projected to be down to 10-12M from original 28M
 - Project Home Base is action learning team to help with housing issues
- There will be a shared governance conference October 7 in the Joan C. Edwards Playhouse – look for flyers and agenda coming soon

d) Advisory Council of Faculty – Amine Oudghiri-Otmani (5 minutes)

Met on 7/14; elected new officers; ACF retreat 11/7-8

e) Graduate Council – Richard Egleton (5 minutes)

We have had our first meeting of the year and have assigned all of our subcommittees for the upcoming season. We have not carried out any other business.

f) Student Government Association – Connor Waller (5 minutes)

Focus on student experience, wellness, and success

Planning student kitchen in MSC to help with food insecurity

Working with Alumni Foundation

9/11 Days of Service

7. Other Requests to Speak - none

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

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Respectfully Submitted:

Kelli Johnson

Kelli Johnson, Recording Secretary, Faculty Senate

MINUTES APPROVED BY FACULTY SENATE:



Dr. Shawn Schulenberg, Chair
Faculty Senate

September 25, 2025

Date Signed

MINUTES READ:



Brad Smith, President
Marshall University

Oct. 28, 2025

Date Signed