

Marshall University Faculty Senate
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, March 26, 2026, 4:00 – 5:30pm
Don Morris Room (MSC)

MEMBERS PRESENT: Sarah McDermott, Heather Stark, Leah Turley, Sandy York, Jamey Halleck, Uyi Lawani, Kevin Levine, Amanda Thompson-Abbott, Conrae Lucas-Adkins, Mike Huesmann, Feon Smith, Tanvir Chowdhury, Ross Salary, Simon Shim, Jodi Cottrell, Zach Garrett, Angela Graham, Shikeal Harris, Lisa Muto, Alysha Nichols, Marybeth Beller, Clinton Brown, Puspa Damai, Shoshannah Diehl, Megan Marshall, Boniface Noyongoyo, Daniel O'Malley, Shawn Schulenberg, Jana Tigchelar, Anthony Viola, Raid Al-Aqtash, Kelly Beatty, Rick Gage, Philippe Georgel, Sean McBride, Stephen Young, Jessica Buerck, Mindy Varney, Kari Mika-Lude, Kelli Johnson, Larry Sheret

MEMBERS ABSENT: Nathaniel Ramsey, Phil Vallejo, Margie Phillips, Jerry Dooley, Tim Melvin, Ammar Alzarrad, Suzanne Konz, Marianna Linz, Kyle Palmquist, Devon Wright, Nitin Puri, Tiffany Davis, Ruhul Amin.

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

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

PARLIAMENTARIAN: Zeli Rivas

SENATE STAFF: Hailey Bibbee

GUESTS: In person – Brad D. Smith, Mohammed Abdulrahman, Andrew Morelock, Karen McComas, Carl Mummert, Marcie Simms, Anna Mummert, R.B. Bookwalter, Kelly Bradley, Vicki P. Stroher, Maria Gindhart, Bruce Felder, Gerald Harrison, Jim Denvir, Kateryna Schay, Brandi Jacobs-Jones, Wesley Stites

Virtual: Mark Zanter, Brian Morgan, Sonja Cantrell-Johnson, William Billingsley, Matt Tidd, Susan Tusing, John Maher, Allison Carey, Jodie Penrod, Diane Palmieri, Ginny Painter, Caitlin Trombley, Monica Brooks, Shannon Miller-Mace

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 2.19.26 - approved

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3. Announcements – Chair

1. Our Higher Learning Commission accreditation visit is scheduled for March 30–31. Please attend any relevant sessions if you are able.
2. I will give my annual address to the Marshall University Board of Governors during its April 8 meeting. The Board will also vote at that meeting on the proposed changes to promotion and tenure in MU BOG AA-6.
3. The Spring General Faculty Meeting will be held the following day, April 9, at 4:00 PM in the Joan C. Edwards Playhouse. The event will be livestreamed, but please attend in person, if possible, to hear the President’s semiannual address, celebrate faculty award winners, and recognize retirees.
4. We have one remaining scheduled Faculty Senate meeting this academic year. The next Executive Committee meeting is April 13 to prepare for the April 23 Faculty Senate meeting. All recommendations and resolutions are due to senate@marshall.edu by April 3. This will likely be a longer meeting, so please plan accordingly. Items currently slated for the agenda include:
 - a. The Faculty Personnel Committee is proposing a Faculty Fitness to Serve policy, establishing a clear and transparent process for cases where a faculty member’s ability to perform contractual duties is in question.
 - b. The BAPC and Graduate Council are jointly proposing a unified Appeals Policy to centralize all appeals processes. This will be accompanied by revisions to UPAA-4 (Academic Dishonesty).
 - c. The Ad Hoc Committee on Student Teaching Evaluations is proposing revisions to UPAA-9 (Course Evaluations).
 - d. A policy on Post-Tenure Review will not be considered at this time. We have asked Finance to model the budgetary impact; this will be taken up by next year’s Faculty Senate leadership.
5. Although this is our final scheduled meeting, state code requires that we remain in our roles through June 30, 2026, in case an emergency meeting is needed.
6. Academic units should be holding elections for the 2026–2028 Faculty Senate this month. Results are due to the Faculty Senate Office by Wednesday, April 1. Thank you to CAM and LCOB for already submitting results. Newly elected senators will meet for the first time on April 30 at 4:00 PM in the MSC Don Morris Room to select officers and the Executive Committee.

4. Recommendations/Resolutions

- a) **SR 25-26-19 FPC**– Recommends a **New BOG Rule on Faculty Conduct**. (Revised) - approved

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b) **SR 25-26-21 APC**– Resolves Following **Undergraduate Degree Programs Continue at Current Level**: BA Criminal Justice; BS Natural Resources and Recreation Management; BS Geology; Certificate Information Assurance. - approved

c) **SR 25-26-22 APC** – Resolves Following **Undergraduate Degree Programs Develop or Expand Due to Demand**: BS Environmental Science; BS Cyber Forensics & Security. - approved

d) **SR 25-26-23 UCC** – Recommends **Approval of Undergraduate Program Addition, Deletion, Change** in the following: Musical Theatre Minor; BA Theatre; Biomechanics; Biomec Pre-Physical Therapy; Biomec Pre-Med; Biomec PrePhysician Assistant; BS Biochemistry; BS Professional Pilot. - approved

e) **SR 25-26-24 UCC** – Recommends **Approval of Undergraduate Course Addition, Deletion, Change** in the following: ART 204; BUSN 150; BUSN 152; BUSN 154; BUSN 156; BUSN 158; BUSN 160; BUSN 162; BUSN 164; BUSN 166; BUSN 168; BUSN 170; BUSN 172; GEO 451; HST473; SCLA 475; AVSC 200;AVSC 205; AVSC 206;AVSC 210;AVSC 211; AVSC 215; AVSC 220; AVSC 222; AVSC 305; AVSC 328; AVSC 329; AVSC 330; AVSC 331; AVSC 335; AVSC 340; AVSC 341; AVSC 345; AVSC 375 AVSC 376; AVSC 380;MUSE 425;THE 370;CD 461; HS 435; NRE 111; UNI103; THE 270. - approved

5. Regular Reports

a) University President – Brad Smith (15 minutes)

President’s Report
March 2026

- Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
- Good afternoon, my friends.
- As I’ve shared in recent monthly reports, the external environment remains dynamic and unpredictable.
- Higher education is at the center of this vortex ...
- Across the country, universities are navigating shifting demographics, policy changes, financial pressures, and evolving expectations about the role of higher education in society.
- To quote Joan Chittister, “the purpose of leadership is not to make the present bearable. The purpose of leadership is to make the future possible.”
- It is moments like these when mission matters most.

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- What gives me confidence is we remain steadfast in our commitment to “inspire learning and creativity that ignites the mind, nurtures the spirit and fulfills the promise for a better future.”
 - Our faculty are laser focused and committed to teaching, scholarship and service.
 - Our staff are creating an environment of support and agility that advances our shared mission.
 - And our students are setting the example with their effort, their talent and their grit.
 - Together, we are a community grounded in purpose ...
 - A university that continues to move forward with clarity about who we are ...and what we stand for ...
 - They say character is revealed in times of adversity ... and I am proud of the character that is on display across our campus and our community!
- With that context, I want to focus my update today on three areas:
 - First, an update on the recent legislative session and what it means for Marshall University.
 - Second, a recap regarding our Women’s Swim & Dive Program and the revised path forward.
 - And finally, a brief update on the Listening Tour 2.0 that many of you have participated in ... and how that work will inform our upcoming strategy refresh.
- **Let me begin with the legislative session.**
 - The 60-day legislative session recently concluded, and it was an active one.
 - During the session, lawmakers introduced 2,777 bills, with 303 ultimately completing legislative action.
 - Of those, 57 bills directly related to higher education, and 9 were ultimately enacted into law.
 - Overall, I’m pleased to report that it was a very positive session for Marshall University, thanks to our amazing Government Relations team and the contributions of the entire campus community.
 - Starting with our base budget:
 - The lawmakers fully implemented the higher education funding formula and reversed the proposed 2 percent budget reduction that had initially been suggested.
 - In doing so, they also supported the Governor’s proposed 3 percent pay raise, which as a reminder, translates to a 1.6% for our university, given only 55% of our salary budget is funded through state allocations.

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- Overall, this is excellent news!
- Finance is actively working with the Budget Advisory Committee on the implications of these two developments, with more to be shared once we've presented to the BOG in April.

- Two areas I'll foreshadow now for this group:
 - This means our baseline budget will be the better of the two scenarios we had prepared for ... flat with the 5% reduction in supplies & other services to continue our efforts behind Save to Serve ...
 - In that budget, we will also pass through a pay increase that the Budget Advisory Committee has helped develop ...
 - Using a progressive scale, similar to the progressive tax brackets, with more dollars going to those on the lower end of the pay scale ...
 - We will complement the state pay increase with \$550,000 in Save-to-Serve dollars, so we can finally achieve and officially declare that all employees' pay will have been brought to market levels as committed by FY'27.

- In addition to these two budget elements:
 - The Legislature also approved \$30 million for a new School of Medicine building, matching the \$31.8M previously approved at a federal level through Senator Capito ...
 - This gets us 2/3 of the way to the needed funding goal for a new School of Medicine building ...
 - And represents a significant investment in healthcare education and workforce development in West Virginia.

 - Finally, Marshall secured:
 - A fourth year of funding for the WV Grant Resource Centers totaling \$500,000 ... split 50/50 with WVU ...
 - As well as \$1 million to establish the new West Virginia Collaboratory, designed to strengthen research collaboration across the state.

 - I want to thank the many faculty and staff members who contributed their expertise and perspective during this process.
 - Your engagement continues to play an important role in shaping policy for higher education in our state.

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- **Let me now transition to my second topic: Women’s Swim & Dive.**
 - As many of you know, this has been a challenging moment for our campus community ...
 - And especially for the young women who represent Marshall in that program.
 - The original recommendation regarding Swim & Dive was grounded in three realities that face intercollegiate athletics today:
 - Title IX participation proportionality,
 - The financial sustainability of athletics programs,
 - And the infrastructure investments required to support Division I swimming facilities.
 - Those realities remain.
 - However, during the process that followed the announcement, revised Title IX consultation indicated that eliminating a women’s program before adding new opportunities could potentially place the university outside the safe harbor framework of Title IX ...
 - Even when the long-term result would be an increase in participation opportunities for women.
 - This counsel was different than we had originally received ...
 - So, after vetting this new information, we heeded our own advice that “facts are friendly, even when they tell you what you don’t want to hear”.
 - With this new data, we pivoted ... and made the decision to retain the Swim & Dive program while continuing to expand opportunities for women and moving forward constructively for our student-athletes and our university.
 - Our goals remain the same ... what changed is the implementation plan to achieve those goals.
 - Leadership requires making difficult decisions.
 - But it also requires the humility to listen, reassess when new information emerges, and adjust course responsibly.
 - We’ve emerged wiser, capturing key lessons which we’ve shared with the Board of Governors and built into our processes moving forward.
 - Our focus now is on supporting our student-athletes and strengthening opportunities for women in Marshall Athletics.
- **Which takes me to my third and final topic, the listening tour that many of you have participated in over the past several weeks.**
 - First and foremost ... thank you.
 - We are nearing the halfway point of the scheduled 30 session Tour ...

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- And the conversations have been thoughtful, candid, and incredibly helpful.
 - It is another example of the deep commitment that our campus and our community have to the future of Marshall University.
 - As we complete the second half of the Listening Session Tour, we are complimenting this work with a deep dive into external trends ...

 - Most notably the impact and implications of AI on education, the workforce and society ...
 - In doing so, we've enlisted the partnership of Paul LeBlanc, the former President of Southern New Hampshire University who now works for the Gates Foundation.
 - Paul has successfully led transformation in higher education during key technology shifts ...
 - And has deeply researched and written an incredible book on the potential implications of AI, which I had the chance to review in manuscript form.
 - It is amazing.
 - We are purchasing copies for campus leaders across our shared governance structure to read once published ...
 - And I've invited Paul to co-facilitate several campus strategy workshops with me over the summer break.
 - The insights from our Listening Tour, combined with this external work and Paul's collaboration will directly feed into those strategy workshops ...
 - I will foreshadow now that these workshops will include the Chairs, the Deans, the heads of the Five Families and the campus AI Task Force ...
 - Who, alongside the Administration, and ultimately the Board of Governors ...
 - Will synthesize and prioritize the Listening Tour feedback and these external trends to refresh our Marshall For All, Marshall Forever plan-on-a-page ...
 - By end of summer, our goal is to have a revised draft to share with the campus community in the early Fall,
 - Providing an opportunity for the broader campus community to review and contribute additional input and edits as appropriate...
 - Leading to a final draft that will set the course for the next five years of our journey ...
 - A journey to be a gold standard 21st Century Prosperity Platform that accelerates individual success, innovative ideas and economic impact for the state and the nation!
 - We have a busy summer ahead ...
 - But the greatest leaps forward occur in times of disruption and reinvention ...
 - And we're seizing the moment at Marshall University!
- So, as I close today, I'll return to where I began.

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- Higher education is navigating a moment of significant change.
- But change does not have to mean uncertainty.
- At Marshall, I see something different.
- I see a campus community that is focused on its mission.
- A campus community that is willing to adapt and evolve ...
 - Our thinking ...
 - Our approach ...
 - And even our decisions when new data or new opportunities require us to ...
- To quote Charles Darwin:
 - “It is not the strongest of the species that survive,
 - Nor the most intelligent,
 - But the one most responsive to change.”
- Marshall University is not reacting ... we are responding ...
- Our work is not always easy ...
- But it is meaningful...
- And it is worth doing.
- Thank you for everything you do each day for our students and for this university.
- Marshall For All ... Marshall Forever!
- Go Herd.

b) Provost – Robert Bookwalter (15 minutes)

Provost Report

Faculty Senate Th Mar 26 4pm DMR

Spring 2026 Enrollment

Total enrollment for Spring 2026 is **12,327** - up 347 or 2.9%

FTTE is at 8712 - up 673 or 8%

1st time fulltime freshman enrollment is 79 - up 3 or 3.95%

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Online enrollment is at 1861 - up 275 or 17%

Graduate/Professional enrollment is at 3008, which is down 253 or 7.775%

First generation enrollment is at 5317 - down 244 or 4.4%

College enrollments show almost all colleges up in majors (from 2.5% to 11%)

Two colleges have a decline in majors - COEPD is down 4% and CECS is down 1.5%

Enrollment Funnel Fall 2026

The enrollment funnel for fall is promising

We have received over 9000 applications, which is a 12% increase year-to-date

Admits are up 31% and intent to enroll is up 4%

Our summer orientation registrations are down 18%

We are at about 1/3 of last year's final orientation numbers

I am grateful for the focused and dedicated work of the Enrollment Management team for continuing our pattern of growth and creating the promise of continued growth into next year.

That team, and the academic support and advising teams across Academic Affairs and in the colleges need our support to translate our strong application & admission numbers into strong orientation and enrollment numbers this summer.

Office of Assessment

The Office of Assessment will have training sessions and consultations in the coming weeks to help department chairs and faculty understand and learn the new assessment software.

Programs going through Program Review in 2026-2027 will have a virtual orientation session on April 10. [Psychology, Math, Chemistry, Physics, Education (Early, Elementary, & Secondary), Physical/Applied Science, Adult & Continuing Education, Leadership Studies, EdD. Counseling, School Psychology, MAT, EdS, Education MA].

Budgets

The BAC has been reviewing all budgets on a weekly basis with the aim of submitting the MU budget to the BoG for their April 8 meeting. Many of your questions about the FY2027 budget will be answered during and after that Board meeting.

COLA Dean Search

The COLA Dean search is underway. We have 3 finalists on campus this week and two next week. I encourage all interested folks to attend or livestream the campus presentations

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and complete the candidate feedback surveys to help us select the best next leader for the College of Liberal Arts.

The search website with candidate information and a link to the feedback survey is found at: <https://www.marshall.edu/cola-dean-search/>

The livestream can be accessed at <https://www.marshall.edu/livestream/>.

Campus 365 project

Plans for a Campus 365 initiative are being led by Robin Riner and Conrae Lucas-Atkins. The project aims to create processes for advancing initiatives that require input from 9-month employees throughout the year, rather than pausing or delaying those initiatives over the summer.

Dates & Events to Remember

- **Digital Accessibility Fix-a-Thon** tomorrow Fri 9-4:30 in DL 349, DL 138, and on Teams

The **HLC Accreditation Site Visit** is March 30 & 31

Monday, March 30

10:45–11:45 a.m. – Criterion 2: Transparency, Integrity & Academic Freedom **DL Atrium**

1:30–2:30 p.m. – Criterion 3: Teaching & Learning, Assessment **DL Atrium**

2:45–3:45 p.m. – Criterion 1: University Mission **DL 349**

2:45–3:45 p.m. – Open Session (**open topic**) **DL Atrium**

Tuesday, March 31

8:30–9:30 a.m. – Criterion 4: Planning & Governance **DL Atrium**

11:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. – Open Session (**open topic**) **DL Atrium**

- **The Marshall Bound** event for accepted students is this Saturday; 10a-5p in WAEC
- The **MU Research Symposium** highlighting student research across all colleges on campus will take place Wednesday April 1
- The **MU General Faculty meeting** will be April 9; 4-5:30p
- The next **Green & White Days** will April 10 & 11
- The **Green/White game** and **Alumni Weekend** will be April 11
- And **Spring Commencement** – the best day of the year - will be May 9

Our purpose is to sustain an institution that will attract students; offer excellent programs help students grow their knowledge, understanding, and send them into their post-graduate lives to make positive contributions to their professions, their neighborhoods, their communities, and the culture at large.

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Our enrollment growth, our assessment of faculty and programs, our advising and student services, and our Career Education programs insure that we accomplish that purpose.

That happens because we have world class faculty who love teaching and learning, who are devoted to expanding knowledge and understanding, and who are committed to helping students become productive citizens, successful professionals, and just good humans.

Your teaching, advising, mentoring, and coaching are the foundation of Marshall's success. I look forward to celebrating another year of excellence in education for our students and for you.

Thank you all.

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

Next BOG meeting is April 8

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

Next ACF meeting is 4/24

e) Graduate Council – Richard Egleton (5 minutes)

1. Next meeting 3.27.26
2. We have reported on most of the Graduate Program reviews and will review the final 2 at the next meeting
3. We will be reviewing and voting on the appeals policy for students. We have worked together with the BAPC to ensure we have a consistent (where possible) policy. We have a number of faculty rotating off and we are awaiting the results for votes of new members from various colleges.

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

1. Collected 2000 items and several hundred dollars and were able to have a pop-up food pantry. Still collecting donations.
2. Collecting period and menstruation products in collaboration with the Women's Center.
3. Working on spring fountain ceremony.
4. SGA elections being held week of 3.30.26.

6. Standing Committee Liaison Reports

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a) Academic Planning Committee – Daniel O’Malley (4 minutes)

The APC has not met since my last report.

b) Athletic Committee – Suzanne Konz (4 minutes) – no report

c) Budget & Academic Policy Committee – Jana Tigchelaar (4 minutes)

This report summarizes the activities and discussions of the Budget and Academic Policy Committee from the February 17 and March 14 2025 meetings.

One of the agenda items in both meetings was the **Attendance and Excused Absences Policy**, which this body voted on today, so I will keep my remarks minimal. The committee worked to review and correct inconsistencies between the Board of Governors policy and the student handbook/catalog regarding excused absences as well as to clarify the process in cases of inclement weather.

The AI academic policy item has been tabled for the remainder of the academic year. The committee is liaising with the task force and awaiting their input for the next academic year.

The committee discussed course withdrawal deadlines; Carl Mummert identified discrepancies between the catalog and Board of Governors policy on this matter. This remains an ongoing issue that will be revisited at a later date.

A grade appeal request for a hearing was denied. The committee noted that the appeal board performed their duties effectively.

The committee's final meeting of the academic year is scheduled for April 18, 2025.

(notes if needed)

Inclement Weather Policy

A proposal has been developed to empower groups to determine whether classes will continue during inclement weather, with the provision that absences must be excused under such circumstances.

Faculty Best Practices

Carl Mummert has developed best practices guidelines for faculty, which empower instructors to make decisions about class delivery or cancellation and to inform their department chairs about such decisions. This proposal passed at the March 14 meeting.

AI Academic Policy

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Course Withdrawal Deadlines

Carl continues to address discrepancies between the catalog and Board of Governors policy on this matter. This remains an ongoing issue that will be revisited at a later date.

New Business

Grade Appeal Board

A grade appeal request for a hearing was denied. The committee noted that the appeal board performed their duties effectively.

Next Steps

The modified attendance policies will be on the next Faculty Senate agenda, with broad support anticipated for these changes. The committee's final meeting of the academic year is scheduled for April 18, 2025.

d) Library Committee – Margie Phillips (4 minutes)

Next meeting is 5.31.26.

e) Faculty Development Committee – Chair/Liaison (4 minutes)

INCO application is due 4.1.26.

f) Physical Facilities & Planning Committee – Jamey Halleck (4 minutes)

The physical facilities and planning committee has not met since my last report. The next meeting date has yet to be determined.

7. Other Requests to Speak

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Kelli Johnson

Kelli Johnson, Recording Secretary, Faculty Senate

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MINUTES APPROVED BY FACULTY SENATE:

Dr. Shawn Schulenberg, Chair Faculty Senate	Date Signed
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MINUTES READ:

Brad Smith, President Marshall University	Date Signed
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