



FACULTY SENATE

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate

April 30, 2026, 3:30 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

Items in **bold print** are items that require action by the Faculty Senate. Other items are for information only.

- 1) Call to Order – Susan Boddie
- 2) Declaration of proxies obtained prior to the meeting and request of proxies for those not given from Senators in attendance (sign-in sheet for proxies available).
 - a) Please send an email for the August 20, 2026 meeting to Ryan Wander regarding proxies a minimum of one (1) week prior to the scheduled Faculty Senate meeting or as soon as possible if an unexpected absence needs to occur.
- 3) **Approval of the minutes of March 26, 2026, meeting of the Faculty Senate.**
 - a) See link here for minutes for all Faculty Senate meetings:
<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/faculty-senate/>
- 4) President's Report – Susan Boddie
 - a) Committee chairs: Please send annual reports to [Susan Boddie](#)

I'll officially call the meeting to order; this is our last Senate meeting. Please be sure you're signing in. Our 1st order of business will be the minutes from the March 26th meeting. Next, we'll move on to my last president's report of this year as your faculty senator.

I want to welcome everybody to our April meeting, our last meeting of the academic year and my last meeting as your president. I'll be with you next year as past president and in an advisory role to our wonderful team. And I'll also continue as a senator. I absolutely want to make sure I thank our amazing Faculty Senate executive team. So, Dr. Chris Dillon is our parliamentarian for this year. Dr. Xiaoi Ren, stepping in as our secretary, and of course, Dr. Nguyen, as our vice president, and our incoming Faculty Senate president for this academic year. And I want to make sure to take a moment to thank Dr. Forrest Parker, our past president, who has been an incredible source of advice and support for us throughout the whole year. So thank you very much.

I want to thank Dr. Crowe as well for stepping in as our Interim President this term since January. And thank you for all the work that you've done for us on campus. We are not done yet. We still have you for as long as we're going to hold on to you for as long as we can. And we have some really great work underway. I'm extremely positive about how things look going forward. I hope you all are too. We're

on a good path and we still have a lot of work to do, and we'll still have Dr. Crowe with us for a while to continue some of these wonderful initiatives that he has started for us. And, of course, thanks to Dr. Noviello, our wonderful provost, for her support and transparency, and everything that she's doing for us in academic affairs, for all the faculty and staff.

With some of the college restructuring that's going on, the Committee on Committees have requested we postpone some of the elections, so that will be for 11 of the college senate seats as well as some of the non-senator positions and some of the committee positions and chairs. We just want to give the opportunity for the college restructuring to happen, and for the dust disassemble a little bit, and those elections would probably be held later in the summer in August, but we'll let Kristin speak to that a little bit later. We will have our vice president/president-elect election today. We will have our secretary election and the nominees for those who do have time remaining left on their Senate terms. We are going to wait on the parliamentarian position because we do have a nominee, but again, to be fair to all the colleges, with restructuring and elections forthcoming, we're going to pause that election until August to give the nominee the opportunity to determine if they will be elected or reelected. And we will also have the nominations from the floor for the secretary and vice president/president-elect position.

VSO has their final concert this weekend, Saturday night at 7 PM Whitehead Auditorium. It'll be a wonderful show. So hopefully you can all come out and see it. Again, I just want to thank everybody for your wonderful support, for your questions, for things that you've brought to the table this year. And I've really, absolutely enjoyed, just been an honor to, to serve as your president this year, and please know that I'm still here for anything that you need. I'm just an email away and not too far off, but it really has been an honor. With that, I will pass on to our wonderful Provost.

Updates from the Office of the President and Academic Affairs- Dr. William Crowe and Dr. Sheri Noviello

Provost Updates

Good afternoon, and happy end of the semester. I want to remind you about commencement, so graduate commencement on Friday evening, in the PE complex at 5 o'clock, and then undergrad commencement on the front lawn, Saturday. We will not be doing fireworks this year, because of the burn limitations. So, don't come out to expect that, but come out to cheer on your students that you've worked so hard to help get through their programs. On Monday the 11th, at 11 o'clock, grades are due. I want to add an additional reminder that if you are teaching dual enrolled students, there are numeric and letter grades due. You would submit your letter grades in Banner, and the numeric grades would be submitted through success portal. I also want to let you know that Anne has submitted her retirement notice, so she will be retiring at the end of June. Dr. de Cruz will be looking for a new person to lead OSPRA. And that job posting should be happening within the next couple of weeks. This is all to support an increase in grant and external funding initiatives.

Looking forward to all of those, and to the coming fall semester, we are adjusting part time pay. Our non-OCCA part-time faculty, will all be at one level. It'll be \$1000 per credit hour. New OCCA faculty will be reduced to \$1,000 per credit hour, so there's no disparity there. Everybody is on the same page. This will also apply to faculty overloads.

Today is Sherri Gravett's last faculty senate meeting of all time. She wanted me to note that she is the longest serving chair of a Faculty Senate committee, even though she is not a faculty member. And I just want to say, we'll have time in next couple of months, because Sherri will be retiring at the end of June. I want to say in front of this group, how much she means to me, to academic affairs, and to the provost office, specifically, but to me, she was a great resource when I was here as Dean, and I will miss her tremendously. And then I thought Honey was going to show up, but today is her last day. I just want you all to know, I did not accept her retirement notice officially. And Dr. Crowe did not accept her retirement notice, so she is unofficially retired. She says: I'm not showing up at work on May the 1st, so there you go. But she has also been a huge value to VSU, to academic affairs, and not sure exactly what we're all going to do to get through the next few months, but we're going to do it. We're a team, and it'll be okay. And they're still local, so we can call them up. We know their cell phones, and we know where they live. So, we can tap them for other things. But please let them know how much they are both appreciated. I want to end with good luck with ending the semester on a very high note, and hope you have some good fun things, or restful things, planned for the summer, whether you are teaching or not teaching. Thank you.

President Updates

On the retirement front, I want to point out, we're losing 487 years of experience with retirees this year. So it's impactful to the institution. You know, the good news is, we get an opportunity to bring in some new people with new ideas and help move the institution, but we're losing a lot of institutional memory and effort, and those folks did a wonderful job in helping move this institution forward. So hopefully they'll stay engaged with us in our alumni association and be around campus. We certainly invited them to do that when we had the ceremony the other day.

The budget looks good this year going into next year. We're funding faculty lines again, which is exciting. We are going to have a budget with new money to spend. So that's exciting after all the years of holding firm or cutting. It'll be great to be able to add some faculty lines, and I think we're doing searches right now for new faculty, for the fall. So that's exciting.

I'll give it a brief enrollment report, and we can talk more about it later if you want to. Enrollment, for the summer, doesn't look all that strong, but enrollment for the fall, looks good. All the indicators are kind of off the charts. Our housing folks believe we have waiting lists for housing in the fall. Applications and deposits or payments for professional orientation are up 29% from this time last year. Then applications and acceptances are 78%, but the real solid indicators for the fall are good. Our 9.2% increase in enrollment goal looks solid. I'm really hoping we go into double digits. I'd like to get the 10% mark in growth.

Thank you all for what you're doing to make that happen. And hopefully fall is going to be bustling, and it's going to be exciting. We've got a new budget with new money, and we would have a lot of new students. This is a great time of year for educators. I went to both undergraduate and graduate research symposiums that were held, amazing work in those events and thank you to you and your peers. It helps mentor students that participate in that. We just saw yesterday the summer research projects that are going to happen. They look interesting, and we need to thank the faculty and students that are involved. Several of those have local impact with our farmers. I am excited about where we're going. We have an opportunity to gear up the research enterprise here at the institution.

I hope you and your peers will all come to graduation, Friday night and Saturday. You know that's a

special time for our students, and I think we should help them celebrate that. We won't have fireworks, but we also don't want to contribute to the fires in this region. So, we've reached out to the local school districts that are in those fire zones to see if there's anything we could do to help. Most of them are in pretty good shape. They have some students that have lost housing that we're helping with, but fortunately, so far, there hasn't been a lot of damage, other than to the trees and the forest. If you're foresters, it's not really a good time for your work. I was just out looking at some cleanup work along Ashley Boulevard by our softball fields, and our softball coach came out to visit, and I said, man, I hope it rains. So, the fires were put out a little bit, and I forgot what he's got in softball games this weekend and he's not wishing for rain. I stepped in a little bit there, but I'm excited. I'd be happy to talk about anything of interest to you, if you have any questions. I know that the end of the year is always an exciting time because we're done. We finished. But I think the summer's going to be a lot of fun, and I think the fall is really going to be exciting, with a lot of new activities on campus.

Q: President Crowe, I got a question. Who do we thank for bringing some equity to part time pay so that there's just one pay for all?

Dr. Crowe: I would start with the Provost, probably. You certainly wouldn't thank me. I don't think I had a whole lot to do with it, but I would think the provost, Traycee Martin, and the folks over in financial services that helped us figure out how to make that work. We rely on part-time faculty members an awful lot, and what we pay, even now, it's not great, but we're getting better, and we're going to do some things. I think, in clinical settings for the nursing faculty that also help there. So, I would claim the provost is what I would do. Thank you, Provost.

Q: I think VECA is going to be shut down very soon. So does VSU have any plan to get the property so we can in future, probably like expand. Maybe come up with a new college building or something like that over there.

Dr. Crowe: We're always looking for opportunities to grow. I tend to be a half glass, half empty person, but in work, I'm kind of a glass half full. I mean, I think we ought to be planning for the future. We are the university of South Georgia, and we got to own it, and we ought to be thinking about what South Georgia needs. You know, does it mean a law school? I mean, can we do forestry? Can we do our architecture? What do we do to make ourselves act and behave, and have the programs that a comprehensive university typically has, as you look around in the country? So, space is not an issue right now, but I think we need to be forward thinking. We have some properties around campus, and we want to do what makes sense for us and what we can get approved through the system office, which is not always the same.

Q: Do you know if they've reached out since then, anyway? I don't believe that the principal knew about it until the day before. So, and we wouldn't be able to even consider purchasing land unless we knew that they were going to sell the land. I understand that they're going to demolish the building, because it's so expensive to repair it.

Dr. Crowe: We don't know any details as far as I know beyond that. They were taking our classes, yes. The scenario where we're working really, we really have given the dual credit market to Wiregrass and other institutions, and we're trying to scrape some of that back to innovative programs with the help of folks in the college of education and others. That's an important way for us to grow enrollments, and it also serve the students that live in our communities. And again, we need to think broader about

who we serve. We serve 41 school districts in the southern region of Georgia. So, but I don't know that anybody knew the closing was happening until the last minute.

I'll make one last comment if there are no more questions. I would just say it's been a pleasure. It's been a while since I worked with the Faculty Senate, so it was kind of good to get back in the groove a little bit. I've enjoyed being here. I don't think I'll be here for the 1st Senate meeting in the fall. You'll have a new president to break in, so be gentle with that person. It's been a pleasure being here, and I think the relationship between the faculty, Senate, and the administration is really healthy. I hope it continues that way so we can discuss issues, be open and honest with each other. Just put everything on the table and, you know, we don't always do things the right way. So it's good to have a check and balance. We want to be open, and we don't have any problem with people pushing and asking questions about, "Hey, why did you do that?" This really makes sense because it gives us an opportunity to explain our thought process. I think that kind of dialogue is healthy and good, and we can we need to be able to disagree without being disagreeable. And I think, you know, I think that's important and part of the things that make higher education unique. So thank you for your support and your work here. Thank you, everyone.

Meeting minutes from committees should be sent to fsec@valdosta.edu **AND** to archives@valdosta.edu with "Archives Faculty Senate Papers" in the subject line. Please label minutes documents as shown in the following examples:

- Technology_Minutes_04-29-2022
- Academic_Honors_and_Scholarship_Minutes_08-28-2021

Thank you for your assistance in getting and keeping our records up to date.

6) Permanent Committee Reports

- a) Academic Committee (fs-stat-ac@valdosta.edu) – Sheri Gravett; Find agendas and minutes here: <https://www.valdosta.edu/academics/registrar/academic-committee.php>

The academic committee met in April and had quite an agenda. You can see all the things online now, on our website. I think you'll be very pleased with what you see in the new catalog. The new catalog should be out in mid-May or so, and I encourage all of you to take a look, and we continue to work on anything that we need to correct and update. We will also continue to work on strengthening our inner college processes of getting it to academic committee, getting it to graduate execs. We can continue to make that process as smooth as possible. Thank you very much for allowing me the opportunity to serve.

- b) Committee on Committees (fs-stat-coco@valdosta.edu) – Kristin Kirchner

I am the chair for the committee on committees. I won't be coming in August though, the position will go back to Samantha Paul. Our elections are delayed, and some colleges have already hosted their elections, especially colleges that don't have many major moves. Some of the colleges that are more impacted, I know college humanities and social sciences is moving over to us. IO Psych is moving over. MFT program is moving over to college and nursing and health sciences. And we have some things moving in and out of the arts. So basically, the colleges on campus are

experiencing a lot of movements, and I believe going into effect July 1st.

So imagine you have a puzzle that you're trying to complete, and as you're completing it, all of the puzzle pieces are changing color and changing shape, and then some of them are leaping off the table and never return. That is what doing CoCo is like. What that means from all of you is that I would like for you to look out for early August. You're going to get that typical email from either a dean associate dean or your CoCo representative, for seats in the upcoming year. So look out for that because you're probably not used to seeing that happen in August. We need those votes in as soon as possible, so faculty know where they are.

As the years go on, it seems to get harder to get people to volunteer. So if your term is not up, and you would like to renew your term, whether you are a senator or a just non-senator on a committee, go ahead and let your CoCo representative know, or you can let me know if you don't know who your representative is for the department. I have all of their names and emails, so you can come see me after, and I will direct you who you need to contact.

If you get wind of some kind of change in your trajectory, so if you are stepping into a department chair position or stepping into a position to make you ineligible to serve on faculty Senate, or you just don't want to do it anymore, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can start finding a replacement. It's when we get those late changes, that's where we end up having to do multiple elections, and then people get confused. So we're trying to keep it down to just one election.

If you are chairing a committee, that means that your term is almost up, and so your pre-chair is going to come on and be chaired next year. If you have volunteers for the next chair, let us know. Otherwise, I believe CoCo has the authority to start assigning people. We try to take preference into account, but in reality, it's really not possible most of the time. If you have a major reason why you can't be on a committee, please let us know that. It's so hard to get volunteers, sometimes we just need people to stay where they are. CoCo is also happy if you want to double dip and be on a couple of committees. We would love to put you in as many spots as you can fit as possible within reason, of course.

Dr. Boddie: Thank you. And, it's a heavy lift for a committee on committee, so we really appreciate everything you're doing.

c) Faculty Affairs (fs-stat-fa@valdosta.edu) – Joe Mason

No report. I will be submitting the annual report to you very shortly.

d) Faculty Grievance Committee (fs-stat-fgc@valdosta.edu) – John Dunn

No report. I'm going to be stepping down after two turns in the faculty senate, and I really appreciate your support. I wanted to tell you a story. I sometimes come across as an attack dog, because I represent the faculty and the faculty senate. the administration, the Board of Regents, disgruntled students. I represent the faculty.

However, I want to tell you a story of how I interacted in my last incarnation as the head of the grievance committee with Karla Hall. Karla Hall, from the College of Ed, was an acting provost. We had a dean causing trouble for a family member. I went and talked to Dr. Hall, which is my duty to try to not create an active grievance and make it all public. And she said she'd take care of it, and she did for

about a month. And Dr. Hall paid a price for that. Dr. Hall was acting provost, and this was during President McKinney's administration. She was up to becoming the full-time provost, and I had a dean in the room that was a good friend of mine that told me this. And he said the whole room was okay with that, except for the one dean that she stepped on, who had a meeting with President McKinney, and Karla Hall didn't get the position. So we have people in the administration that will sometimes even risk their careers to help faculty members. I've had a good experience with administrations in the past. We have some bad apples, we have bad professors sometimes. We had a really bad president. We've had some good ones, too, so I just want to remember Karla Hall, she's not with us anymore. She's retired, writing her books, but, she was a good provost, and she helped me.

Dr. Boddie: Thank you, Dr. John, and thank you for your service. Senator and as the chair of the faculty grievance committee for several years. We appreciate that.

7) Standing Committee Reports

- a) Academic Honors & Scholarships (fs-stand-ahs@valdosta.edu) – Chalise Ludlow

Proxy – Joe Mason

Chalise stated they held their banquet, and she just wanted to thank the faculty that served and helped her in that committee.

- b) Academic Scheduling & Procedures (fs-stand-asp@valdosta.edu) – Kelly Davidson

No report.

- c) Athletic Committee (fs-stand-ac@valdosta.edu) – Kristin Kirchner

Athletic committee usually sends out two emails a year to all the faculty, and that is to solicit you all for your athletic and your academic athletic spotlight. So you got one with this past fall. Some of you nominated, and you went to the basketball game and gave out the certificates. Usually we have that in the spring as well. This year, the athletic department requested, instead of doing that, they really wanted to do a spotlight on the new academic honors society for our student athletes. So they receive chords and get inducted, with the Greek letters and everything. They really wanted to take time in the ceremony to focus on that, to get it promoted so that students would know about it, and try to go for that in future years. So we put a pause on the athletic academic students for just this spring. Please look out for that in future semesters though.

- d) Human Capital Committee (fs-stand-hcc@valdosta.edu) – Selena Nawrocki

No report.

- e) Educational Policies (fs-stand-ep@valdosta.edu) – Chris Dillon

No report.

- f) Environmental Issues (fs-stand-ei@valdosta.edu) – Mike Bochenko

We had a recent event, which was co-sponsored. I had 24 participants. The event taught the participants about recycling and how to use products. So that was a successful event. Also for an

outdoor learning spaces director, this individual became part of the biology department, and then finally, we have had some progress since Helene, the Camellia Grove has recently had 100 new plantings put in. If you go by and see them all covered in some kind of light covering, that's primarily to protect the young plantings from the sun. It's going to get brutal here in the next month or so. I want to thank Emily Campbell. She was very instrumental and pushing that product on that project forward.

g) Faculty Scholarship (fs-stand-fs@valdosta.edu) – Mary Beth Rousseau

The faculty scholarship committee met seven times during the past academic year. We began with a budget of \$120,000. Over the course of the year, we approved 119 proposals. We did deny or request resubmission of 20 proposals during the year, and probably two thirds of those were not outright denials. If you applied enough in advance and there is something wrong with your application, please resubmit it next month. Overall, a really successful year, and we look forward to doing that with our new chair next year, when we make a final decision about that. We thought the provost's office been able to maintain a budget of \$120,000 to allocate throughout the year. The deadline for our very last meeting of the year is April 20th. If you are traveling during the summer, you may submit a proposal. However, the funding must align with the fiscal year, so we can address your proposal and approve it, but your funding will not be allocated or available to reimburse you until the new fiscal year begins.

h) Internationalization and Globalization (fs-stand-igc@valdosta.edu) – Byeonghwa Park

I could read briefly share one of them from the meeting, who is trying to resolve it in an application in January, to host the team systems student, in a global initiative to support education and Korean culture, worldwide. So I would wish to share that the application has passed, and we were recently selected and scheduled as part of the final process. We are hopeful for a positive welcome in the final stage, and I try to take this moment to express my appreciation to the team for your strong support throughout the process.

i) Library Affairs (fs-stand-la@valdosta.edu) – Jodi Cronin

No report.

j) Student Affairs (fs-stand-sa@valdosta.edu) – Jieun You

No report.

k) Technology Committee (fs-stand-tc@valdosta.edu) – David Cole

No report.

8) Unfinished Business

a) Faculty Grievance document revisions update.

Thank you to Dr. Dunn and the committee for the work that they've done on the faculty grievance document this year. There will be some continued revisions that will take place over the summer. And so that will be an agenda item in the fall, hopefully, by the 1st meeting in August.

9) New Business

One of our agenda items is the academic leave policy and reconceptualizing the proportion calculations.

Motion to open discussion – Catherine Bowers; All in favor.

Based upon the numbers of faculty and how they're shifting, the colleges usually have one to two academic leaves per year. We're just rebalancing. We've never had a full year in which all the leaves have been used, and this is just anticipation of updating your policy for next year. I don't think we've ever had 12 applications a year come through. If all applications come through, I'm sure they would be considered, but we've never had that many. I think the rationale from my understanding was not only based on the college restructuring, but also on the reduction in faculty and reduction in student enrollment.

So, the policy has all the procedures, the application, the timeline on it. The policy remains, what we're looking at today is just the proportions and the number of awards for a given college.

All in favor; no abstentions or opposition. Motion passed.

Thank you for coming in to visit Dr. Black, and explaining about the proportions.

10) General Discussion

a) Executive committee elections in April

Nomination for Vice President/President-Elect (2026-2027) – Christine James

Nominations for Secretary (2026-2027) – Ryan Wander and Shaun Alt (nominated from the floor)

Parliamentarian (2026-2027) – nomination- Jennifer Lambert Shute (after election). August election and open nomination from the floor in August 2026 for this seat.

Secret ballots circulated by colleague, collected, and counted.

Dr. Christine James elected as new Vice President/President-Elect.

Dr. Ryan Wander elected as new Secretary.

3) Adjournment

I think it goes without saying that everything works so smoothly, and Dr. Boddie played a major role in that.

On behalf of the leadership board and executive team, we are so thankful for her leadership this whole year. She put so much care and thought into her work, and it really shows how dedicated she is to her role. So, thank you.

Dr. Boddie: It will be my honor to continue to serve in any way that I can. Thank you so much.

Before we adjourn, I would like to make a motion that we express our thanks and gratitude to Dr. Crowe for coming out of retirement and serving once again.

Meeting adjourned! Everybody have a wonderful summer, and we'll see you in August.

Reports and agenda items due to president: (sboddie@valdosta.edu) by April 2.

At the request of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee (fsec@valdosta.edu) any actions sent to the president : (sboddie@valdosta.edu) for possible inclusion in the Senate agenda should be accompanied by a written document with the rationale and purpose of the decision. The Executive Committee requests that these documents be submitted via email attached as Word documents.

Proxies sent to secretary (xren@valdosta.edu) by April 23.

Next Faculty Senate meeting: April 30, 2026, at 3:30 p.m.

Attachments

- A. Faculty Senate Calendar 2025-2026
- B. Faculty Senate Minutes 03-26-2026