

JOURNAL OF THE FACULTY SENATE
The University of Oklahoma (Norman Campus)
Regular session – November 10, 2025 – 3:30 p.m.
Oklahoma Memorial Union – Frontiers Room
Office: Chemistry Building, Room 207 | Phone: 405-325-6789
Email: FacSen@ou.edu | Website <https://www.ou.edu/facultysenate>
Note: The remarks of the Senators and others are summarized and not verbatim

The meeting was called to order at 3:31 pm by Chair Robbins.

PRESENT: Bert, Bhattarai, Bofferding (1), Borck, Brice (1) Cain, Cost Mirais de Sa E Silva (1), Cortest (1), Demir, Edgerton, Ernest, Ethridge (1), Fahes, Gordon, Grigo, Grinnell-Davis (1), Hill, Christopher, Hill Crag, Kang, Kaoutzani, Kazempoor, Ketchum, Lamothe, Larson (2), Litov, Liu, Lungmus (1), McLeod, Minks, Mountford, Muraleetharan, Nollert, Sarmiento, Schmeltzer (1), Scrivener (1), Sharma (1), Tracy, Warnken, Wood, Youngbull

ABSENT: Ahsan (1), Apanasov (1), Beutel (1), Cavallo (2), Fithian (1), Hambright (1), Hougen (2), Kibbey (1), Richter Addo (1), Rueda (2)

FS Chair: Sarah Robbins
FS Chair-elect: Rebecca Loraamm
FS Secretary: Stephanie Burge
FS Executive Committee Members (Non-senators):
FS Administrative Manager: Ann Seely

Guests: Dr. Wayne Riggs, Director for the Center of Faculty Excellence
Dr. Paul Gilmore, Dean of the Honors College
Dr. Lori Snyder, OU Elevate
Dr. Hunter Heyck
Mr. Haydon Grubbs, OU Daily

Note: During the period from June 2025 to May 2026, the Senate holds eight regular sessions. The figures in parentheses above indicate the number of absences.

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DETERMINATION OF A QUORUM.

Quorum was achieved.

APPROVAL OF THE JOURNAL

The Faculty Senate Journal for the regular meeting of October 13, 2025, was approved with the revisions of a couple of incorrectly reported absences. A Senator moved to approve, and the motion was seconded. The vote passed and the journal was approved.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The Faculty Senate extends condolences to the family and former colleagues of Sonya Fallgatter, long time staff of the Senate who passed away on October 15, 2025.
- Save the Date: The Faculty Senate Shared Governance Reception will be held on January 26, 2026, from 4 pm to 6 pm in the Scholars Room at Bizzell Memorial Library

SENATE CHAIR'S REPORT, BY CHAIR JERVIS

The report was distributed via email. Chair Robbins opened the floor to questions. There were no questions.

WAYNE RIGGS – DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR FACULTY EXCELLENCE

Wayne Riggs Center for Faculty Excellence. Dr. Riggs has directed the Center for Faculty Excellence since June 2025. Director Riggs offered an overview of CFE’s primary activities, along with discussion of things that have happened since he started this role. CFE serves all faculty, from regular faculty to renewable term, to adjunct faculty. CFE oversees organizing new faculty orientations and maintaining contact with those faculty throughout their first semester to provide mentoring. CFE also has a fellowship competition each year, where faculty may propose a service project that extends what CFE does. Lastly, CFE meets with job candidates to let them know what resources are available on campus for faculty.

CFE website – There are four focal areas for CFE: teaching, research/creative activity, community engagement, and faculty success/career progression. On the CFE website, there are many workshops advertised for faculty to help them with these core areas. Riggs noted that faculty are often not trained in teaching before they become new faculty, and CFE offers a lot of support for faculty to develop this aspect of their skills.

CFE has specialists to help consult on grant proposals, publication, and presentations to facilitate research and creative activity. CFE also has workshops on community engagement, including broader impacts of research and incorporating service learning into courses. CFE provides information pertaining to tenure and promotion processes, to help guide faculty through the process.

Riggs noted that CFE has been at the forefront of several issues since he took over in June including the shifting federal landscape with respect to funding for research and creative activity. Riggs encouraged faculty to reach out to CFE if there are things that CFE could do to better support faculty research. Jennifer Holcomb was recently appointed as the new Associate Director of Research and Creative Activity at CFE, and Riggs noted that CFE will also have faculty fellows for Humanities and STEM to help with faculty research/creative activity.

Riggs noted that AI is another area of big change for CFE, particularly as it relates to aspects of faculty support. AI has created a lot of need for additional faculty support, and instructional faculty are having to

consider if they can teach the way they used to and may need to recreate how they teach. CFE is committed to supporting faculty in the post AI world, including integrating it into content AND restricting its use in certain course components.

1. CFE Teaching team has created a generative AI module and resources for faculty that can be used to help faculty integrate AI into their courses.
2. Several faculty fellowship proposals have to do with supporting faculty for AI, including creating assessments that use integrated AI in the classroom. Riggs noted that the policy on AI use at OU is not fully clear yet. CFE continues to work on these issues. Riggs noted that there is currently a lot of variation in usage in AI across courses. Riggs noted that there are guidelines in place for AI usage and asked that faculty keep those guidelines in mind as they prepare their courses.

A Senator asked about the CFE presence on OU-Tulsa's campus. The Senator noted that the move to One OU has exacerbated OU Tulsa's feeling of being removed from access to resources and asked whether there was a plan in place to try to support faculty at OU-Tulsa. Riggs noted that there isn't a specific mechanism for OU-Tulsa, but that programming is available on zoom. The Senator followed up that advertising and access remains an issue. Riggs will follow up with that Senator.

PAUL GILMORE – DEAN, HONORS COLLEGE

Dean Gilmore started the position of Dean of Honors College in June of 2025. Gilmore noted that there had previously been a taskforce as well as a strategic plan before he arrived and those goals objectives remain in place.

1. Honors courses available and integrated across campus.
2. Opportunity for all students
3. Educating leaders for the future
4. Undergraduate research activities to create collaboration between students and faculty

Gilmore would like to emphasize interdisciplinary, experiential learning, and noted that the Honors College should be serving the campus as a whole. Historically, Honors Colleges have reproduced educational inequalities, but moving forward, the Honors College should be more focused on outreach. Students can petition to be in Honors classes if they have a 3.4 GPA, regardless of whether they are in the Honors College or not.

Gilmore noted several important goals for the Honors College, including developing a stronger living learning community, making the Honors college more representative of the student body, and expanding co-curricular opportunities across disciplines and colleges.

Gilmore convened a faculty advisory council to help develop a new foundation class for Honors students, which all incoming Honors students would take. In addition, Gilmore plans to increase offerings of general education honors sections. OU lags other relative peers when it comes to this. Traditionally, the Honors college has required a thesis, which may not make sense for all majors/colleges. Gilmore noted the need for more flexibility. The Honors College will also make greater efforts to connect to interdisciplinary minors and certificates. Furthermore, Gilmore would like to increase the number of presidential teaching fellows substantially (from 2 to 10) and organize teaching fellows around key subjects of inquiry.

A senator noted that science faculty do not usually participate in the Honors College Fellows. Gilmore noted that historically the fellows have been almost exclusively humanities and social science faculty, primarily because the faculty teaching load in those fields align with the humanities and social sciences. However, he noted that organizing these appointments around subject area is one way to address this issue.

Another Senator asked about the living learning community plans. Gilmore noted that the presidential teaching fellows would incorporate a requirement that faculty would have some contact with Honors students outside of class to help build this sense of community. Currently, Honors students primarily reside within two floors at Dunham Residential College. However, Gilmore is looking to build upon those spaces and expand the living learning community. The RAs in the living learning community are already in the Honors College, and there would also be plans for mentors and faculty fellows to bolster those communities.

A Senator asked about the Undergraduate research program HRAP (Honors Research Assistance Program), FYRE (first year research experience), and the Honors College Symposium. Gilmore noted that he was trying to broaden out those opportunities.

LORI SNYDER – OU ELEVATE

Lori Snyder (OU Elevate) presented findings from recent research on the OU Elevate Faculty evaluation model. Snyder noted that results are available from the OU Elevate IVE model for faculty annual evaluations and the pilot tests associated with that grant. Four departments participated in the pilot program. Snyder noted that this project initially began to investigate the impact of the current faculty annual evaluation system.

The OU Elevate team gathered a lot of data (institutional data, survey data from faculty, faculty meetings with various departments) to seed funding from NSF to get an institutional transformation grant to investigate the faculty evaluation process. Despite funding disruptions in new environment, the OU Elevate team were able to develop a new model for annual evaluations, as well as pilot test these changes.

Guiding Principles for Faculty Evaluations

1. Rewards all valuable faculty contributions
2. Enhance clarity and transparency of standards.
3. Enable unit leader to make efficient evaluation decisions.
4. Promote create and unique contributions
5. Support effective workload policies
6. Facilitate customization by academic units.
7. Serve as a reliable tool for merit pay decisions

OU Elevate IVE Model. There are three categories of evaluation: Improvement needed, Valuable Contributions, and Extraordinary Contributions. The idea behind this simplified model is to have fewer categories, which will be better for meaningfully differentiating between faculty contributions, as well as clearer guidelines for each of those categories.

Snyder noted that four units participated in pilot. Each of these units conducted their standard evaluation process and also used the IVE model for faculty annual evaluation. Then, they were asked about their pre- and post-pilot experiences.

Findings –

In general, Snyder reported that the units found the IVE Model to be more: transparent and clear, while using appropriate methods, valuing efforts, allowing for submission of materials that reflect time and contributions. Faculty had more positive responses with respect to the IVE model than the unit leaders. Snyder noted that this was for a limited sample (only 4 departments). Faculty felt that the IVE model enhanced clarity, transparency, and fairness in the evaluation process.

Snyder noted that the team is making a case for implementation across the board at OU, but the cessation of the funding has limited the ability to move forward since additional pilots were not able to be funded. OU Elevate has pursued additional funding to pilot test the IVE model across 8 different disciplinary units across campus.

A Senator asked whether the model would move from a 5 point spread to a 3 point spread. Snyder confirmed that was the case. The Senator noted that it might be problematic because of fewer degrees of gradation, and that faculty might not feel that the spread would be fair. Snyder noted that this had come up in meetings with faculty and departments, and that the team was trying to find ways to make the most meaningful distinctions, rather than smaller distinctions that are not that important for the broader goals of the strategic plan and the health of the unit. Snyder also noted that the model attempts to get away from scores, to some extent. The Senator noted that we need these distinctions for merit based raises. Snyder noted that justification must be given for merit pay, but that does not have to be in numbers.

A Senator asked whether there were any differences across the units in the pilot analysis. Snyder replied that those response were generally very similar.

A Senator noted inconsistency in what the Provost was asking departments to do for merit pay raises (e.g., top 10%, top 20%) and the new IVE system. The Senator also noted that in our pursuit of AAU status, many of those indicators are quantitative in nature, rather than qualitative. Snyder noted that the merit raise issue happened in the midst of trying to decide the model, so there may be some challenges in meshing those systems. Snyder also noted that quantitative data will inform evaluations, even if those categories are not necessarily numerically described.

A Senator noted that he was in one of the units that participated in the pilots, and the unit was able to create the rubric to perform the evaluations, so that tailoring made the system more useful.

A Senator noted that not all faculty have similar allocations of effort, which may complicate the evaluation process. Snyder noted that the IVE system is fully compatible with different allocations of effort.

FOR DISCUSSION: OKLAHOMA PRINCIPLES, FACILITATED BY PROF. HUNTER HEYCK

Professor Hunter Heyck introduced the revised Oklahoma Principles, which a Faculty Senate subcommittee has worked on over the past month. Heyck noted that after the subcommittee's work improved the policy quite a bit, and then the newer policy was circulated to the administration for approval. OU HSC faculty senate campus was also contacted for their approval, and they were also in favor of the revision.

Primary differences

1. Original version seemed like a defensive reaction, and an apology for things we were not actually being done, so the subcommittee worked to change the tone and framing of the document.
2. Attestation is an attestation of abiding by the non-discrimination policy, not just these principles.

A Senator asked if the revised version was sent. Chair Robbins noted that it was circulated.

A Senator asked if the OK principles were applying a litmus test to be on the search committee by imposing political neutrality. Heyck replied that any policy could be misconstrued and misapplied, but it would take a stretching of the policy to turn this into a litmus test on the faculty member.

Chair Robbins noted that this will go to a vote in the Senate in December, so she encouraged Senators to discuss with their constituents.

NEW BUSINESS

Chair Robbins asked if there was any new business and no new business was introduced.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm. The next regularly scheduled Faculty Senate Meeting of this academic year will be held on December 8, 2025, at 3:30 pm.

Stephanie Burge, Faculty Senate Secretary, 2025-26