

**Polk State College Faculty Senate Agenda**  
**Date: March 10, 2025**  
**Time: 3:00 P.M.**  
**Meeting Held via Zoom**  
**Steering Committee to Meet Following the Senate Meeting**

This meeting was recorded.

**Officers:**

- Bill Caldecutt, President (present)
- Anthony Cornett, Vice President for the Winter Haven Campus (present)
- Jess Jones, Vice President for the Lakeland Campus (present)
- Heather Childree, Secretary (present)
- Greg Harris, Parliamentarian (present)

**Others:**

- Chris Bothelo, Senator at Large (present)
- Amy Bratten, Administrative Liaison (present)

**Attending Senators:** Lee Childree, Anthony Cornett, Jess, Jones, Heather Childree, Greg Harris, Chris Bothelo, Misty Sparling, Laura Brimer, Kim Hess, Johnny Stewart, John Woodward, Dirk Valk, Lorrie Jones, Pal Good, Michael Derry, Andrew Coombs, Gwen Phillips, John Barberet, Gregory Johnson, and Dawn Drake

**Faculty Attendees:** Carolyn Orr, Pam Jones, Jaqueline Grey, Melissa Shapiro, Francisco Rodrigues, Herb Nold, Jamie Haischer, Susie Moerschbacher, Heena Park, Jennifer Shaw, Tiffany Messerschmidt, Matina Wagner, Jeff Barnum, Nerissa Felder, Latrice Moore, Salma Wehrmeyer Nawlo, and Abeer Alamri

**Presenting Guests and Others:**

**Presenting:**

Susan Morgan, Director of Student Enrollment Services/Registrar; Lonnie Thompson, Chief of Institutional Compliance and Engagement/Title IX Coordinator

**Non-Presenting:**

Reggie Webb, Senior Vice President of Student Services and Campus Operations; Missouri Thomas, Executive Assistant to the Senior Vice President; Kevin Ferrier, Program Manager Cardiovascular Technology; Yovan Reyes, Dean of Early College and Student Engagement, Beth Luckett, Dean of Health Sciences; Lisa Correll, Associate Dean of Health Sciences; and Tamara Sakagawa, Vice President of Communications and Public Affairs/Chief of Staff

**I. Approval of Minutes from February Meeting**

Via email on February 20-21, 2025, Misty Sparling made a motion to approve the *Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes: February 10, 2025*; Laura Brimer seconded. The motion carried.

**II. Approval of March Agenda**

Greg Harris moved to approve the *Faculty Senate Agenda: March 10, 2025*; Jess Jones seconded. Motion carried.

### III. Faculty Senate Officer and Administrative Liaison Reports

#### A. President's Report (Bill Caldecutt)

1. Evergreen Salary Study: No updates.
2. Requested Feedback regarding Whistleblower Protections: The Senate was asked to request information from the DBOT lawyer regarding whistleblower protections for faculty based on the suggestion by a Trustee during a DBOT meeting. No response has been provided.
3. Procedure 6073: Procedure on Rules and Procedures: Faculty concerns about potential issues with the *Sunshine Law* were shared with the Senate regarding this workgroup [Dec. meeting]. Senate leadership was asked to consult with Lonnie Thompson about this concern [email Jan. 5]. Dr. Falconetti said at the President's Staff Meeting on Feb. 11, 2025 that the College's lawyer issued an opinion that the workgroup will not be making any recommendations; therefore, the *Sunshine Law* does not apply.
4. Reduction of Faculty Overloads/Stipends and Cancellation of Classes: Amy indicated that she would look into these issues and provide an update.
5. Definition of Salary Steps: There were concerns shared about the change in the definition of Salary Steps at the bottom of the Salary Schedule document. At the President's Staff Meeting on Feb. 11, Dr. Falconetti said that the language had been provided to Evergreen to evaluate as part of its work.
6. Steering Committee on Procedure 6012: Teaching Faculty Evaluation System: The item is on agenda for today.
7. Mold Issues in LTB: A ticket was submitted recently for visible growth in the storage room LTB 2285. Dirk Valk said he made the report and Brad investigated.
8. Collegiate Faculty Inclusion in Budgeting and Salaries: Bill was asked at the Feb. 11, 2025 President's Staff Meeting to reach out to Collegiate faculty regarding this. Collegiate faculty have asked to be included in discussions since decisions are made without their input. An update will be provided later in the meeting.
9. Evaluations of Supervisors: Per procedure, faculty are supposed to be given an opportunity to evaluate supervisors annually, and some faculty have asked if they're supposed to be evaluating direct supervisors. Faculty have told the Senate that they're not regularly solicited for these evaluations.

Bill was asked at the Feb. 11, 2025 President's Staff meeting to contact the Deans to ask about this. He asked Bert Rivera and Kim Thomas Manning if they have sent out the forms. Kim Thomas Manning then sent the form out.

Discussion ensued. Faculty indicated that one issue in the process is that the form is not anonymous. If it's emailed, administration will know who completed the evaluation.

Amy Bratten said to print a copy and send it through interoffice mail to her. If the faculty member is not on campus, that member can send it to a colleague on campus

and have that person send it through interoffice mail. Some faculty reported that they did not receive the message from the Dean to complete the evaluation.

Discussion ensued regarding HR/Administration's lack of an up-to-date mailing list for full-time faculty and how this is impacting communications/ operations.

10. Senate Objectives: Dr. Falconetti asked for the *Faculty Senate Objectives* (i.e., requests for partnership with Administration for resolution) to be presented to President's Staff on Feb. 11, 2025. Bill, Anthony, and Jess attended this meeting of President's Staff. Bill presented the list, and members of Staff made requests to re-word some items. These requests were provided to Senate based on a draft of the minutes from the February 11, meeting and are incorporated into today's meeting discussion.

#### **B. Lakeland Vice President Report (Jess Jones)**

1. Summer Simple Syllabus Deadlines for General Education Courses
  - A. March 14 for 12-week, 8-week, and 1<sup>st</sup> 6-week courses
  - B. April 28 for 2<sup>nd</sup> 6-week courses
2. Simple Syllabus deadlines for Non-General Education Courses
  - A. April 25 for 12-week, 8-week, and 1<sup>st</sup> 6-week courses
  - B. June 2 for 2<sup>nd</sup> 6-week courses
3. Safety Training Series: Basic First Aid Class
  - A. Winter Haven: Wednesday, March 26, from 10:30-11:30 am (WLR 106)
  - B. Lakeland: Thursday, March 27, from 10:00-11:00 am (LAC 1133)
4. Commencement Ceremony
  - A. Thursday, May 1, at 10:30 am and 6:30 pm at the RP Funding Center.
  - B. The last day to rent regalia is March 31.
5. Polk Fitness Classes
  - A. General Fitness: Tuesdays 5:15 – 6:00 pm (LWC 100), Professor Black
  - B. Chair Yoga and Cardio: Thursdays 5:15 – 6:00 pm (LWC 100), Professor Black

Jess Jones was asked if we have to hold summer office hours. Jaqueline Gray said per her DC that office hours are not required in summer. This is important, because Simple Syllabus requires that office hours be listed. Chris Botelho said a solution for summer classes is to type "none" on Simple Syllabus. Kim Hess said we are not obligated to have office hours in summer. The expectation is to be available, but they're not paid hours. Amy was asked for an official determination, and she asked for time to look it up. [Update: Amy's monthly email on March 10 said that summer office hours are not required and the office hours for Simple Syllabus for the summer can be listed as "none" or "NA."]

#### **C. Winter Haven Vice President's Report (Anthony Cornett)**

1. First Aid Class and Graduation are upcoming.
2. Speaker Series for State and Local Government: March 13, March 27, and April 3.
3. Polk State's Phi Theta Kappa came home from Florida's Regional Conference with wins in most categories. The organization is number one in Florida for the seventh time in nine years. The award tally since 2013-2014 is 159. The International Phi Theta Cappa Convention may garner another 6 to 7 awards.

**D. Parliamentary Report:** None

**E. Academic Liaison Report** (Provost Amy Bratten)

1. Summer Office Hours: Amy said she would investigate if these are required.
2. Administrative Evaluations: Administration evaluations should have gone out from the deans; please send these to Amy.
3. Faculty Evaluations: Annual Contract evaluations occur once a year; Continuing Contract faculty are evaluated every three years. Human Resources appears to be missing some faculty evaluation records. Please send documentation of your prior evaluations to HR so they can be put in your file to replace the missing documents.
4. Academic Affairs and Workforce Master Plan: Amy is meeting with the Academic Affairs and Workforce Education (AAWE) team on March 12 to look at the Master Plan. The document is an evolving document which will be updated regularly. Please send feedback to a dean or director.
5. Students vs. Staff Basketball Game: Shout out to student winners.
6. High School Outreach: The Florida Virtual Campus Conference was on the Lakeland Campus and the Public Service Career Showcase was on the Lakeland and Winter Haven campuses. This included high school students coming on campus as outreach activities.

**IV. Committee Reports and Updates**

**A. General Education Committee: State-Mandated Changes** (Anthony Cornett)

Anthony Co-Chairs the Committee with Mike Long (Lakeland Math). The state has mandated that the two-credit hour Health class that Polk State requires can no longer be required for graduation. It is part of 36 hours of General Education credits that are required for an AA degree. The state says we need to plug something in, but it cannot be a three-credit class. The compromise is to be confirmed at AQC on Thursday. Polk plans to remove the requirement for a Lab Science. Health classes were under the Science requirement. Removing the lab requirement means one credit can be removed from Science to the two newly-available credits, and that becomes a three-hour class. The new requirement is that the three-credit hours can be taken from any area a student wishes. It'll be six science credits and three hours from whatever the student wants. Even the arts can be used to fill the three credit hours.

**B. Committee Requests:** There are requests to join several committees; please mail Bill Caldecutt if interested in serving.

1. Belkis Capeles asked for participants for an Agricultural/Environmental Science activity.
2. Kim Manning requested a volunteer for the English Screening Committees.

**V. Old Business**

**A. HR Questions and Answers**

Greg Harris motioned to table. Chris Botelho seconded. Motion carried.

**B. Evergreen Compensation Study: Follow Up**

Greg Harris motioned to table. Anthony Cornett seconded. Motion carried.

**C. Senate Objectives List**

Bill shared, on screen, the document approved at the last Faculty Senate meeting showing the Senate's objectives for action by/partnership with Administration. The

document included modifications requested by President's Staff members on Feb 11. The yellow highlights indicate wording that was changed from the original document. The document will be available in PIE.

Bill reviewed each objective in order, and explained each requested change, giving an opportunity for discussion. There were no objections or significant discussion for any of the changes with the following exceptions:

Objective 1, distribution of the minutes (putting minutes on the website instead of in PIE and distributing the minutes to the DBOT). Minutes are now posted on the website and are going to the DBOT via President Falconetti's office. The Feb. 11 request from President's Staff is to render this objective resolved. The practice in past is that the Senate sends the minutes to the DBOT. Greg Harris said that President Falconetti sending the minutes does not meet the objective or comply with the Senate's governing documents.

For Faculty Senate Objective 8 (Procedure 6073: Procedure on Rules and Procedures), Bill added an update with a detailed time-line related to concerns that were brought to Senate by faculty in December 2024. Senate leadership was asked about potential *Sunshine Law* concerns, and they were discussed at the Senate meeting. Bill was asked by the Senate to share these concerns with Administration. On January 5, Bill emailed Lonnie Thompson (Compliance Officer) and he received a reply on January 6.

For Faculty Senate Objective 16, Bill asked Misty Sparling and Lee Childree if they had asked their principals about being included in the budget process. Misty and Lee did not know they were to ask about being included in the budget process. The Collegiate High School salaries are now separate from the Faculty Salary Schedule. There's no mechanism in the collegiate programs for faculty involvement in the budget and salary process. Amy Bratten asked if collegiate faculty are asking for a seat on the Budget and Planning Council and if there is there a mechanism to meet regularly to discuss salary? Misty pointed out that she was making more than the Polk County School Board teachers when she started with Polk State, but she is now making less than that with no guarantee of increased salary (e.g., regular Step increases).

There was a motion to accept the President's Staff-requested updates to the *Senate Objectives*, with the exception of the requested change to Objective 1 as indicated by Greg Harris. The motion was seconded by Anthony Cornett.

Misty Sparling asked Bill to review the revision to Procedure 6073, item 8. Bill explained that the revision explains that President's Staff agreed to the formation of the work group, not to the specifics of how the group would be formed.

Jennifer Shaw asked about Procedure 6009 and when Administrative Evaluations would be sent out, as she had not received a request to evaluate her supervisor. Discussion ensued. Several faculty reported not receiving a request; others reported

receiving a request today. Amy Bratten asked those who had not received a request to email her.

A motion to accept all edits--except for Objective 1--carried unanimously.

**D. TLCC Testing Support**

The President's Staff asked Bill to add this to the Senate's agenda. There was no presenter for this item.

**E. HonorLock**

The President's Staff asked Bill to add this to the agenda. There was no discussion on this item. Items D and E will remain on the agenda for next month. The HonorLock item will be converted to HonorLock/Online Proctoring since the College no longer uses HonorLock.

**VI. New Business**

**A. Procedure 6012: Faculty Evaluation Work Group Update** (Presenter: Susie Moerschbacher)

Susie said that a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis is being done for each section of the procedure. The group is meeting weekly until the end of the semester. They will assess progress and reconvene in the fall.

**B. Procedure 1008: Educational Field Trips** (with Attachments) (Presenter: Amy Bratten)

Amy said that there are no major changes; the edits are mostly clean-up for language, formatting, clarity, and name changes.

Gregg Harris motioned to approve the procedure and attachments; this was seconded by Anthony Cornett.

Andrew Coombs said that section 3C requires that the field trip sponsor provide email notification to professors. This is burdensome and difficult because faculty don't have access to students' professors' names. After discussion, it was decided that the language for the procedure needs to state that: *it is the responsibility of the student to notify his or her professors of the absence.*

If a professor does not trust the student, it is the professor's task to verify the trip with the sponsor.

A motion to retract the previous motion was made by Greg Harris. Anthony Cornett seconded the motion.

A new motion to approve the procedure with this change was made by Greg Harris. Andrew Coombs seconded. The motion carried.

[**Note:** A motion to extend the meeting was made by Greg Harris. Jess Jones seconded. The motion carried at 4:22 pm.]

**C. *Draft 2025-2026 College Calendar*** (Presenter: Susan Morgan)

Susan stated that the draft states that the last day of summer classes is also the day that grades are due, and this error would be fixed.

Andrew Coombs mentioned that there is concern about graduation occurring on the same day as the end of semester because professors and students still have classes to attend. Amy Bratten asked how far out the College has to arrange for graduation. Susan explained it's done at least a year in advance, and the College must accept the dates the RP Funding Center offers. Dates are already set for Spring 2025, but in the future, this can be considered. Amy said that if faculty can't be there because they're teaching, this needs to be addressed. Susan explained that student attendance may be affected for students transferring to state colleges after the semester if graduation is held later.

Jennifer asked if Administration could indicate *Never Attended* dates on the Calendar for students to know this information. Susan said this could be added.

Jacqueline Gray asked if the College is recognizing Juneteenth. Susan said an individual can take this day off, but it is no longer a College-wide holiday.

Jess Jones asked about the early fall start date, which affects the December ending of the semester. Susan said that this has been mentioned before, but part of the reason is the availability of the RP Funding Center. Also, with an earlier start and finish, the College increases the holiday time off. The state requires that the College start before August 22, which limits this. Jess asked if January could start one week later. Misty Sparling said that the collegiate high schools start classes in July. Susan said that if the Spring Term is moved later, it affects the Summer Term. Time is needed for grade collection and preparation for Financial Aid, and nearly every day is accounted for in between. Ideas could be considered in the next year.

Michael Derry made a motion to approve the *Draft 2025-2026 Calendar* with the edit to the Summer Grades Due date. This was seconded by Kim Hess. The motion carried unanimously.

**D. *Procedure 5008: Accommodations for Students with Disabilities*** (Presenter: Lonnie Thompson)

This is the procedure that governs how Polk State handles disability services. There are no substantive changes—edits align the text with current statutes and Division of Florida Colleges mandates based on College's civil rights review last year.

A motion to approve the procedure was made by Jess Jones and seconded by Chris Botelho. The motion carried unanimously.

**E. *Faculty Overload Limit***

Bill Caldecutt said he had been hearing from faculty who were concerned about overloads being limited to less than 84 points (i.e., the number of points allowed by Procedure 1006 without VP approval). At a previous Senate meeting, Dr. Bratten stated

this was due to pressure from the Department of Labor and SACSCOC. He was asked to request clarification and any information or documentation from Dr. Bratten that would enable faculty to better understand the situation. Amy responded and provided four file attachments. Bill shared the documents from Amy Bratten with the Senate last week.

Discussion ensued regarding the materials provided from the Department of Labor and SACSCOC. Michael Derry said that he does not see support for the idea that full-time faculty have too many overloads, but rather that the report indicates that Polk State is understaffed regarding full-time faculty.

Kim Hess said that teaching overloads isn't like teaching overtime. We're either at the limit or below. She did not see a problem with faculty teaching two overloads [84 points] and hopes that does not change. She agreed that what is noted in the documents is that we don't have enough full-time faculty. Since 2017, the Lakeland Math Department has lost eight full-time faculty--and has hired three. Previously, department members could choose whether or not to teach overloads, but that currently isn't possible due to being so short on full-time faculty. The hope is that Administration will provide us enough full-time faculty.

Andrew Coombs expressed concerns about possibly owing adjuncts healthcare. Michael Derry said that office hours for adjuncts are part of the 2.25 hours used for accounting purposes, and if adjuncts are being limited to 9 credit hours (36 points), that makes the adjunct limit fall below the 30-hour limit. Office hours for full-time faculty are included in the full-time faculty calculation.

Anthony Cornett asked Kim Hess to clarify the number of full-time faculty in the Lakeland Math Department and wondered where the money has gone that would pay for full-timers.

Kim said that the department is dependent on adjuncts and that it is very hard to find people with master's degrees. Anthony asked if the budget is there, why aren't we hiring people? Kim responded that we have had two full-time temps instructors for a couple years, and that shows a need to hire more full-time professors.

Amy Bratten said she is going to look into this, but it looks like we're five people short in the Math Department.

Jess Jones said his understanding is that the College is now advertising for permanent full-time faculty. Amy Bratten said that we're looking at graduate schools, journals (which don't typically have high rate of return), and conferences. Jess said that he has not had very many responses to the ads he has had out since September. Kim said that in the adjunct ads it says that adjuncts need to be available 24/7/365. Kim suggested changing the ad [to be more realistic].

Chris Botelho said that the Winter Haven Math Department is down about three people and trying to hire for the next academic year. One of the reasons he heard that we weren't hiring new Math faculty was that the Evergreen Study was going on and it had put a pause on hiring. Amy said she had not heard that, but she will dig into enrollment numbers and sections to see where we need faculty.



Andrew Coombs said that the ads on LinkedIn are showing up Polk State being in *Spokane, Washington*. Amy Bratten said that should have been fixed last week.

Jennifer Shaw said that advertising for graduate schools might be problematic because the degrees might not be confirmed. Amy Bratten said that interviews can happen without official transcripts, and we can go as far as assigning courses. The degree must be confirmed a certain number of days before the first day of classes. Jennifer asked if we then have second and third choices in case a candidate is not confirmed.

Gregory Johnson said that a number of jobs requiring master's degrees have a salary range of \$43,000 to \$59,000. He questioned how Admin came up with that number because it appears to be the bachelor's degree salary range. This will dissuade potential candidates. Amy Bratten doesn't know how HR determined the low and top ends of the salary scale posted. Others indicated that this needs to be changed that because that's less than a public-school teacher earns. To assist/clarify, Bill looked up the current salary schedule for faculty and confirmed that Polk State's starting salary for full-time faculty with a Master's degree is \$45,783.

**VII. New Business from the Floor: None**  
None

**VIII. Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Michael Derry and seconded by Kim Hess. The motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 5:13 pm.