

## Polk State College Faculty Senate Agenda

Date: March 9, 2026

Time: 3:00 P.M.

Meeting Held via Zoom (recorded)

Steering Committee to Meet Following the Senate Meeting

### Officers:

Anthony Cornett, President (present)

Greg Harris, Vice President for the Winter Haven Campus (present)

Jess Jones, Vice President for the Lakeland Campus (present)

Heather Childree, Secretary (present)

Michael Derry, Parliamentarian (present)

### Others:

Chris Botelho, Senator at Large (present)

Amy Bratten, Administrative Liaison (present)

**Attending Senators:** Heather Childree, Andrea Hofeditz, Lee Childree, Michelle Bissessar, Johnny Stewart, Andrew Coombs, Kari Misa, Niqui Young-Pringle-Brown, Gregory Johnson, John Woodward, Misty Sparling, Greg Harris, Chris Botelho, Dirk Valk, Gwen Phillips, Michael Derry, and Jess Jones

**Faculty Attendees:** Kim Hess, John Bedell, Susie Moerschbacher, Jacqueline Gray, Lynsay McCaulley, LaTrice Moore, Kyle Seiverd, Melissa Shapiro, Ed Smith, Jennifer Shaw, Pam Jones, Jamie Haischer, Nerissa Felder, Christy McCullough, Abeer Dhafer Alamri, Von McGriff, Jeff Barnum, Aaron Morgan, Herb Nold, Matina Wagner, Cristina Ferrer, and Nathaniel King

### Presenting Guests and Others:

**Presenting:** none

**Non-Presenting:** Jim Davis (Fire Science Coordinator), Cody Moyer (Director of Learning Technology), Kim Thomas Manning (Academic Dean), Beth Luckett (Health Science Dean), Deleise Wilson (Nursing Dean), and Yovan Reyes (Dean of Early College)

*The meeting began at 3:01 p.m.*

### I. Approval of the Minutes from the February 2026 Senate Meeting

Greg Harris motioned to approve the *February 2026 Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes*. John Stewart seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### II. Approval of the March 2026 Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda

Greg Harris motioned to approve the *March 2026 Faculty Senate Meeting Agenda*. Chris Botelho seconded the motion. The motion carried.



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

#### A. Senate President's Report (Anthony Cornett)

1. Meeting with Dr. Kerr: Anthony met for 90 minutes with Dr. Kerr [Interim College President] last week; he has another meeting this week. He hopes to meet with her weekly.
  - a. She hopes to help resolve issues between Administration and Faculty. She inquired about the lack of faculty pay increases and faculty morale, and Anthony was encouraged to be entirely honest regarding these situations.
  - b. Dr. Kerr has looked at SACSCOC. She expects they will be looking at faculty overloads and the adjunct-to-full-time ratio more stringently. We do not have enough full-time instructors and thus the faculty teach more overloads from necessity--to cover classes and also to mitigate the lack of pay increases and steps. She indicated that faculty should be able to live on the base pay without requiring overloads to make ends meet. Dr. Kerr indicated that she had some ideas to potentially increase pay, and Anthony wants to ensure he can speak candidly about these before discussing them with the Senate.
2. ADA Compliance in Canvas: Canvas ADA compliance should be met by April 2026. Cody Moyer [Director of Learning Technology] can be contacted for assistance if needed (or Anthony can give some ideas). Once a course is in compliance, it should remain so each time it is copied for a new semester.
3. Faculty Evaluations: Evaluations will begin this term. Some observations were completed last fall. Faculty should contact the dean's office if they were supposed to be evaluated but were missed.
4. Password Changes: IT began the announced password changes for stronger security protection. They are being completed in batches of 100 to ensure there is enough support for users who encounter problems. Passwords will be more complex but only need to be changed once per year.
5. PACE Employee Survey: Last month Anthony said that the PACE Survey would have around 75 Likert scale questions with no short-answer responses. That has changed. The survey will have the 46 questions that come with the survey and three short-answer questions. There is no character limit in the short-answer questions so a person can expound. PACE will create an algorithm to quantify the written responses.
  - **Q: Jacqueline Gray**: You mentioned that Dr. Kerr wants to look at the overload ratio of faculty to adjuncts. Are you able to elaborate on that?  
**Anthony**: Mary Clark [Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness] said that SACS doesn't like the College to rely heavily on faculty overloads for course coverage--that overloads should be more of a last-ditch effort [i.e., more full-timers hired and appropriate adjunct ratios]. Many Polk faculty need the overload pay to survive. Mary says SACS is cracking down. In the past SACS hasn't expressed concern over how many overloads faculty do. Dr. Kerr has some ideas about increasing faculty pay to compensate for faculty losing overloads as the ratios are corrected. But the secondary problem is making sure that there are enough personnel to teach, as SACS is concerned with the ratio of full-time faculty to adjuncts. SACS might ask why we don't have more full-time faculty. SACS is scheduled to visit soon; the paperwork is due in September.



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- **Q: Jess Jones:** As this is our last evaluation with SACS before the college moves to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), can this issue be avoided since we won't be with SACS much longer?

**Anthony:** No, if SACS doesn't approve of the College's operations during its visit, it will follow us for the next five years. The safer bet is to find a solution now, and that will be an issue with pay.

- **Q: Jennifer Shaw:** We were already reduced from 96 to 84 overload points. What is the target ratio and the faculty overloads allowed for SACS?

**Anthony:** I'm not that familiar with the ratio, but Dr. Kerr said that full-time faculty should be able to survive on full-time pay. I've expressed our pay concerns to Dr. Kerr as well as the faculty's concern regarding finding adjuncts to teach given the rules for their maximum course number. There are lots of related issues. The problem is finding the money for the solutions. [Anthony said he would ask Dr. Kerr on Thursday if she would like feedback on her ideas.]

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

1. **Professional Development Day (PDD):** PDD is April 10; individuals are asked to confirm attendance and a meal by Friday, March 27.
2. **Statistics Course Redesign:** The Lakeland Math Department is incorporating Excel for STA 2023 *Introduction to Statistics*. The course is in transition with a committee working on the rebuild (pilot scheduled for Spring 2027). Sections using Excel will be labelled.
3. **Lakeland Math Department Screening Committee:** There are plans to hire one professor with the hope of replacing two interim full-time professors that have been in use for three years. Additional permanent full-time positions are expected, as a number of faculty losses have not been filled.
4. **Humanities Speaker Series:** The *Earth and Air* presentation is coming up in the WFA Theatre Lobby on March 11, from 12:30 to 2:00 pm. This follows the *Fire and Water* event from Fall 2025 on the Lakeland Campus. The event features an acoustic performance by the Symphonic Band (led by Tom Witek), a poetry reading, breathing exercises with Mary Ann Murdoch, and an exploration of ceramics with Andrew Coombs.

### **C. Winter Haven Campus Vice President's Report (Greg Harris)**

1. **New Canvas Features:** There are new Canvas features per an email from Cody Moyer sent March 5.
2. **Intellectual Freedom Survey:** This Survey (stipulated by Florida Statute section 1001.03(20)) assesses the extent to which employees feel free to express beliefs and viewpoints on campus. Completion is voluntary and anonymous. A link to the survey was provided in an email, and it closes April 3, 2026.
3. **Faculty Load and Compensation (FLAC):** Faculty must complete the FLAC approval to validate non-academic and assignment pay.
4. **Open House Seminars:** There are three open house events: Lakeland's is on March 24 (LTB 1100), Lake Wales has one on March 25 (JDA 101), and Winter Haven has one on April 1 (WHC Gym). The events will be from 5-7 p.m.



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5. Healthcare: myBenefitsFlorida App: The new mobile app (myBenefitsFlorida) is downloadable on Apple/Android devices for viewing benefits information.
6. The Foundation's Endowed Teaching Chair Awards: The application closed March 6 for the three 2026-2027 endowed teaching awards. Recipients will be notified in April.
7. New Eagle Excellence Faculty Award: This award honors one full-time faculty member whose teaching, mentorship, and commitment to students exemplifies the best of the College's mission. The initiative was developed for students to celebrate faculty excellence and impact. Students can nominate during the spring semester. The recipient is to be recognized during Spring Commencement, April 30. The nomination period is March 1-31. Full-time faculty in good standing with the institution are eligible after completion of at least one Academic Year of Polk State College employment at the time of recognition.

#### **D. Parliamentarian's Report (Michael Derry) - None**

**Q: Anthony** [Clarification of Michael Derry's Zoom-chat comment]: You are indicating that 80% of the classes be taught by full-time faculty for HLC accreditation, correct?

**Michael Derry:** Yes, that's what I read last year. Having worked for a number of HLC universities, it doesn't appear to be strictly enforced.

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

1. Canvas ADA Compliance: Cody indicated that the College is at 78% compliance.
2. Accreditation Concerns: HLC does not actually have a percentage or ratio for overloads or adjuncts; they compare institutions to industry standards. SACS has a stronger focus on faculty loads and making sure there are enough full-time faculty. They're moving away from a QEP review model and moving towards oversight of operational items.
3. AQC Meeting Materials and Notice: Amy and Mike Long [Director of Enrollment Management] are hoping to make AQC materials available to everyone. Amy was told not everyone is receiving the notifications, and she is trying to determine what is wrong with her email lists.
4. Eagle Excellence Award: This award was initiated by the students. Dr. Kerr strongly supports this.
5. Dr. Kerr's Absence from the Senate Meeting: Dr. Kerr sends her regrets, as she was booked all day today.
6. Faculty Load and Compensation (FLAC) System: Amy is meeting with Paula [King] and Alisha [Keilty] from payroll to create a presentation on overload processing and extra pay (completed three times a semester). Amy admits that Administration has not done a good job of informing everyone on this process. If a faculty member doesn't complete the FLAC acknowledgement, the overload/extra pay is bumped to the next round of approvals.
7. Polk State Procedure 1001: Communicating Course Information to Students: Cody and Learning Technology are providing update ideas based on changes from the move to *Simple Syllabus*. Amy plans to work with Anthony to create an ad hoc group to work on this procedure and asks faculty members to let a Senator (or Anthony) know if they are interested in being involved.
  - **Q: Jennifer Shaw:** My FLAC was completed incorrectly. Another issue is that the button remains blue after submission, leading to ambiguity about its acceptance.



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Can the button turn grey to indicate that the approval was accepted?

- **Provost Amy Bratten:** If you're ever not sure, you can email your dean or me, and we can look it up.
- **Jennifer:** I did that, but Bert [Rivera-Marchand, Dean of Academic Affairs] couldn't access it [to review it] due to an issue with payroll, so I had to sign the pay acknowledgement even though it was wrong—then just hope it would be able to be corrected.
- **Q: Jennifer:** With AQC, there are at least 5-6 faculty members in various departments who haven't received any notifications since last April (2025), which is concerning based on SACS requirements and *Sunshine Law*.
  - **Provost Bratten:** If you know who, send me their names or have them email me. I traced the problem to a specific person who handles HR listservs.
  - **Jennifer:** How are the minutes and materials to go to the public if they are not on the website?
  - **Provost Bratten:** I am working on that.

#### IV. Committee Reports and Updates – None

#### V. Old Business – None

#### VI. New Business

##### A. Collegiate High School Salary Issues—Misty Sparling

[Misty Sparling asked that the following statement regarding the Collegiate Faculty be placed in the record]

*Thank you for allowing me to bring this forth. Several of our collegiate faculty members became very concerned when we were all sent individual emails stating, "We would like to share important information regarding compensation updates connected to Teacher Salary Increase Allocation (TSIA) funds, the 11-month stipend, and district salary scale adjustments."*

*We submitted questions to our administration since the amount we were receiving was so low compared to Polk County School Board teachers. The questions and research are available on PIE in our Faculty Senate folder for March. During this administration under Dr. Falconetti, needless to say, the raises and/or step increases have been few and far between, despite the funds still being allocated the same or more from the State of Florida.*

*After further investigation, we discovered that the professors at collegiate high school, or the instructional personnel, were each given a \$500 step [increase] while approximately 80% or more of the TSIA money went to the Principals and Vice Principals. TSIA money is for TEACHER salary increases. However, with this current disbursement, we accidentally discovered that Principals and Vice Principals at the collegiate high schools received at least 10 times what the collegiate professors received from the TSIA money. Please keep in mind that in 2023, Principals and Vice Principals received approximately \$20,000 raises to keep pace with other high school principals in Polk County.*

*If an instance occurred where professors were accidentally given funds, then I have no doubt that the business office would quickly take that out of our next paycheck to rectify the situation. We are asking that those TSIA funds be returned and disbursed to the professors (teachers) as is the stated purpose of the funds to begin with.*

*We would also like the questions that we submitted answered as soon as possible. We would like to deal in the facts of the disbursement, but those questions were given on February*

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*2026, with no answers provided as of yet. We would like a definitive date of when those answers will be provided. We would like hard numbers in those answers.*

*There are many that are eager to go to the papers, but I urged them to let me attempt to handle this financial irregularity this way to help Polk State College avoid yet another financial scandal.*

*We ask that all supporting documents that I provided also be included in the Minutes for President Kerr and the DBOT.*

Misty Sparling said that the questions and research are available on PIE (Polk Information Essentials intranet server) in the Faculty Senate March 2026 folder.

She explained: The Collegiate Program has teachers who did not receive a raise at all, or a step. We have teachers who are \$8,000 behind compared to what they would make at the Polk County School Board. This shouldn't happen. The Collegiate Programs are long-time *A-rated* schools. We have never been this poorly paid. And the issue of overlooking pay increases keeps happening over and over and over again—even though we keep asking. Each time there's a raise at the Polk County School Board it means [the state] allocated that money for Collegiate faculty, too.

The Collegiate Faculty would like the answers to the questions provided to Administration, as this is not right.

- **Dean Yovan Reyes** [Dean, Early College]: Questions were submitted to Principal Thigpen first, then forwarded to me, and we collaborated with the principals to answer them. We need approval from Cindy Baker [VP Finance] and the state. Answers are forthcoming. They were sent to HR this past week. With removal of President Falconetti and arrival of Dr. Kerr, answers have been delayed. It was a 2- or 3-page document. Some questions we may not be able to answer. It is taking longer, but the answers will be sent back shortly.
- **Q: Lysay McCaulley**: [To Dean Reyes]: You said the questions were sent to HR within the last week. I was under the impression that they were sent to HR prior to this. The principals had worked with VP Baker's office regarding the allocation of funds. Can you shed some light on what was discussed, because the \$500 [that was given as the remainder to faculty] is not a raise. It's an insult.
- **Dean Reyes**: That will be answered when we give the questions back.
- **Misty**: It is difficult to accept that the principals felt they deserved ten times more pay than the teachers who make this an A-ranked school.
- **Aaron Morgan**: It's not just your department [Collegiate Program]. We've [the rest of the College Faculty] have had two salary studies in two years that show that faculty are massively underpaid ...while parts of staff--I believe Administrators--are paid *at or above market* in their compensation.
- **Dean Reyes**: There is some miscommunication from HR. It's public knowledge that TSIA [Teacher Salary Increase Allocation] is designed to bring all faculty to the pay-level of those in the whole district. Collegiate faculty are paid well-over what district teachers earn. The same applies to the principals--TSIA money was used to bring them to level. If faculty are already at level, that's where we run into that problem. The state mandates that we use the funds.



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- **Q: Lynsay McCaulley:** It’s my understanding that the money is *not* for Administration, so I would like some clarification on that as well.
- **Q Christy McCullough:** If I were teaching at Polk County Public Schools, I would make \$7,103 more a year, and I can provide documentation. When I came here, I was told, “Here’s your pay.” I was *not* told it was maxing me at ten years. I was also told that when the salary schedule was approved, I would get a raise. That new salary schedule got approved...maybe? I don’t know. But I’ve gotten \$1300 in increases since I became employed here [years ago], but based on the district, I should have increased \$8,600. The College’s teachers are not being paid what we’d receive at the public schools. I came to work at the College with twenty years of experience. The letter about the TSIA funding specifically references that faculty would be brought to *correct years of service*. I would like to know: Which faculty were brought to the correct level and why were not all teachers brought to the correct level? I teach five different preps and use all four of my instructional certifications.
- **Q: Jamie Haischer:** [To Dean Reyes]: Can you publish the statistics that the collaborating group was looking at to make decisions, the averages for the school system, and what was used as the “highest paid” and the “lowest paid”? We would like to see the data that the group used to base the decisions on and the specific salaries used.
- **Dean Reyes:** TSIA monies are meant to bring [teaching] faculty up to the district’s standard pay, and I said that we were above that—above and beyond that.
- **Misty Sparling:** Some of us [Collegiate faculty] were hired before Collegiate pay was split from the College Faculty’s pay scale, and now we’re paid on a separate scale. We make more [than more recently hired Collegiate faculty], and so they keep using that as a reason not to give us raises. It’s very expensive to live.
- **Q: Aaron Morgan:** Can we get the methodology used [by Yovan, the principals, and HR], because there were also problems with *The Evergreen Faculty Salary Report*—issues with data and methodology.
- **Jamie Haischer:** Michael [Derry] and I published a document a few weeks ago regarding the Step System and levels. If you didn’t receive that email, please write to one of us. The email shares information regarding what has been happening to the faculty pay over the last ten years.
- **Q: Christy McCullough:** There was a form that was disclosed in the Polk County Schools bargaining. It’s a worksheet, and it’s filed with the state. Can we get a copy of that form? It shows the total amount and the allocation provided to teachers; that document would be useful to see.
- **Misty:** It should be noted that Christy [McCullough] used to perform college audits.
- **Christy:** Yes, on Rollins College and several municipalities. The College currently has three different Collegiate charter schools. There was talk about things being done to align the schools. Lakeland Collegiate is not the same as Chain of Lakes. This issue may affect all three schools. We need to make sure that all three schools are treated comparably.

## B. DBOT Rule 1.10: *Selection and Appointment of the President*—Anthony Cornett

Anthony explained that at the February District Board of Trustees (DBOT) meeting, the new DBOT



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attorney [David Carmichael] put a revision of Rule 1.10: *Selection and Appointment of the College President* on the Meeting Agenda. The Board had its first read-through of the document. Normally before the first read of a Rule or Procedure, the item has gone through Faculty Senate and President's Staff [per Procedure 6073 and DBOT Rule 2.24].

- **Q: Aaron Morgan:** Was this a Rule that was read without Faculty Senate input?
  - **Anthony:** Yes. The lawyer came up to me after the DBOT meeting and asked if we could “fast-track it” [through the Senate for review]. I asked if he had a Word document with track changes and if he had sent it to the College Editor [the College's processes for making revisions]. He said, “No,” so I got an original copy from Melissa LaRock [Coordinator, Finance & Business] and made the tracked changes that the Board wanted to make and sent it to the Editor. Some changes are really drastic. I was told the reason for the changes was that we needed to align with new statutory references. The document hadn't been updated since 2019. Some changes are incidental.

Anthony explained that during the DBOT meeting, the lawyer said that things can now be partially done “in the shade” according to law. The statute allows part of the president's selection to be done “behind closed doors.”

You'll notice that the original version says the Board “shall request the screening committee to submit a number of qualified applicants” and so on. All of that has been edited to say that the Board advertises the vacancy and sets the qualifying criteria. There will no longer be a screening committee. You can see this entire deletion, including this section down here that aligns the process to the *Board of Governors Rule 1002* and SACS's shared governance model is all deleted.

Section B concerns who makes up the search committee, or steering committee. There will no longer be a screening committee. The Board advertises the vacancy and sets the qualifying criteria. In C, there's all of this deletion. It is unclear who makes up the search committee or screening committee. The Board Chair now appoints the members of the committee, provides the search committee's charge, and determines the scope. These are drastic changes.

In E, there's the insertion of Florida Statute that requires that if you're selected to be on the committee, you must sign a nondisclosure agreement. The requirement that the people to be hired must have a doctorate was also deleted.

I brought this up while meeting with Dr. Kerr. She wants to follow the College's policies [Procedure 6073 and DBOT Rule 2.24]. The process followed for this revision violates Procedure 6073, in which a document's review is supposed to go to Faculty Senate, then District Campus Group, then President's Staff, and then to the Board.

Dr. Kerr initiated a phone call [with Anthony and Chair Barnhart] the day after their meeting. The Chair said that the College's Procedure 6073 does not apply to Board rules, and Board rules can only be changed by the Board. Anthony read from Procedure 6073 to Chair Barnhart where it states that every Rule or Procedure goes through this process, and



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she said that was well and good, but it doesn't apply to the Board.

The Board wants to move quickly because it only has Dr. Kerr for four months. In order to comply with statute, the role was changed to not require an earned doctorate, but the future College President could have a "terminal degree."

The Board already did the first read. Anthony has informed the Board that this process is in violation of College Rules and Procedures. It fell on deaf ears. They'll do the second read on March 30 and pass it on.

- **Q: Jennifer Shaw:** The Board is not following the College's procedures, is this correct?
  - **Anthony:** Yes.
  - **Jennifer:** It sounds like the changes are cutting faculty out of selecting the next leader.
  - **Anthony:** Faculty, Staff and Administrators, Community Members – it was in the rule that these groups had to be on the committee. The way it's rewritten, it is entirely up to the Board Chair who is on the committee.
  - **Jennifer:** They're going to advertise the position on March 30, but that's only two months. Are they going to do candidate townhalls?
  - **Anthony:** I don't know.
- **Q: Aaron Morgan** [indicating posting of DBOT Rule 2.24, Article III in the Zoom-chat]: "The Senate shall enjoy a full partnership with the College administration in the initiation and development of rules, policies, and procedures within its jurisdiction. The Senate shall monitor the implementation of these rules, policies, and procedures."  
Rules supersede procedure. "Faculty Senate shall enjoy full participation, etc." Would you say that the college is not following Rule 2.24, Article III?
  - **Anthony:** Yes.
- **Q: Aaron:** Can I ask the same question to Provost Bratten?
  - **Provost Bratten:** I don't know that I have authority to say, but it doesn't seem to comply.
- **Q: Aaron:** What is your suggestion for moving forward when we clearly find that the College is not following its rules and procedures?
  - **Provost Bratten:** It's a good idea to have a conversation. Have the [Senate] Minutes with concerns there. Anthony speaking to the President is a great idea. I've not had these conversations with the President or Board Chair. Anthony is leveraging at a better place than I am. There's the opportunity to reach Board members through the Board Secretary or to get on the Public Comment list at the start of every DBOT meeting.
  - **Aaron:** I'm aware of the ability to sign up. I've been told I can only speak on items that are on the Agenda, but the DBOT doesn't post the Agenda in a timely manner. It sounds like you've indicated that the best course of action is to record these concerns in the Faculty Senate Minutes, but we've had challenges with how the Minutes are submitted [to the Board].



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- **Anthony:** I'm going to ask Michael Derry if he would resume emailing the Senate Minutes directly to the Board members. In the [recent] past we've sent the minutes to Christine [Lee, Director, Office of the President] to send them to Board members.
- **Heather Childree:** OCPA has informed me that the Minutes have been posted.
- **Jennifer:** OCPA posts the minutes in PIE but not on the website. [**Clarification:** *This is incorrect. Minutes have been posted at [polk.edu/faculty-senate/minutes-2/](http://polk.edu/faculty-senate/minutes-2/)]. They're not being sent to the DBOT members.*
- **Provost Bratten:** Make sure that Anthony is getting in front of the President every week and that he takes an Agenda with him every time.
- **Aaron:** We have a history of a President who doesn't meet with her President's Staff members.
- **Provost Bratten:** I didn't say President's Staff--Anthony is meeting [individually] with the President once a week. Every time you [Anthony] have a meeting, bring this up.
- **Aaron:** Can individual faculty members go to HR?
- **Provost Bratten:** This doesn't seem like an HR issue, as that would be more for if you have a complaint against someone.
- **Anthony:** I explained to Dr Kerr and Chair Barnhart that SACS is coming this year [to review the College], and they don't like it when colleges don't follow their own policies. How is SACS going to feel when it learns that we didn't follow our procedures?
- **Jennifer** [As related to inquiry on HR]: Human Resources believes the College's *Staff Handbook* is the *Faculty Handbook* and is using it for faculty issues. The Handbook literally outlines *staff* duties. They don't follow Procedure 6013 [*Employee Grievance Procedure*] at all, and we have had a huge problem with Administration not following the College's Rules and Procedures.
- **Aaron:** We have the answer [from Provost Bratten], which is to send one person to the President to explain our concerns and go to DBOT meetings and wait to get on the Agenda. Meanwhile we watch rules get broken.
- **Anthony:** I brought this situation before the Faculty Senate so it would be documented in the Minutes. From everything I've gathered, there's nothing we can do. I can go to Dr. Kerr. We can go to the DBOT.
- **Provost Bratten:** The structure of Faculty Senate is where the Senators reach out to their faculty.
- **Anthony:** And Faculty refer to their Senators, and Senators reach out to the Faculty Senate President [representative governance model].
- **Provost Bratten:** Anything in procedure that mentions changes based on legislation... If it's something that's based on legislation, then it can supersede the process. The changes for selecting a college and university president were changed in a law in 2025.

[**Note:** The text for SB 520 (March 2022) related to this discussion can be found at: <https://www.billtrack50.com/billdetail/1391181>.]



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- **Anthony:** Even if it's a law, it still has to go through Polk State's review mechanisms. The Rules the College revised at the end of last year were revised because of changes to laws, and those all followed our [review] procedures. If the new Florida statutes say the Board can do this [make specific changes to the search process], then there's nothing we can do.
- **Q: Jess:** Are we wondering if the new statute would allow [the College] to make changes without going through the review process? The Senate could formally follow the review process, ask the lawyer to visit us next month, and have him explain the statutory changes. Or the Senate could vote on it today and kick it back, to show action on our part.
- **Anthony:** We [the Senate] should vote on it. David Carmichael [lawyer for DBOT] and David Fugett [Executive VP of Human Resources and Legal Affairs] are both lawyers. We can invite one of them to visit and explain the statute and clarify if it allows the College's policies to be superseded. [On the statute's "in the shade" portion] Presidents won't apply if they know their names will be published and their College Boards will realize they're job hunting. Only the finalists' names are presented. With the selection of UF President Ben Sass, he was the only finalist selected. The finalist selection is done in the shade. Everyone signs an NDA—the public won't know who could have made the final cut if only one person is presented as the finalist.
- **Q: Michael Derry:** In reference to the removal in Section C (3) of the "screening committee" or "search committee" [composed of college stakeholders], will the College be violating the *Board of Governors Educational Regulation 1002*?
- **Anthony:** That is a concern as well as alignment with SACS's shared governance model. While these stakeholders may still be allowed on the committee, there is no guarantee [that they'll be on the committee] based on how this is written--especially community members. There were several major community members on Dr. Falconetti's committee. There were many people on her committee.
- **Andrew Coombs:** I'm inclined to vote no [on the revision].
- **Provost Bratten:** Procedure 6073, Section II.D(4) says the rule or procedure *may be reviewed and revised out of the planned sequence* if changes in state rules, statutes, or other intervening factors necessitate it. If there are changes in laws, they can be updated out of order.
- **Q: Jennifer:** Are some of these revisions not aligned with the law?
- **Anthony:** There are two new statutes added in the statutory reference section.
- **Jess:** To interpret the language, we are supposed to review [Rules and Procedures] on a schedule every five years, and if the law changes, we can jump the Rule or Procedure to the front of the line [in the review sequence], but it still follows the College's procedures.

*[Note: At 4:28 p.m. Michael Derry motioned to extend the meeting to 5 p.m. Jess Jones seconded the motion. The motion carried.]*

- **Michael:** It says we can review rules out of order, but not that we ignore the process.



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*Jess Jones motioned to table the Rule so Faculty Senate can reach out to the lawyers.*

- **Dirk Valk:** The steps in Procedure 6073 have not been followed. It's not been brought to the Senate by President's Staff. It did not come to us in the right fashion.
- **Michael:** Section D doesn't change how rules and procedures are reviewed. It's a five-year review schedule. It explains that if the law changes, we don't have to stick to the five-year review schedule.
- **Jennifer:** Since Dr. Bratten is the Faculty Senate Administrative Liaison, is it more reasonable for her to go to the attorneys or to President's Staff rather than Anthony [regarding these concerns]?
- **Provost Bratten:** It can't hurt for both of us to do that.

*Dirk Valk seconded the motion. The motion carried to table the review of Rule 1.10 Presidential Search until David Carmichael or VP Fugett can provide clarity.*

- **Anthony:** It's tabled. We will ask for clarification on the statutes and if the law allows superseding of the College's Rules Procedures.

## VII. New Business from the Floor

### A. Staff Handbook versus Faculty Handbook:

Jennifer Shaw asked for clarification regarding the *Staff/Employee Handbook* versus the *Faculty Handbook*. The *Staff/Employee Handbook* was revised in 2018 but it never went through Senate. It is being applied to Faculty but has policies that do not relate to Faculty at all, such as lunch breaks and overtime. [PIE file name: **Staff Handbook revised nov 2018** at:

<https://polkstatecollege.sharepoint.com/hr/Documents/Employee%20Handbook/Employee%20Handbooks/2019%20Staff%20Handbook%20revised%20nov%202018.pdf#search=staff%20handbook> ]. There are two handbooks for the employee categories. There is a *Faculty Handbook* specific to Faculty. [website **Faculty Handbook 2021-2022:** [https://www.polk.edu/wp-content/uploads/Faculty-Handbook-2021-22\\_V1.0-final.pdf](https://www.polk.edu/wp-content/uploads/Faculty-Handbook-2021-22_V1.0-final.pdf) ].

- **Provost Amy Bratten:** The *Employee Handbook* covers all employees, but then the *Faculty Handbook* is an addendum to the *Employee Handbook*. The *Faculty Handbook* points out the differences.
- **Jennifer:** I was told that it [the *Staff/Employee Handbook*] was written for Staff members. It never went through the Faculty Senate. If it encompasses both Staff and Faculty, then the Faculty should have seen it, and it should have gone through the proper procedures.
- Amy said she would check with the Human Resources Department.

### B. Administrator Evaluations and Observations



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Jennifer indicated that once a year faculty evaluate their supervisor. It's March, but we haven't received notice of this.

- **Provost Bratten:** Yes, it is supposed to be every year. I will check on the timeline.
- **Jacqueline Gray:** Jennifer brought up rating our direct supervisors. I've never received anything about that.
- **Provost Bratten:** It went through email [last year].
- **Jacqueline:** We were having a lot of trouble receiving all-faculty emails.

### C. Administration and Following the College's Rules and Procedures

- **Aaron Morgan:** Did Jen [Jennifer Shaw] mention something else that was changed without the College following its policies and procedures? It's another example, and faculty and Provost Bratten agree that the College should be following its own Rules and Procedures. The fallout could be very negative. We should go through Senate minutes and determine how many [Rules, Procedures, documents] have not followed procedure. We need to ask Administration to stop doing this. Is it worth compiling a list and giving it to HR, the President, or the Board?
- **Anthony Cornett:** It would be a tedious task, but it could be done. We'd have to go back several years because [for example] the *Faculty Evaluation Form* was changed [removing language recommending a Step increase with a good Annual Evaluation] without faculty being notified or included. The Senate didn't meet during the summer when this was changed. This is why the Senate is asking Administration to reattach forms to all of the Procedures on the website [so policies are not changed on PIE without collaboration].
- **Aaron:** Is there any hope for this to change [the loss of the recommended annual Step increase]? Before I was full time, I was told about the Mercer Salary Study, and we were underpaid. Then the Gallagher Salary Study and Evergreen Report said that faculty are not being compensated to market value. Is there any value to getting this list of items, to ask Administration to stop violating its own procedures? The only path we have moving forward is to communicate with Anthony and to hope that when he talks with the President, she can bring it to DBOT.
- **Anthony:** I will definitely bring it to Dr. Kerr and the DBOT.
- **Aaron:** Would SACS be interested in the list? Who would be held responsible?
- **Anthony:** I don't know who would be, but SACS may find it interesting.

## VIII. Adjournment

Jess Jones motioned to adjourn. Chris Botelho seconded. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.



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