

Faculty Senate Minutes

February 12, 2026

Call to order:

A regular meeting of the University of North Alabama's Faculty Senate (FS) convened in Wendell W. Gunn University Commons 330 and via MS Teams Video Conferencing at 3:30pm with President Carter presiding.

Members in attendance

Jackie Allen, Lisa Ann Blankinship, Sidney Blaylock, Miranda Bowie, Charles Brooks, Keli Brothers, Danny Burton, Argie Campbell, Justin Carter, Freda Coleman-Reed, James DaSambiagio-Moore, Jenny Dawson, Ravi Gollapalli, Anissa Graham, Einar Gudmundsson, John Hodges, Rebecca Hopkins, Jason Imbrogno, Lorie Johnson, Kelly Latchaw, Mark Linder, Melanie Looser, Tom Lukowicz, Jason McCann, Ashley Molina, Stephanie Montgomery, Andrea Nate, Brent Olive, Gary Padgett, Michael Pretes, Steven Puckett, Chris Purser, Candice Quinn, Robert Rausch, Beverly Russell, Matthew Schoenbachler, Justin Scott, Darlene Townsend, Gretchen Windt, Ping Zhao, Rui Zhou

Members not in attendance

Leah Graham, Andrea Hunt, Suzanne Reese Mills

I. Recognized Proxies

Dr. Greg Carnes for Sen. Cagle

II. Recognize guests

Dr. Minnette Ellis, Vice President & Dean of Students
Noah Bishop, Kinesiology Ph.D. student

III. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

IV. Approval of the Minutes from January 8, 2026 meeting

The minutes were approved as submitted.

V. Remarks from Dr. Ken Kitts, President

- Gov. Ivey's budget has recommended UNA for a 6.1% increase (\$58 million to \$61 million). If received, this would be the first time for UNA to receive over \$60 million.
- Alabama state will hold governor elections later this year; this will impact budget proposals, legislative decisions, and Board appointments.
- Special earmarks for UNA courtesy of federal funding includes \$6 million for the JRA Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (\$5 million) and ACONHP equipment (\$1 million).
- Pres. Kitts has created a Bicentennial Planning Committee chaired by Dr. Minnette Ellis and Dr. Sean Jacobson (History). Other committee members are Prof. Jackie Allen (COEHS), Prof. Anissa Graham (CASE), Dr. Ann-Marie Irons (ACONHP), and Dr. Justin Scott (SCOBT).

- Updates on academic facilities:
 - Engineering Building – bids open this semester
 - Center for the Arts – meeting with deans and chairs with possible relocation in AY 2026/2027
- Reminder: 10th Light the Fountain on March 12, 2026

VI. Remarks from Dr. Brien Smith, Provost/ EVPAA

- Reminder: OER stipend program (<https://www.una.edu/oer/index.html>)
- Announcement: 2026/2027 Provost Fellows Program will provide training and collaboration in academic leadership. Fellows will work closely with the Provost on University level initiatives. Applications are due 3.13.26. (<https://www.una.edu/academics/provost-fellows-program.html>)
- FSP Carter and the AI committee will host a panel on 2.24.26.
- Kilby is being recognized by the Alabama State Department of Education
- Spring enrollment as of 2.12.26: 10,036 up from 9,946 final census in Spring 2025 term.

VII. Remarks from Dr. Justin Carter, Faculty Senate President (FSP)

- Reminder of meeting procedures
- Proposed training for incoming Senators as a Canvas course and/or first meeting of Faculty Senate
- Please share the Departmental Chairperson information with peers and bring feedback to next meeting

Dr. Minnette Ellis provided information on the University's Strategic Plan (<https://www.una.edu/strategic-plan/index.html>). Her report emphasized the six themes of the 2024-2029 plan. The plan report provides updates on each of the themes.

VIII. Reports

- a. Standing Committees
 - i. Faculty Affairs (Sen. Hodges) – Grievance Policy (Agenda Item IXb.)
 - ii. Academic Affairs – No report
 - iii. Faculty Attitude Survey (Sen. Purser) – Draft is finalized with expected survey release by Spring Break.
 - iv. Faculty Handbook Oversight Committee (Sen. Lukowicz) – Agenda Item IXa.

IX. Unfinished Business

- a. Department Chairperson Policy (3.2.4) – A motion to discuss was made by Sen. A. Graham and seconded by Sen. Pretes. Discussion. Motion to table until Ad Hoc committee could be formed and review wording was made by Sen. A. Graham with second by Sen. Pretes. [Vote: 41Y:0N]

- b. Faculty Affairs Committee Response to Grievance Policy – A motion to discuss the committee’s findings was made by Sen. Pretes and seconded by Sen. Schoenbachler. Discussion. Motion to move response to Grievance Policy to Human Resources was made by Sen. Pretes with a second by Sen. Schoenbachler. [Vote: 41Y:0N]

XI. New Business

- a. Section 4.2.6 from Faculty Handbook – Distance Learning Compensation – A motion to remove Section 4.2.6 from the Faculty Handbook was made by Sen. Townsend with a second from Sen. Pretes. No discussion. [Vote: 41Y:0N]
- b. Faculty/Staff Welfare Committee Response to Implementation for the Birth Recovery and Parental Leave Policy – A motion to accept the response and send to Human Resources to address potential discrimination and FLMA concerns was made by Sen. Puckett with a second from Sen. Molina. Discussion. [Vote: 40Y: 1N]
- c. Faculty Workloads and Teaching Loads (Section 3.2.2) – A motion to accept the proposed changes for discussion was made by Sen. Hodges with a second from Sen. Burton. Discussion. An amended motion to table discussion and send to an Ad Hoc committee for review was made by Sen. Puckett with a second from Sen. Brothers [Vote: 40Y:1N]

XII. Information Items

- a. UNA Strategic Plan – [2024-2029 Strategic Plan](#)

XIII. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Sen. Pretes and seconded by Sen. Coleman-Reed. Meeting adjourned at 5:11pm.