EO: We’ll try and keep this to an hour. Please grab one of each of the handouts. Let’s get started. Welcome to the opening meeting of the 2015–16 Faculty Senate. We have a lot of new folks because we changed our by-laws and have better representation across campus. The entire group is not here today, as you probably picked up from my e-mails; in 2 weeks we’ll reconvene and see if this room is big enough to accommodate us. I’m EO, the Faculty Senate President. I’d like to start off the meeting by first orienting you to the basic protocols so JDH can do his note-taking, and then have everyone introduce themselves. JDH is our Secretary/Treasurer. What’s going around right now is a sign-in sheet so we know who’s here. Minutes do get posted from every meeting, including who’s here—you can go to the Faculty Senate web site to see the minutes from last year. The minutes will also include things you say. If we need to pull things off record, we can do that; if we decide there should be open discussion, where things are not being recorded, we can do that—our Constitution and By-laws allow for that. We can also record conversations without identifying names, for serious stuff where—for example, last year a senator brought a motion to see if Faculty Senate wanted to support a vote of no confidence going forward with the faculty at large for a member of the administration. During the discussion of that issue, we decided that because a number of senators present were not tenured and were a little bit nervous, no names would be associated with their comments. What was recorded went into the minutes, but we did not report who said what. Be aware that when you come to any meeting, you sign in, and be aware that your words will be recorded virtually verbatim. Let’s do introductions going around the room. Introductions made going around the room—for example, our President, NS. (Secretary’s note: NS came in a bit later.) In 2 weeks, we’ll have the whole group and I suspect seats at the table will be more limited.

Welcome everyone; we’re glad to have you all here and to have such a nice cross-representation from across campus!—finally! That’s been an issue. What we’ll do is work through our old business, and then move into new business. Two of the handouts you have are old business topics, and won’t take long. Last year, we had a bit of turnover with regard to how policy is administered; in that time, policies didn’t get updated on the website. The Policy Steering Committee has been working like crazy to deal with this. We got our Constitution and By-laws passed, which is why we have so many more senators this year, because of a shift in who gets a senator. This is not currently posted on our web site; LJ, we have the old version posted, and need to get the new one up.

LJ: I wasn’t sure how much had been changed in the last version I had.

EO: There are significant differences from the old one to the new one, and two addenda. We’ll get those up. Read this over at your leisure. None of it should be terribly shocking; it tells what our authority is (for those of you wondering what we get to do), who gets to serve and who gets to vote, and that sort of thing. That’s for you to take with you and read over because it’s not online yet. The next two items on “old business” are about policies that have been problematic. Both have been under the revision process for a period of time and held up for various reasons. The first priority is the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities. This got held up in part because it took a very long time to get legal feedback from our campus attorney. The copy you have is the policy with his comments on it. I’d like to set up a working meeting to zip through this and get this going again. This could be a fairly quick fix, and while I would normally like to say that we could make this a normal subcommittee working situation, all of the experienced senators spent a lot of time working on
this, and so were rather familiar with this. The new senators and the faculty need to be aware of this. The deans are pushing for this because it tells them how to handle faculty—what they can and can’t do. It really is about what your rights are and what you’ll be held accountable for. So we need to get this passed.

JH: And this is really important because there will be new policies that will link to this one, too, so this is kind of a nucleus.

EO: It’s honestly a first priority, policy-wise.

JS: I see salmon and blue colors on this document—whose notes are whose? On the fourth page is where there are some different notes...

EO: The version I sent to the attorney was clean, and this is what I got back from him. The comments are either from him or from someone he solicited them from.

JS: So we don’t know who “C” is or “E” is...?

EO: “MC” is “Mike Carter,” our university counsel. I know he asked for input from some other people. I think the remainder of the comments—and I can verify this with him—may be from him doing work on different computers, using software labeled with someone else’s initials. It’s one of those two things. But he sent me this as his official feedback. I think that, in terms of scheduling this, I’d like to see how far we get through the current agenda, and if we do get through it, we can make finishing this up the priority at our next meeting—we can get it out of our hands. After that, NH and I just shepherd it through the rest of the approval process. That would be an easy way to cross it off of our “to do” list, which wouldn’t be a bad thing at all. The other “old business” policy, which you don’t have as a handout, is Academic Integrity. This has been my baby since before I was a senator. It’s been held up by legal, and then getting in a whole new administration that had opinions that differed from those of the previous administration. Once we got those resolved, Student Government chimed in and wanted a say, and they’ve been running with it. I don’t know how far.

NS: Our primary issue is the running with it?

EO: It’s not just reporting; there’s also the process through which we handle appeals, who deals with things going above the classroom, etc. There’s some significant changes in here. Four years ago, I did a 20–30 minute presentation on changes people had asked for to this policy; I can probably dig that up and send it to everybody. That would give you a sense of where we’re trying to go with this. But this is one that we’re going to have to handle because it provides protection to us. It tells us what we should and shouldn’t do and what options are available to us when we deal with academic integrity.

NS: Are the timings of any of these contingent on the new Academic Vice-President being hired on? Does that make a difference?

EO: Not that I’ve been told; the deans really want this done. In terms of Academic Integrity, there’s not the same level of frustration and need, but faculty have been driving that. Regardless of how the policy survey turns out, we really ought to just finish up. It’s just been hanging over us for a while.

JH: What about Faculty Evaluations? I know that that’s one that kind of got left by the wayside—is that going to be up to the populus?

NS: We’d separated that into two and I thought we had submitted it.

JH: It got pulled back because of concerns.

EO: I wasn’t responsible for pushing that one forward.

NS: It was pushed forward primarily because it was reflected in the Review Policy—the evaluation part was. It went for a vote; we requested it come off the agenda, and it was taken off, and now it’s just sitting. That’s a good question.

JH: Is there any pressure to get it pushed through?

EO: I’ll show you the current survey results. The only push we’re getting from the deans is that there have been some schedules of evaluations that are onerous in terms of the workload involved—I don’t know if that’s in our new version, but they want that addressed. They’re (the deans) spending all their time evaluating. We really ought to take a step back and evaluate how much evaluation is actually necessary, and maybe a system where you might not go through annual or even 3 year evaluations could be considered—maybe every 5 years or so. In the meantime, certain things could trigger a review if there are issues that are raised.

NS: We all approved the Faculty Review policy, and it’s 2 years old. The Evaluation policy was driven off of that because we needed to get that done—originally, it was part of the Rights and Responsibilities policy, and we carved it out. We pulled it back to make changes to peer exchanges and we were hoping to address the schedule of evaluations, but that would mean modifying the reviews, which is fine if that’s what the body ends up wanting to do. That’s where it sits right now. I think I have a copy of what we did up to that point.

CB: Can we get the most recent version? It wasn’t the scheduling of how often we get evaluated; it was mostly the other, about how faculty are supposed to evaluate timeliness, how many office hours the faculty member was sitting there, etc.

JH: The integrity of the professor!

CB: And it was asking us to write a letter pointing out weaknesses...

EO: We’ll start this one from where it currently is and, as a group, discuss it. NS, if you could get me a copy, I won’t send it out this week, but I’ll hold it until we get to a point where we can sit down and really start thinking about it, and then I’ll send it out at that point. We’ll push Rights and Responsibilities for September. Let’s just worry about Rights and
Responsibilities for now; let’s not muddy the waters. I want everyone to be comfortable about this, and what it references, so if it references evaluations or reviews, then as we move on to work on those, we’re collectively aware of that. So that’s where these policies sit. Two we should get off our plate because they should be relatively quick. Some are in a weird limbo because of other issues we probably need to ultimately address. The last item of old business is committee elections. We have a number of faculty committees that are staffed entirely by election, and there are issues because we didn’t know the schedule for post-tenure reviews. The Post-Tenure Review policy is relatively new, which means that most tenured faculty, at the time is was passed, none of them had gone through post-tenure review. They’d gone up to Full Professor and no review system was in place for after that. To address that and get everything onto a nice, regular schedule, a condensed review schedule was in place where so many faculty would come up every single year until we got through everybody, and then we’d go on an every 5 year basis. What’s done is create a bit of a situation where people elected to that committee are up for post-tenure review! So we have two different people who were on the committee that had to step down in order to be able to go through post-tenure review; Sue Bennett and Bart Stender. I looked over who was qualified to serve on these committees: in the School of Humanities, there’s a short list with only one person not scheduled for post-tenure review in the next 3 years: Tim Bywater. I went to Carole (Grady, interim Academic Vice-President/Provost) and Richard Featherstone (Dean of Humanities) to ask for their permission to do it by appointment rather than have to hold a one-person election. They agreed, and I approached Tim to see if he would be willing to serve, and he said yes and that it was OK to skip the election.

NS: Do we need to ratify that by a motion here today?
EO: There’s no real policy for dealing with this; it’s a one-time situation: once we get through this backlog, this will never happen again.
NS: But we can make a motion to forego the election and appoint Tim Bywater. I make that motion.
CB: Second.
EO: All in favor? (All ayes; none opposed.) I did want to get your feedback in case anyone had a problem. In the sciences, we have no one that isn’t up for review at some point, so we’ll have to elect people to serve for a year and then cycle off. We’ll have to have nearly annual elections until we get through this weird backlog.
NS: You will have an election on that one...?
EO: Yes.
JF: It has to be a full, tenured professor?
EO: Yes. We have five, but they’re all scheduled in the next two years. Anyone not scheduled for this year will be on the ballot, then they’ll cycle off, and people that have been through it get put on the ballot the next year. There was no easy way around it. The other committee election that was problematic was that Marius van der Merwe has been listed as being in his first year on the Faculty Review committee for 3 years in a row.
NS: He’d served for 3 years and was re-elected, but isn’t eligible now.
EO: Because he’s up for Full Professor next year. I’ll create a ballot for the School of Science and Technology and we’ll handle that to get those people elected. We’ll be following policy except for the weird term lengths for the post-tenure review representatives from the School of Science and Technology. Carole doesn’t have a problem with it. There’s no way around it, but can we go through a formal sign-off process? As soon as we get through the backlog, we go right back to policy.
NH: I move.
NS: Do we make a motion now, or wait until next year when we go against policy?
EO: We’re going against policy this year. Bart Stender needs to step down because he’s up for review.
JF: Second.
NH: Next year we won’t be against policy because we’ll get Bart Stender.
EO: All in favor? (All ayes; non opposed.) Great, thanks! So that’s basically old business. Again, if you’re new, feel free to take a look at any of the policies that you’ve heard discussed here and keep them in the back of your mind. New business: the first thing is that there’s a Board of Trustees meeting on September 11; the Chair of the board (Christina Durham) has changed the format of these meetings. Traditionally, all the staff and faculty leadership would give quick reports 3-5 minutes long to the Board. What she has done is keep these short updates, but then invite a select few representatives to come to the lunch that follows their meetings, which are not open to everyone that can attend the general meeting, to give them 15 minutes to do a longer report. Faculty Senate got selected for the first one. What I’ve been told by Marilyn (Davis, Secretary to President Williams) is that the Board of Trustees is looking for a report on the Faculty Senate’s goals and plans, and the strategies by which we aim to achieve them. So this is actually something we need to discuss a bit! Obviously, one component is what happens with the policy survey and the policies that we plan on moving forward with revising.
NS: I’d highlight how we’re structuring the Senate now so that it can be a bit more integrated. This is a great time to publicly say the purpose of some of the things we have done so that we can make sure we have a clear connection to administration, with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee now meeting with them on a regular basis.
EO: The Board of Trustees approved our Constitution and By-laws at the end of the last year. Has there been turnover on
the Board?
NS: Not that I’m aware of. My point is not to tell them what we’re doing so much as remind them of what we want to be
doing with shared governance we’re in the offices of the President and Academic Vice-President so that we can ______.
EO: For those of you who are wondering what we’re talking about: in addition to changing where the senators needed to
come from, we modified the structure of the Senate with the Constitution and By-laws to create a Faculty Senate
Executive Committee. It was confusing: it used to be that the entire Faculty Senate was called the “Faculty Senate
Executive Committee,” and the entire faculty body was the “Faculty Senate.” That was confusing because we think of a
“senate” as being a group of elected officials. Now we’re collectively the Senate and we represent our faculty
constituents, plus we have an Executive Committee comprised of the President-Elect (NH), the current President (EO),
the Past-President (NS), the Secretary/Treasurer (JH), and two selected senators ratified by the general Senate. Some
of those e-mails that went around about alternative things people could do if they couldn’t come to our regularly
scheduled meetings was that I proposed…I think we’re at four individuals that might have problems with our meeting	
times and time commitments. Three of them are Alex Chamberlain (Art), Brent Albrecht (Math), and Wendy
Schatzberg (Physical Sciences). Initially, it was Brent and Wendy who said they’d be missing, so I proposed that they be
our appointed senators on the Executive Committee. There’s pros and cons to having those two serve: they are both
from the School of Science and Technology, and their absence would make the School under-represented in the Senate
in general at the meetings. That would mean that School would have over-representation on the Executive Committee.
If you go through the By-laws, the Executive Committee is designed to set agendas, figure out what the Senate meetings
will do, and some other things. But if you look over the description, by and large we’ve built into the power structure, if
you will, that the Senate as a whole can override whatever the Executive Committee wants to do in a meeting; they have
the right to say “Hey, you didn’t put this on the agenda, which we asked you to do,” and then it has to be immediately
covered during a regular Senate meeting. So I don’t know that the Executive Committee has that much power.
JH: I was the one that brought that up, but I don’t think it’ll be a problem—I didn’t think it would be a malicious thing; we
just all represent different interests. When you brought it up, the way it was, it was almost the reverse: was it going to be a
problem being under-represented.
EO: As it is, we basically have these three senators that have Thursday time conflicts; if we moved the time, we’d have even
more senators with conflicts, which is why we’re going with this solution. The question becomes: do we want to go with
the two School of Science and Technology representatives and leave Alex to chair other Faculty Senate committees, or
shift it around? I want to open this up for conversation.
CB: Brent and Alex have both been on the Senate for a while, so they’re more up on what’s going on and would better be
able to steer things just for that reason. That would balance out better.
EO: If we assign Wendy to chair a Senate committee, that’s more of a stand-alone responsibility, and I’d almost rather have
someone do that that has more experience.
NS: So let’s have Wendy and Alex on the Executive Committee, and have Brent do the other committees. That’ll give
Wendy some experience. If Brent’s OK with this, of course.
NH: It’ll be good for Brent to take charge.
EO: He’s expressed interest in being involved in faculty governance for an extended period of time, so giving him some
responsibility like that would be a good thing. In this body, I’d like to then make a motion that we add Wendy and Alex
to the Executive Committee and appoint Brent to chair one of the two Faculty Senate committees to be determined at a
future date.
TF: Second.
EO: All in favor? (All ayes; none opposed.) Moving right along, the committee reporting requests: something that has come
up in feedback I’ve received is that there’s not a lot of accountability about people attending committee meetings,
contributing—things like that. There’s not a great deal of accountability if a committee goes rogue and doesn’t do
anything for a year. Something we discussed last year was having chairs of faculty-serving committees come here to the
Faculty Senate once a school year and give us a 5-10 minute update about what they’re doing, and share their meeting
minutes with us.
NS: I’ve thought a lot about this: is it possible that that report, rather than be in person, be a submitted statement of what
they did each month?
EO: So asking them to do a monthly report?
NS: Or semester report.
NH: Let’s open that up to the group—so every committee chair reports in writing every month.
CB: Are we talking just about the committees we own?
EO: Just committees on which faculty serve.
NH: It’d be almost every committee.
CB: How does that fall under our authority, to get them to report to us?
EO: It'd shift their charters a bit from only reporting to the Provost’s office, for example, to reporting/informing us. If we don’t own them, they're not beholden to us; it’s just keeping faculty governance apprised of what’s happening on committees.

NS: There are some committees that we crafted into our Constitution and By-laws that we do have ownership over.

CB: I'm asking more about a committee like: I'm on the Academic Program Research Committee, chaired by David Wade (Director of Academic Programs and Curriculum). It doesn't feel like we have any natural authority over David Wade’s committee in any way.

NS: Just the ones in our Constitution and By-laws, then.

NH: Is the idea just to start with the 10 we own and see if we can get the reports going?

JS: That'll be good, to just start with what we own, and then if it works well, share that with the other committees—we could then say “Here’s what we’re doing.” I know that President Williams would like to know the good news about what’s going on, and that might be something where we can say “Here’s what we’re doing,” and he can take that and make it more universal.

EO: We can do that; it addresses the issue of accountability for what a subset of committees are doing. We may need to revisit this because one of the things that keeps coming up is some degree of accountability for the ones we don't officially own. We can try it this way this year as an experiment, and re-visit it next year for the others, if indeed we have the authority to do so.

LJ: We can have the ones that we own give us synopses, and the ones that we don’t own invite them to come give 5-10 minute presentations if they want to at a Faculty Senate meeting.

NH: Still having them do that once a year, and the ones we own do theirs every month?

LJ: Yes.

NS: How are those committee chairs going to perceive this? Are they going to be frustrated?

JH: For Professional Development, it could be a quarterly update because our deadline isn’t until October.

EO: I guess the reason I wanted face-to-face presentations was that it allowed discussion and questions about what’s going on. Annual presentations would keep the workload down. If you had a committee with a lot of stuff going on in the Fall, you could schedule to come in toward the end of the Fall; if you’re a committee that meets twice a year, you could report in the Spring once you’ve finished everything.

CB: If one of the things is that we have rogue committees that aren’t meeting, their chairs are not going to perceive our request well if there’s no perceived authority here. It makes more sense to have their hierarchy make that request. It'll work well with the committees we don’t need to worry about, but not with the ones we do, and we’ll end up locked in some arbitrary battle and embitter some people toward us.

JS: Could we do a hybrid? Even if it’s monthly, we have a list of our committees, and every month we know what they’re doing, but invite the ones we don’t oversee and reach out and say “Hey, we have a way to disseminate information; if you have something, come and share it with us.” If they want to come and present, invite them to do so.

EO: We’re not talking about anything terribly involved—just be done in 5 minutes. Just so we know what’s going on.

JF: I’m kind of not in favor of this—have we really seen a downside to these committees that haven’t done anything?

EO: Yes. The shift in course evaluations, which people have been asking to be modified, has been held up for a year because the committee tasked with working that didn’t do it. One could argue how serious, but there are repercussions that make faculty unhappy.

JF: I don’t know which of the 10 committees that are under our charter, and others that aren’t...maybe there are committees that are more critical to the functional well-being of the college, but there’s got to be ones that haven’t been meeting that one’s ever noticed. I’m on a committee; I don’t know what it’s called, and we’ve never met.

CB: If they’re not meeting and there’s no effect, they don’t need to exist.

EO: Right, it should be retired.

JH: And put those people on other committees.

CB: With all the reservations about hierarchy and how that could create bitterness, for the faculty members on such committees, we need to make plainly aware that they are welcome to come to the Faculty Senate with concerns about what’s happening on their committees. Whether they’re a chair or not, we’re supposed to represent them. If you’re on a committee and you don’t feel the chair, or others, are pulling their weight—if the faculty member wants to get stuff done but no one else is doing it—the Faculty Senate is a legitimate place to voice that concern to have it taken to administration. So find some way of letting those faculty know that we’re here.

EO: Basically, to summarize what I’m hearing: those committees that we own, we ask for regular written reports that can be handed out or e-mailed to senators on a meeting-by-meeting basis. The chairs of the committees we don’t own we invite to come present to us if they want to communicate or update us on what they’re doing. If we don’t have authority over them, we won’t get reports that they’re not meeting, but that’s not ultimately our responsibility. And ultimately also send out an e-mail to all faculty at some point that says “Hey, this is what we’re doing with committees, and if you’re on a committee that we don’t own, and you’re concerned about the work that they’re doing, or that they’re not doing what
they’re supposed to be doing, please e-mail your senator or the senate leadership so we can bring it to the committee owner.”

NS: As a chair of a committee, if I want power in things I’m doing, I can go to the Senate, who will then go to administration to represent my cause, rather than “The Senate is checking on me.” If the communication is that way, that it’s not a “check,” but that we’re a resource to champion your cause, let us know what your cause is so we can help. That’s the spin.

EO: I agree—thank you.

JF: The other thing is that if the chair isn’t a faculty member, and it’s a committee not under our purview, could we just get a faculty member on the committee to present instead of the chair? They’ll have the faculty point of view. So not necessarily the chair is the person that has to come.

EO: So we’re requiring that a faculty member that serves on a committee that we don’t own to come and report to us? I’m not sure we have the authority to request that than we do to request the chair to come do it.

JF: Well, either way—say that “If you want to come because you’re faculty and we’re Faculty Senate, and you want to come report on your committee.”

NS: Which anyone can do anyway.

EO: So the committees we own we ask to submit in writing—short, written summary on a monthly basis, even if there’s nothing new; those that we don’t own invite them to schedule a time to come present if they like, and that could be the chair or a faculty member on the committee, and then communicate clearly if any faculty has concerns about their non-Senate-owned committee, we’re an avenue to communicate those concerns.

JS: And as a friendly amendment to that: we might say “If you have something to applaud, or any concerns, please bring them to us so we can help you.” I think we have to start with that positive if we want to get them to do this.

NS: This can be done with simple e-mail from the Executive Committee to the committee chairs: “Let us know what’s going on this month, anything to applaud, etc.”

EO: That’ll help with the Board of Trustees meetings, too, to highlight things that the faculty have done.

CB: Another amendment: we could also point out that “If your committee’s work is being held up by another committee, and you have concerns about that…”

EO: Or even administration or staff—that’s a good point. NH has to leave shortly—is there a motion?

JS: You just did. I’ll second.

EO: All in favor? (All ayes; none opposed.) OK, quickly, I want to pull up Survey Monkey and show the policy poll results.

The very first one is ranking stuff in order; these are the policies listed (reads from screen). The most popular ones are pretty straightforward: those hovering around 16% are clear winners. So Faculty Termination, Faculty Reviews, Faculty Evaluations, and Faculty Workload are first, second, third, and fourth—these are getting hit in terms of preferences for revision. Ironically, the ones people are volunteering to work on—there’s a disjunct there! Notice that Faculty Termination: we had a couple new people volunteer; for a long time we were stuck at two. Faculty Reviews, Evaluations, Professional Development, and Faculty Workload. There are two that are getting a lot of volunteers, and then a second category that’s at the 4–5 person range. Also in this is Professional Standards in Teaching got flagged, but not as strongly in terms of people’s preferences for revision. Notice that there’s only 29 responses. Senators are disproportionately represented among the respondents.

MG: Who did this survey? Who was it sent to?

EO: We sent it to all faculty. And they have until the end of the week to reply. I ask you all to go back to your constituents, and I’ll resend you all the link again, encouraging your constituents to participate in this. We don’t have enough respondents for me to be comfortable that we have a mandate to do any of this. We’re talking here that only 20% of faculty have replied.

JF: Why is this policy up for review?

EO: We are stewards over a variety of policies, and have had a lot of requests from faculty to revise some policies. We cannot possibly revise all of them this year, so this is an attempt to prioritize which ones we address. This is one of our responsibilities—as stewards of a policy, we have the right to start the process of revision.

JF: Even though this one just revised 2–3 years ago?

EO: That doesn’t matter.

CB: Do we know what they want revised?

EO: We do not; we’re merely getting feedback from them about which ones they want revised. We’re not asking because every person I’ve talked to has a different preference, so I’m not collecting those data.

CB: I’m just looking at these and I don’t know what people want revised with, for example, the Tuition Waiver policy.

EO: Well, with that one, for one thing, as soon as a child gets married they’re not qualified for the waiver anymore—that’s come up a few times. I could mention a few things for some of these policies, but in the end it doesn’t matter because they’re not high enough ranked. Most of the ones that are intuitive got a lot of attention. People put themselves down for things they felt they could comment on more than ones about which they had strong opinions, which resulted in some
disjuncts between the high priority ones and the ones people were willing to work on. I’d appreciate if you’d raise that in your e-mails to your constituents. Please take care of that in the next 12-18 hours. At this point, I won’t worry about our web site until our next meeting. The last couple of items: I skipped over the updating the web site; basically, if you’re not listed on the site, please let LJ know. She’d like pictures, too, so people know who their representatives are.

LJ: If your department has pictures on its site, please let me know so I can just grab those.

EO: Instead of asking her to hunt them all down. Please keep that up-to-date; we’ll work on getting the policies up to date.

We’ll also work to change some of the tab names to reflect the new Constitution and By-laws. Updates from our meeting with Carole; NH and I were just there. One of the things we discussed is that the President and Carole have some priorities that they’d like our help with over the next 12 months. We have another meeting with the President next week; he’s currently out of town, so we weren’t able to involve him in this conversation. We got feedback from Carole that a major issue is course caps and capacities. This is an issue—we were asked to communicate that the cap increase was a decision made by Carole and the President in consultation. Carole wants people to know that there was some discussion that communication could have been a bit better and that she is proposing that we establish a Strategic Enrollment Taskforce to work on issues related to class sizes and to what happens if we have similar enrollment issues in the future to create some degree of predictability. If X, Y, and Z happens, we might see a bump in these types of classes, and here’s the procedure by which that happens. That is something they’re very interested in doing and for which they will need faculty input. They want to work with the Faculty Senate on that. So that you guys are aware, and so that you can communicate this to your constituents: because of the way that the purge really didn’t quite happen—normally we purge students who haven’t paid their tuition and things, and we moved the purge date up to match other institutions in Utah—apparently, most students did not realize this, and administration felt there was a big communication concern, and that students would be negatively affected if they went ahead with the purge on the new date. So they elected to delay it. They then went through and identified specific groups of students to contact—they literally called all of these students to see if they were coming, and eliminate those students not coming based on that information. Financial Aid was also an issue in not having all of that go through, so they couldn’t tell which students were just waiting on financial aid, so they held off on the purge, so it didn’t happen as it has traditionally. Cap sizes have been held at 10% for the affected courses and will be held there through the third week, at which point in time they’ll do the traditional purge.

CB: Did they change the policy on adding, too? I had students adding after a week of class was over, without an add card.

EO: They’re supposed to use an add card.

CB: They went to registration and got signed into my class, and I’m not the only faculty member to whom that has happened.

EO: They shouldn’t have been able to do that. There needs to be communication with the registrar to find out why they’re not following policy. I was under the impression that that was what was happening, so I just sent students who needed to get into one of my classes to them to get add cards. It seems to be hit or miss down there. This is an issue that must be addressed.

CB: I can’t administratively drop them if they’ve just added my class, right?

EO: Right.

FK: What does “traditional purge” mean?

EO: Traditionally, at the end of the third week, those that haven’t paid tuition are purged from the system and automatically unenrolled.

FK: How is that going to drop it back down from 10%?

EO: It doesn’t change the cap; it just removes bodies. It won’t change number of people in your classes this fall.

CB: They were counting on the airline model of overbooking and depending on people to cancel, but they didn’t.

EO: That’s one of the reasons we’re having the task force, to deal with this issue this year.

HS: Did anyone compare it to fire-code numbers?

EO: Josh Thayne was using very conservative ones based on administrative requests, and the posted ones were often not the real ones. He gave me the formula for figuring it out, and we were being very, very conservative with our fire code. Technically, we could put more students in there, so fire code wasn’t the issue it appeared to be on the surface.

HS: I had more students than my posted code.

EO: At this point, what happened this semester is that it’s a done deal, and we’re trying to figure out ways to handle it and make it unnecessary in the future, or that if it turns out to be necessary, for whatever reason, that there’s a procedure for how it happens. At this point, your classes are what they are; we’re not going to do a lottery to kick students out of classes.

AK: How did they select which classes got raised caps?

EO: The registrar and Student Services and Advisement proposed the list based on what they perceived to be net demand.

AK: Did they use the wait lists?
EO: They were using the inability of students that they were advising in one-on-one meetings or during the orientations to get into classes, is my understanding. Quite honestly, what a lot of this comes down to, and this is the other thing I wanted to raise, is that the Workload Policy comes up a lot on the survey, and this is a workload issue. There are a variety of other workload issues that have come to our attention over the course of the year, understanding in what constitutes sufficient service, and sufficient work and responsibility to equitably justify release time--these are all issues becoming more and more important to faculty because they feel negatively affected by it. That’s probably one of the main things we’ll need to focus on this year: workload across the board, not just in terms of course sizes and overloads, but all of these other issues.

CB: So the Workload Policy spells out what classes get capped where and how?
EO: No, but it talks about the workload credits you get for teaching certain kinds of classes. If a class size were associated with a workload, it would go into this. If a much larger course justifies a shift in the instructional credit-hour equivalence, as they call it, it goes into the Workload policy.

CB: We discussed this with our dean, and not all courses are created equal, but right now the university treats them as if they were all equal. If it’s not English 1010 or 2010—it’s either writing intensive, or it’s not. We need to spell that out.
EO: The Workload policy is terrible because it’s hard to compare apples to apples. It’s all piecemeal. Several years ago I created a spreadsheet that I can share with you from when I served on the Workload Committee--because I couldn’t make heads or tails of it--and there’s a lot more differentiation in classes than there appears. It’s not just about writing; there’s studio time, music lessons, labs, etc., all of which have different workloads. It’s not one size fits all, but it may not be as refined as it could potentially be. There could be online vs. face-to-face—there are other things that could be discussed. I think faculty want to own this one, not have it handed down to us, and that’s why I want to clear our plate of our old policies quickly.

CB: That’s one where we could potentially spell out a review policy for courses that institutes a course cap?
EO: Yes. The only thing I’m waiting for, in addition to clearing these old policies, is that with Carole becoming interim Provost, there was a delay in the workload audit that we required when the Workload Committee was disbanded. This is something that we asked for: in the absence of the committee, we need some way of telling what happens across campus to ensure that people are being treated fairly. Carole is collecting those now (she’s received one), and those will help us to inform what’s going on here. Release time will also be something that will have to be addressed.

JS: Why did they raise the caps rather than open more sections?
EO: They were getting feedback that there weren’t more instructors available. Is that true? I’ve heard of instances where it wasn’t, but that’s the argument that was being made.

CB: As an owner of the largest bottleneck on campus, in our area, it was definitely true—we’ve hired every available adjunct in the city, and we’re all teaching overload, and we’re not even close. So it does happen.

LJ: And we’re at the cap of how many adjuncts we can hire for accreditation.
EO: There were some labs for which they opened up additional sections because of equipment limitations that prevented them from increasing class sizes—I coordinate the first-semester majors’ labs in Biology, and had two new sections open up, which was done in consultation with our dean. We were warned about it, but it was days before the rest of this happened.

JS: I think we just have to be careful as the Faculty Senate to just accept more students without the financial remuneration that goes along with it.
EO: And that’s what the Workload Policy is about. In this instance, it’s a done deal. We can argue about what happened, and we’ve registered our complaints—trust me, they have been heard! The deans aren’t happy about it; the situation could have been handled better, but at this point, what we can do is take the information the administration wishes it had had when it made this decision and make sure there’s a procedure in place to get them that information, and that there are procedures and policies in place to make this predictable and fair to faculty. That’s our goal at this point.

JS: Is there something in place that says it will revert back to old numbers after this emergency situation?
EO: It was never meant to be a permanent thing, although obviously it’s permanent for this semester.
CB: Is this a “temporary tax cut”?
JS: That’s something we as senators need to get from administration.
EO: Administration has said that this was not intended to be permanent—it’s a temporary increase. The intention is for things to go back down. At this point, we’ve opened a can of worms, and need to discuss on campus why classes are set the way they are, how is it working for is, and what it means pedagogically. What kinds of things can we do to deal with bottlenecks without breaking the backs of faculty but also without driving away hordes of students? We have to balance all these different pressures and it’s not going to be “I want to teach classes at 5:00”—I realize no one is asking for that, but it’s not going to be faculty asking for that and getting it. It’s also not going to be—and I think we can make this argument convincingly—that we won’t all be teaching classes of 100, especially if they’re writing intensive or anything like that. We have to find the middle ground somewhere and have a procedure to allow wiggle room in bad years. Right now our enrollment is 4–5% down, and that’s budget-cut levels. If this has protected us all from budget cuts, so that we
wouldn’t lose any positions, and as people retire or move on that we wouldn’t lose the opportunity to replace them because we don’t have the money, then we might be viewing this differently. But our numbers have improved—when they first did this it was at 10%. So it got better, but not better enough. So it could happen again. No, it’s not permanent, and Carole has assured us that she’s looking into best pedagogical practices, and is talking to deans and chairs about it, and that she’s a firm believer of keep caps to where best pedagogical practices suggests they should be. She’s been in conversation with Randy Jasmine and Sean George in English, who were particularly hard hit by this because of the writing classes and discussed these things. So based on that, we’re saving reports from the senators about the new semester until the next meeting. Is everyone OK with that? I hope I’ve touched on the whole caps issue, which is why many senators asked for this meeting today. I think everyone is in agreement that it could have been done better. As we move forward, we just need to spell out what we all expect and hope for from this situation in the future.

JF: What’s the time for the all-faculty lunch?
EO: They’re all basically the same. I’d like to have more than 29 respondents to the survey before we officially set it. In the survey, all the bars were pretty much exactly the same length—again, please e-mail your constituents reminding them to do the survey. Once we have more responses, we’ll set a time. The regular Faculty Senate meetings are the third Thursdays of each month at 2:30. That’s primarily because NH and I meet with Carole on the first Thursday at 2:30 and President Williams on the second Thursday at 2:30. The only conflict there is during Fall Break; we’ll meet on the fourth Thursday that month. Is there a motion to adjourn?

JS: Moved.
FK: Second.
EO: All in favor? (All ayes; none opposed.)