UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS | FACULTY SENATE

Minutes
Tuesday, 29 Sept 2026
Wingo 315

Present:
President Davis
Provost Hargis
FS President Thomas

Senators:
At Large: Rowley, Rosenow
CAHSS: Craun, Spivey**,** Burley
CHBS: Downey, Jenkins
COB: Fang, Britton, Horpendahl
COE: McClellan**,** Buchannan**,** Couture
COSE: Johnson, Yarberry, Naumiec
Honors: Franks
Library: Lebeau-Ford

I. Call to order: FS President Thomas. **12:46 PM**

II. Notification of Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the Faculty Senate meeting, held 8 Sept 2026 were approved via online voting form, 14 Ayes, 0 Nays, 2 Abstentions

III. Comments

A. President Davis

I have nothing to report today but am available to answer questions.

B. Provost Hargis

I have two quick announcements:

1) The Majors Fair is this Thursday, Oct. 1 at x-period in the Student Center.
2) There are two Higher Learning Commission Forums:
    a) The student forum is tomorrow
    b) The faculty forum is Oct. 8th in Mashburn 116 during X-period. These forums are in regard to HLC Criterion 3–Teaching and Learning.

Senate Question: Has there been a public list of the 30+ minors that UALR recently eliminated?

Answer from President Davis and Provost Hargis: We don't have any inside information concerning this issue, but would suggest examining the public minutes of their Board of Trustees meeting.

C. FS President Thomas

I have no specific comments.

President Davis left the meeting.

IV. Invited Guests

A. Jaclyn Austin, Associate Dean of Students/Director of Student Involvement & Leadership, Alison Taylor, Executive Director of Alumni Relations, Topic: Home Coming Committee

This presentation was postponed until the next senate meeting.

V. Constituent Concerns: See Appendix A

VI. Faculty Senate governance extract for senatorial review before next meeting:

A. **Item:** Faculty Senate By-Laws:

ARTICLE I. PROCEDURES FOR THE REGULAR ELECTION OF SENATORS

Section 4. Ballots will be open 48 hours during the week of the election. If the Faculty Senate President deems an extension is necessary, the time period will be extended up to ten working days.

Section 5. A candidate is elected by winning a majority of votes. In an election involving more than two candidates, the ballot shall be presented in a ranked-choice election, whereby faculty will be asked to rank the candidates in order of preference. In counting the votes, the top choice of each voter is considered. If no candidate has a majority of the votes, then the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and voters who picked that candidate as "number 1" will have their votes count for their next choice. This process shall continue until a candidate receives the majority of votes.

In the event of a tie vote at any point in the process, the tie shall be resolved by a coin toss conducted by the President.

B. **Discussion:**

One Senator asked the Faculty Affairs Committee to consider alternatives to a coin-flip in the face of a tie. He proposed examining the Senate Bylaws of peer institutions to see other options.

C. **Proposed issues/changes:**

The Faculty Affairs Committee will investigate and consider whether they want to initiate a change to the Bylaws regarding this issue.

VII. Senate Committee Reports

A. Committee on Committees

VP McClellan, Chair: The committee has met and has sent a survey to the Chairs of all FS committees. We are meeting next week to discuss the responses.

I also want to request the senate's input on two matters:

1) The University Committee on Committees Health and Wellness Advisory Committee–do we want to cancel that committee since the Wellness Challenges program is going away ?

   The University CoC wants to know if faculty are ok with that, or if they would like the committee to continue as a voice on future, as yet unknown, well-being issues? Please contact me if you have an opinion on this.

2) Our committee met with the Provost, and there are changes coming to the Strategic Plan Committee. These changes have already been approved and will begin next year.

Finally, VP McClellan has plans to meet with Vicki Parish to try to develop a better way for FS committees to communicate their minutes, needs, and decisions to the FS.

B. Faculty Affairs Committee

Co-chairs: Senator Rowley and Senator Rosenow

We have two charges so we have appointed one Chair for each.

Rosenow will be leading a team developing a postmortem report on the Salary Review Study that took place last year.

Rowley's team is gathering information to generate a report on Faculty Work-Load across campus.

C. Academic Affairs Committee

Chair Buchannan–The application window for the FS Faculty Enrichment Grant is open but is set to close on Oct. 1. However, promotional efforts started late due to the busyness of the semester and there was a suggestion of extending the deadline.

Sen. Rowley moved to extend this due date to Oct. 19th.
Sen. Burley seconded.

Discussion: The Oct. 19th date was widely approved.
Vote: The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Buchannan added that the committee has a meeting set for Oct. 9 to discuss proposals to improve the grant process/criteria. They will begin evaluating applications after the 19th.

D. **Advocacy and Engagement Committee**

Chair Horpendahl:

The committee met last week. Gift bags for new faculty are now prepared. Committee members will pick them up this week and begin distributing them in person to new faculty.

After our reception for long-time faculty last spring, CETAL suggested we do something for the broader faculty community. The committee discussed having a faculty lunch-day in the Presidential Dining Room in Christian Cafeteria once or twice each semester. We are also considering holding faculty-nights at UCA sporting events where faculty could meet on campus and attend as a group.

VIII. Vote on Faculty Senate By-Laws change proposal, submitted by President Thomas at the 8 Sept 2026 meeting.

Senator Rowley moved to approve. Senator Naumiec seconded.

Discussion ensued and there were several key questions:

1) What would be the procedure if senators have proposed corrections.
2) What if these corrections are substantive? Who decides this matter and through what process?

There was a suggestion to add specific windows for senatorial review (2-days), secretarial changes (1 day), and final review (2 days).

Senator Spivey moved to table the proposal until the next meeting so that the FS Executive committee could revise the proposal. Senator Horpendahl. Seconded.

Vote: 7 Ayes 8 Nays 2 Abstentions. Motion to Table failed.

After more discussion, Senator Britton offered an amendment which added a clarifying statement (highlighted in yellow below).

Sen. Britton calls to make the change “removed from the minutes.

Vote: 13 Ayes, 0 Nays, and 4 Abstentions. Senator Britton’s amendment passed.

The senate then voted on the amended proposal:

Vote: 9 Ayes, 5 Nays, and 2 Abstentions. The proposal passed.

The text of the approved proposal can be found in Appendix B of these minutes with Senator Britton’s amendment highlighted in yellow.

IX. New Business

1) VP McClellan: I would like to thank Senators Jenkins, Jamerson, and Craun for agreeing to serve at the FS table during the UCA Benefits and Wellness Fair, Oct. 19.

2) Also–per our discussion last meeting, I am presenting a proposal for the FS shirt purchases with two competing bids. I want to clarify that the shirts will be grey–not purple. **The bid document can be found in Appendix C of these minutes.**

I am asking for the funding for this purchase to come from our UCA Foundation account instead of our annual allowance.

After a few minutes examining the bids, Senator Burley moved to purchase shirts from Vendor A. Sen Frank seconded

Discussion: There was a question about sizes greater than extra-large. VP McClellan responded that increased size meant an extra cost of $5 per shirt.

Senator Spivey stated that he was not in favor of spending Foundation money on the FS instead of on the wider faculty community.

FS President Thomas mentioned that individual senators could decide not to order a shirt if they so wished. It was not mandatory.

Other senators mentioned that a specific shirt could be a useful tool to help other faculty recognize senators and could potentially be worn on voting days to remind faculty to participate.

Vote: 15 Aye 2 Nay 1 Abstention **The motion passed**

Senators may order shirts through the UCA Bookstore before 5pm, Oct. 13. FS will pay for them in bulk.

3) The University Committee on Committees requests an additional representative from the Faculty Senate. President Thomas asked for a volunteer.

Senator Couture stepped forward

X. For the Good of the Faculty

From FS President Thomas:

1) I want to publicly thank Dean Bisping of the College of Business for supporting a family-inclusive event this past weekend for Business faculty and staff. It went extremely well.

2) I also want to thank VP McClellan for being a forward leaning servant leader on the FS Executive Committee.

From Senator Frank: I want to acknowledge former senator Prof. Ellen Hostetter's efforts in organizing Honors Challenge Week, which brought a McArthur genius award winner and four other nationally renowned speakers to campus for a week of talks and discussions focused on "Rural Communities: Global and Local." More than 500 UCA students attended these events.

Senator Craun moved to adjourn the meeting. 2:14 pm.

XI. Reminders and Announcements:

A. Faculty Senate meetings are now held on the second and last Tuesday of each month.

B. Next regular meeting on Tuesday, 13 Oct 2026 at 12:45pm

Appendix A: Constituent Concerns:

1) I would like to raise a question and concern regarding UCA's student success monitoring systems and the role faculty are expected to play in retention efforts. Several years ago, faculty were informed that GradesFirst, which had previously been used to support student success monitoring, was being replaced. At the time, my understanding was that GradesFirst was awesome but too expensive, and that another system, Navigate, would eventually take its place. I would appreciate clarification on whether a new student success management platform is still being considered or whether there are other plans currently in development.

I do want to acknowledge that the current system provided through Enrollment Systems makes submitting grade progress reports relatively easy. However, my broader concern is that, as conversations surrounding student retention continue to increase, particularly in light of the enrollment challenges and the anticipated enrollment cliff. We seem to have fewer tools available to faculty for proactively identifying and supporting students who may be struggling. Previous systems allowed faculty to do more than simply report grades. Faculty could identify students as being at risk, submit alerts, provide contextual comments, and communicate information that advisors or other student-support personnel could use for follow-up. Those functions made it easier to connect academic concerns with a broader student-support process. Without similar tools, the responsibility for monitoring student progress can become more fragmented and, in some cases, more difficult and time-consuming for faculty.

I am also concerned about the limited communication faculty receive regarding the university's broader Student Success plans, including what systems are being considered, what processes are currently in place, and what expectations the university has for faculty participation. If a new platform or expanded student-success system is being explored, I believe faculty should be informed and included in those conversations, particularly because faculty will likely be among the primary users. If plans have changed and the university no longer intends to implement such a system, that would also be valuable information for faculty to have. Forgive me if I have missed updates regarding this.

Do you have a recommendation or solution to address your concern?

I recommend that the university provide faculty with a clear update on its current Student Success strategy, including whether a new early-alert or student success management system is being considered. If a new platform is being explored, faculty should be included in the planning and evaluation process to ensure it is practical for those who will use it regularly.

The Faculty Senate will forward this concern to V.P. Kevin Thomas and Dr. Julia Winden Fey for comment.

2) Classroom buildings have heavily used bathrooms. Constituent mentions that many of

the trashcans in the women's bathrooms don't have lids, and these can begin to stink in a very short time. Can we get lids and have these emptied more frequently?

President Davis will follow up with Kevin Carter. Physical Plant to get this addressed.

3) Electrical scooters and bikes on sidewalks pose a danger. Do we have any plans for signage or enforcement of safety on walkways?

President Davis will follow up with involved departments regarding current policies and potential strategies.

The Faculty Senate will pass the results of his investigation on to SGA.

Appendix B: Formal Bylaw Amendment Proposal
To resolve these procedural defects, the following amendment to Article VI, Section 4 is submitted for consideration by the Faculty Senate pursuant to Article VII.

Current Bylaw Text (Proposed Strikethrough):

~~Section 4. Voting On and Dissemination of Minutes~~
~~- Online voting is authorized for ratifying meeting minutes. Voting must be secure and include only those authorized to vote.~~
~~- Members must receive proper notice, no fewer than two business days, of the vote and any materials necessary to make an informed decision (like motions, reports, etc.).~~
~~- A quorum must be established for the vote to be valid. The motion passes based on a majority or required threshold of those voting, as specified in the bylaws or rules.~~
~~- Once the votes are certified by the Secretary, minutes can be shared with others.~~

Proposed Bylaw Text:

Section 4. Review, Approval, and Dissemination of Minutes

A. Distribution: Following a Senate meeting, the Secretary shall distribute draft meeting minutes to all Senators via official university email.

B. Tacit Review Period: Senators shall have two (2) business days from distribution to review the draft minutes and submit proposed corrections or edits to the Secretary using the official online correction form.

C. Automatic Approval: If no corrections or objections are submitted by the deadline, the minutes shall stand approved as distributed by unanimous consent.

D. Handling Corrections:

1. Non-substantive or clerical corrections accepted by the Secretary shall be incorporated into the draft, and the corrected minutes shall stand approved.

2. If a substantive correction is contested or unresolved, the disputed portion shall be removed from the minutes and placed on the agenda for disposition at the next regular Senate meeting, while undisputed portions stand approved.

Appendix C: Faculty Senate Shirt Quotes

To: University of Central Arkansas Faculty Senate

From: Rhonda McClellan

Date: September 9, 2026

Re: Request to approve expenditure for Faculty Senate shirts

Purpose

This proposal requests Faculty Senate approval to purchase 22 branded shirts for senators (including officers) to wear at Senate meetings, campus events, and other faculty-facing activities. The goal is twofold and supports Article 8, Section 3 of the Senate Bylaws: to raise the visible presence of Faculty Senate across campus, and to give faculty an easy, recognizable point of contact that encourages engagement with Senate work.

Vendor Options

Two estimates have been obtained for comparison. Both are built around the same base garments — Port Authority L508 (women's cut) and S508 (unisex cut) short-sleeve, easy-care shirts. Southern Tees, Inc. is UCA's approved apparel vendor and its quote includes a screen-printed Faculty Senate logo; the approval status of the second, non-marked vendor has not been confirmed.

Mock-up

	Vendor A — non-marked quote	**Southern Tees, Inc. (UCA-approved vendor)**	**Notes**
Price per shirt (S–XL)	$19.40 base rate (in either purple or gray)	$24.98 base rate	Southern Tees rate before discount, printing, and tax.
Faculty Senate logo / screen print	Included (can be embroidered at shown price)	Included — left-chest, $2.72/shirt (screen shot)	Branding directly supports the visibility goal of this proposal.
Estimated total, 22 shirts # of Senators	**$426.80**	**$549.56**	

Requested Action

Faculty Senate is asked to vote on

- Approving an expenditure of up to ~$500 for 22 Faculty Senate shirts from a Faculty Senate foundation account:

Senate approved ordering from Vendor A.