UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS | FACULTY SENATE

Minutes
Tuesday, 13 Oct. 2026
Wingo 315

Present:
President Davis
Provost Hargis
FS President Thomas

Senators:
At Large: Rowley (excused absence), Rosenow
CAHSS: Craun, Spivey (excused absence), Burley
CHBS: Downey, Jenkins, Jamerson
COB: Fang, Britton, Horpendahl
COE: McClellan**,** Buchannan**,** Couture
COSE: Johnson, Yarberry, Naumiec (excused absence)
Honors: Frank
Library:

I. Call to order: FS President Thomas. 12:46pm.

II. Notification of Approval of Minutes

The agenda for today's meeting and the minutes from the September 29 meeting were inadvertently not shared beforehand. Therefore, the minutes for September 29 and October 13 will both be approved electronically at the same time.

President Thomas apologizes for the mix-up.

III. Comments

A. President Davis

Very quickly–We had a bit of Free Speech yesterday in the designated area. Remember, members of the public can come and speak their mind within this space according to our policy as well as state and federal law. For associates of UCA (students, staff, and faculty) the public areas of campus are always official free-speech areas following these same policies.

B. Provost Hargis

I have no comments today.

C. FS President Thomas

1) I am devising a Google-Drive structure for the Faculty Senate to use for future file-sharing and archiving. This week, I will send out a document explaining this structure for you to review and comment on. Please review this when you receive it so I can incorporate your suggestions.

2) I have also created an explanatory video and slide-show regarding management of the FS Committee on Committees. This is a guide to help everyone understand the complex appointment and reporting process–and specifically to help future Vice-Presidents prosper when they act as Chair.

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

Student Involvement & Leadership used to be Student Life--we have rebranded. My office is seeking to develop more involvement in Homecoming activities among students, faculty, and staff. For faculty, this is a chance to engage with students outside of class–a practice which strengthens retention. Homecoming week is the week of Oct. 26 - 31. We have thirty candidates for homecoming royalty (15 King and 15 Queen), and this number includes students beyond UCA's fraternities and sororities.

There are many events, and a full schedule can be found at Uca.edu/homecoming. Here are a few that might be especially attractive to faculty:

Friday, Oct. 23–we will be decorating the lawn area in front of the student center (12 - 3pm) and Old Main so that students come back the next week and immediately see this is a special week.

Monday, Oct. 26–Pep Rally in the Farris Center at 7pm. We will narrow the thirty royalty candidates down to sixteen!

Tuesday, Oct. 27–Student Activities Board Fall Fest. Vendors and food, noon-6 pm in the T-rec Parking Lot.

Thursday, Oct. 29–Boos over Booze Carnival to raise Awareness of the dangers of binge-drinking. It is still possible to sponsor tables. Contact Assoc. Dean Austin if your department is interested. It is a drop-in event, 12-3 pm in front of the Student Center.

Friday, Oct. 30–several big events!

a. Student Athlete Advisory Committee is having a food-drive drop-off. The academic department that brings in the most weight (all week) will win an award/prize. The event is from 10 am - 2 pm at the food pantry.

b. Food Truck Festival will be in the Old Main Circle.

c. UCA Step Show with six organizations participating. Farris Center, doors open at 6:30, event starts at 7:30. Tickets are $20.

Saturday, Oct. 31

a. UCA Bear Walk and Parade begins at 1:30 pm. This year's theme is Fall Movies. Parade starts on College, crosses to Bruce by Health Science Bldg, and then returns to College on Farris.

b. Trunk or Treat in Farris Center Parking Lot. 2-4pm. Anyone interested in participating can register on cub-connect. Sign-up closes next Friday (23rd).

c. UCA Football Game is at 4pm.

President Thomas: This is a reminder that the UCA Bookstore offered their Sky Box for the FS to use during homecoming.

B. Associate Provost Kurt Boniecki

I wanted to give an update on our preparations for the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) review that is taking place this year. The comprehensive evaluation visit takes place March 8-9, 2027. We are currently preparing an assurance argument to submit

before the on-campus visit. The document provides evidence that we are meeting the four HLC accreditation criteria: Mission, Integrity, Teaching & Learning, Sustainability.
–The final feedback forum is next week, Oct. 22 at x-period in Irby 215. Please come! A big portion of Criterion 4 (Sustainability) is shared-governance. We would like to hear from you.

–You can read the full assurance argument at Uca.edu/accreditation. There are also two different feedback forms online:

1) General Feedback–do you find the document to be good, bad, poorly worded, or missing evidence?

2) A Spotlight Form–Do you know of individuals, departments, or programs that demonstrate or embody a specific section/criteria within the assurance argument? If so, please use this form to let us highlight them within the document or during the March on-campus visit.

Feb. 8, 2027, is the deadline to submit our assurance argument document.

Nov. 10-11: Two consultants will visit campus to meet with a variety of constituents to discuss the upcoming HLC visit. These consultants will attend the Faculty Senate meeting on Nov. 10 from 1- 1:30 pm to discuss the experience of shared-governance at UCA.

All Faculty can prepare for HLC by familiarizing themselves with our UCA Mission-statement and their responsibilities/roles within it.

Question: Who's on the writing team for the Assurance Document? There are a great many people involved. We have designated team leaders for every criterion, and two for criterion three.

Leslie Greybeal leads the team for Criterion One

Warren Readnour, Criterion Two

Amy Hawkins & Jacob Held, Criterion Three

Nancy Reese, Criterion Four

Each team has produced a draft of their portion, and I (Kurt Boniecki) am reviewing/revising these.

President Davis and Provost Hargis thanked everyone involved for their work on this important task.

V. Constituent Concerns:

1) I want to publicly say that I'm glad to be on a campus with Cleary Report numbers that are lower than many other institutions.

2) Why is Fall Break for UCA different from Conway schools?

a. They moved their break this year and we had kept ours as we had already planned.

3) As a constituent, I am writing to express my concern regarding the Faculty Senate's stated support for the recently announced increase in health insurance costs (as reported in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* on 10/3/26). Specifically, I am requesting clarification on why this position and the surrounding discussion are not formally documented in the official meeting minutes. I ask that the minutes be updated to accurately reflect the Senate's stance or that a formal explanation be provided regarding this omission.

a. **Secretary Craun:** The Faculty Senate received information regarding this issue during President Davis' comments at the Sept. 8 meeting. This appears in the minutes. The senate did not take any formal action or official stance on this matter. There isn't anything missing from the 09/08 minutes.

b**. President Davis commented:** President Davis explained that the faculty senate, staff senate, and SGA presidents are invited to offer comment on board agenda items, and that this comment period is not an endorsement or a vote for or against any item. He noted that, in the same way, SGA would never be asked to vote on tuition and fees. The purpose is to promote transparency, so that these groups understand how institutional figures, including tuition, fees, and the health plan, were developed and feel comfortable with the process behind them. He expressed his concern that representatives not be put on the spot, and that their role in board meetings not be mischaracterized.

c. Thomas' response:

The Board of Trustees agenda was released on Friday 25 Sept, the Senate met the following Tuesday (29 Sept), and the Board of Trustees meeting was held the following Friday (2 Oct). In the short window between the BoT agenda being released and the Senate meeting, no senators brought the issue to the Senate floor for discussion. Furthermore, in the time between the BoT agenda being released and their meeting, no constituent raised the concern through our web form or any other means.

President Thomas emphasized that if any senator or constituent had voiced a concern prior to the board meeting, he would have formally represented that position to the Senate for discussion and consideration prior to the BoT meeting.

4) Thank you for the response to an earlier concern regarding bikes and scooters on walkways. The UCA Physical Plant has posted signs, and there has been a policy email sent to students. However, I notice that we do not have an official policy governing bicycles. They are governed by city-ordinance *on* the road, but there is nothing expressed about proper behavior *off road* in public spaces such as sidewalks. Perhaps the University should develop and publish a policy for bicycles on University grounds.

a. On 8 Oct, UCAPD sent a reminder email to all faculty, staff, and students regarding the rules of the road for operating scooters, hoverboards, or similar devices on university property.

b. Pres. Thomas added that he asked UCA Police if scooters needed UCA permits like cars. Apparently, they are not assigned permits. If they were, then perhaps we could provide owners with guidelines and be able to identify if a scooter/bike rider is a student.

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

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

ARTICLE II. PROCEDURES FOR FILLING PARTIAL-TERM VACANCIES AFTER REMOVAL OR RESIGNATION

Section 1. Sitting Senators may be removed from their seats by the Faculty Senate Executives after accumulating two unexcused meeting absences in a single semester. In order to avoid this, Senators must notify the Secretary of anticipated absences prior to the meeting. To comply with Article III of the Constitution, a Senator who is appointed as an administrator at the assistant dean or above level shall either resign or be removed effective the first day of their appointment.

Section 2. If a Senator is removed or resigns before completing a full year of their term, the candidate who came in second to the resigning/removed Senator will be offered the seat by the Senate President, and so on until the position is filled. If there was a tie for second (or any other) place, the ranking of the candidates will be determined by a random drawing. If none of the candidates accept the seat, a Special Election will be held.

B. Discussion will take place at the next FS meeting.

VII. Treasurer Report.

Faculty Senate Maintenance & Operations (M&O)	M&O - - -	$1,394.00
FS Empowerment Grants (project grants to faculty)	M&O - - -	$31,564.00
Faculty Senate Scholars Fund (Foundation Scholarships for students)	Current Restricted: Endowed 11,500.25 34,757.63 3,302.49	49,560.37
Faculty Senate Development Fund	Current Restricted: Non-endowed 1,318.00 - -	1,318.00
UCA Faculty Senate Fund*	Current Restricted: Non-endowed 12,680.87 - -	12,680.87

*This is the fund the approved Faculty Senate shirt purchase will come from.

Question: Are the Faculty Senate Scholars awards reflected in our By-Laws? Can we get the details of the process?

A. No, I do not believe this long-standing scholarship is reflected in the by-laws. We probably need to add it. The answer to your question about the award process is: Yes. I will look up the Memo of Understanding for that scholarship account and report back at the next meeting.

VIII. Senate Committee Reports

A. **Committee on Committees**

VP McClellan, Chair: We have met and are sifting through the returned surveys (regarding the viability and need for each existing committee). We are also compiling membership lists and will then bring the new member lists to the webarchivist for posting. The committee is scheduled to meet again on Oct. 22.

B. **Faculty Affairs Committee**

Co-chairs: Senator Rowley and Senator Rosenow

We have 3 items:

1) We will share a draft of the Post Mortem report on last year's Faculty Salary Review by the end of the semester.
2) Our second charge has been revised. Originally, we planned to compare faculty work-loads across departments and programs. However, this has been done before, we met with President Thomas who asked us to instead examine:
   a) Whether there are published T/P standards for each department.
   b) Whether/how these are made available to faculty candidates
   c) How they are being used at mid-tenure review or during the pre-tenure period of faculty careers.

   We will develop a more precise charge over the Fall semester and undertake work on this in the Spring. President Thomas noted that this is
3) At the last FS meeting, Senator Spivey recommended that we look at election procedures, specifically ties, among our peer/aspirate institutions. Our current procedure is a coin-flip. This is an ongoing task, but we will have a recommendation soon.

C. **Academic Affairs Committee**

Chair Buchannan–
We have 1 application so far for the Faculty Empowerment Grant. October 19 is the deadline, so please pass that on. We are meeting the 30th to discuss the applicants.

D. **Advocacy and Engagement Committee**

Chair Horpendahl:
The New Faculty gift bags are in the colleges and are being distributed. This takes time as there are many different schedules to connect and faculty are spread across campus–even within the same colleges.

IX. New Business

None

X. For the Good of the Faculty

Student, Chelsea Roessler, presented at the national S-Stem meeting in Washington D.C.

Thank you to Shawn Charlton and Laci Lyons for their help with the HLC workshops.

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, 27 Oct 2026 at 12:45pm
C. Wellness Fair is next Monday, 11-2 in front of the Student Union. D. FS shirts need to be ordered asap!
E. COB will have a Chili fundraiser for the food pantry on Nov. 12 in COB from 1:30 -2:30 pm.

Secretary Craun moved to adjourn the meeting at 2:16pm.