

MINUTES

GOVERNANCE COUNCIL – May 14, 2025

Members Present: Matt Seimears, Kristen Finnel, Wendy Hall, Sue Orchard, Kendra Sprague, Nolan Wheeler, Trey Batey, Brad Benjamin, Dana Cummings, Amber Lemiere, Kailie Drumm, Caitie Graham, Natalie Richie, Michal Ann Ure, Lucas Myers, and Hannah Palenske

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 3:04 PM.

1. [Approval of Minutes](#)
 - a. The minutes of the April 4th Meeting were approved.
2. **Budget Update**
 - a. Vice President Wheeler shared that the college will undergo a significant budget reduction process. A budget reduction guideline has been developed and will be shared at the All-Staff Meeting. Faculty members asked clarifying questions regarding the process.
3. **Human Resources and Investigations - Clarity for Faculty.**
 - a. Lucas Myers inquired about how and why investigations are initiated. Vice President Sprague explained that HR conducts investigations only after a report has been submitted. The initiation depends on the severity and nature of the situation and whether there are legal compliance requirements.
 - i. It was clarified that the process includes the language: *"This investigation can include discipline up to and including termination."*
 - b. Kailie Drumm asked for clarification regarding student-initiated complaints. HR responded that student reports are submitted via the "Make a Report" form. Once submitted, HR and Student Services triage the complaint. If students go directly to HR, they are redirected to the appropriate administrator (e.g., Dean or VPI).
 - i. Amber provided an example regarding students filing reports in response to grades and asked for clarity around solving matters at the lowest level and the role of academic standards. She added concern about why some things are pushed higher quickly and other issues are resolved at the department level. It was emphasized that while resolving matters at the lowest level is preferred, it is not always appropriate. Faculty are encouraged to work with their dean, VPI, and HR to determine the best action.
 - ii. Amber also suggested the need for a formal remedial process. VP Wheeler and Sprague clarified that the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) distinctly separates remedial and disciplinary processes.
 - iii. Michal Ann asked who constitutes "we" in HR decisions. HR confirmed that it consults with the appropriate Vice President and Dean when deciding whether to investigate a situation.
4. [DRAFT Immigrant Rights Policy 273](#)
 - a. The "Keep Washington Working Act," enacted in 2019, requires compliance from colleges to limit local law enforcement's role in enforcing federal

immigration laws. This policy underwent several revisions with the assistance of Sue, Magnus, and the Assistant Attorney General (AAG).

i. The policy is moving forward.

5. [Discrimination Harassment Complaint Procedure - 231.1A](#)

a. The procedure is moving forward.

6. [Title IX Employee Disciplinary Procedure 235.2A](#)

a. The procedure is moving forward.

7. [Title IX Employee Disciplinary Procedure 235.3A](#)

a. The procedure is moving forward.

b. Faculty asked clarifying questions, and no concerns were raised.

8. [CERT Policy 675](#)

a. Brad noted that policy documents are acronym-heavy and requested clarification on the goal. VP Wheeler explained that CERT is designed to increase the number of trained individuals available during emergencies and for events such as graduation and community activities. It replaces the less effective EBCs model.

b. The policy is moving forward.

9. [CERT Procedure 675.1A](#)

a. This is approved to move forward.

10. VPAL Discussion with Faculty.

a. *Faculty have felt that VPAL meets for nine hours, and the Instructional Council gets nine hours of work pressed into their one-hour meeting. Faculty feel they must accept this process without respectfully modeling a Governance Design for meaningful input. What is a better way for VPAL and LCC Faculty to work together?*

i. Lucas emphasized the importance of shared governance and noted that current practices may erode trust. Amber echoed the need for improved collaboration, noting these challenges became more apparent post-COVID.

ii. Faculty members expressed concerns about the lack of shared governance in the recent dissolution of the College and Career Preparation (CCP) program and the subsequent departmental reorganization. It is the faculty's position that the principles of shared governance were not appropriately followed and that meaningful dialogue should occur before such decisions are finalized, whether at Instructional Council or Governance Council.

1. Amber Lemiere noted that the process lacked transparency and left faculty feeling blindsided, stating that the changes were presented as finalized decisions rather than topics for discussion and input.

2. In response, Kristen acknowledged the faculty's feedback and emphasized that while shared governance is valued, there may be circumstances where full engagement of shared governance is not feasible.

3. Additional concerns were raised regarding the limited time available during union meetings, particularly in contrast to the extended meeting time allotted to VPAL. Faculty shared that this imbalance hinders the ability to engage in thorough discussion and feedback.
 - iii. Kristen expressed openness to more dialogue and noted that IC is improving, though more departments should bring forward agenda items. She also mentioned logistical issues with meeting times.
 - iv. Brad and Dana supported these concerns.
 - v. Dana shared additional concerns regarding the responsibilities and expectations placed on Department Chairs. She emphasized that providing formal department chair training for individuals serving in these roles would be highly beneficial to ensure clarity, consistency, and preparedness in fulfilling their duties. Kristen endorsed this idea.
 - vi. Matt asked for clarification on the difference between Instructional Updates and Instructional Council.
Outcome: The topic will be moved to the Instructional Council for further discussion.
11. **Follow-up discussion with faculty from the previous Governance Council, with Angel R. present.**
 - a. **This topic is being moved to the Instructional Council.**
12. **Faculty Professional Partner:**
 - a. *Is this model of mentorship working?*
 - b. *In what ways does this model ensure consistency for all faculty?*
 - i. **This topic is being moved to the Instructional Council.**
13. Possible New Governance Council meeting dates and times to ensure that all members are free to attend.
 - a. **To be discussed at a future meeting.**
14. **Follow-up with Human Resources after the Governance Council/Human Resources Hiring Practices Meeting/Scenario - Sam Orth, Invited Content Expert**
 - a. Sam shared updates on faculty recruitment and improvements to the hiring process.
 - i. Five of eight faculty recruitments were filled; one failed search, and two are in progress.
 - ii. The faculty hiring timeline was improved based on campus and governance feedback.
 - iii. Key changes include earlier job postings, earlier position descriptions, and increased travel reimbursement for finalists (up to \$1000).
 - iv. Dan Ruiz now serves as a search advocate.
 - v. Hiring committees now participate in collaborative matrix review meetings for a better understanding.
 - vi. Interview processes were enhanced by increasing the duration and depth of the sessions.

- vii. Teaching demos now occur during finalist visits due to in-person requirements.
- viii. Spark Hire was found to be inadequate due to its 3-minute time limit.
- ix. Kailie emphasized that the teaching demo remains the most critical part of the process and asked whether 20 minutes is sufficient.
- x. **Outcome: HR continues to work diligently to find a solution that best fits the needs of the college, faculty, and interviewees.**

15. [Accessibility Policy 720.1A](#)

16. Governance Council Data Analysis of the *New Faculty Orientation Survey* - Wendy.

a. This topic is being moved to the Instructional Council.

~~17. Additional topics for discussion. Helping President Seimears understand the difference between Instructional Council and Instructional Division Meetings.~~

18. Meeting adjourned.

With no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.