

**WFU Faculty Senate Minutes – April 15, 2026**  
**Farrell Hall, Room A17**

Call to Order – 4:00p

1. Approval of March 18, 2026 meeting minutes - Approved

2. Announcements

- a. President's Ball
  - i. This Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Lawrence Joel Coliseum
- b. Senate Reception at President's house – 4/28
- c. May Meeting and into Summer
  - i. No May meeting, but ExCom will meet
  - ii. Next year's schedule will be sent to AY 2026-2027 senators

3. Old business - None

4. Current business

- a. Standing Committee reports.
  - i. Athletics (Parsley) – no report
  - ii. Capital Planning (Castro)
    - Bicentennial Space Planning Group – meeting with various groups and conducting workshops
    - Evaluating feedback that they have received
    - Links in the report in the attached minutes
    - Security Advisory Committee – next meeting on Monday, April 20th
  - iii. College Senators (Tarte/Breckenridge) – no report
  - iv. Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility (Morath) – no report
  - v. Fringe Benefits (Kirkman)
    - Report in minutes (Combined Committee Reports)
    - Transition to Fidelity
    - Can meet with CapTrust
    - Link on the website to make an appt
  - vi. Medical School (Cartwright) – no report
  - vii. Salaries (Evans) – no report
  - viii. University Integration (Kaufman) – no report
- b. Senate President Report
  - i. Reflections on the past year
  - ii. The things about Wake Forest that sustain us – discussion with WFUPD officers at campus picnic
  - iii. Remind ourselves of Wake Forest's unique qualities and celebrate our distinctiveness
  - iv. We encourage discourse, engagement, and challenge: example of signage around campus memorialization
  - v. The creation of spaces where this kind of conversation can happen is not accidental, it is intentional
  - vi. List of extraordinary challenges of the past five years; many institutions have changed or even closed in response to these events and situations
  - vii. President Wenté's leadership has allowed us to maintain our core values and mission
  - viii. NC Gateway program, living wage, memorialization to the enslaved, and more have all happened during exceptionally trying times
  - ix. Grateful for Pres. Wenté's transparency around issues from budget to athletics to Charlotte campus growth and beyond

- x. Hope that the next President will continue Pres. Wente's commitments to shared governance and transparency
- c. President Wente's Address to the Senate
  - i. Gratitude for partnership with Senate and for candor in communication
  - ii. Shared governance is and should continue to be one of our campus's greatest strengths
  - iii. Teacher-Scholar perspective at the center of Pres. Wente's identity and has defined her service as president
  - iv. Reflection on President's Leadership Series for students – discipline of inquiry; skills of leadership formed in the practices of teaching and research
  - v. Teacher-Scholar model is what makes our transformative education so special
  - vi. Faculty's commitment to teaching and scholarship is central to our identity; hard to hold both identities at the same time, but it's something that we celebrate here: hopes it will continue to be a living and evolving strength at Wake Forest
  - vii. In the first year, still dealing with questions about COVID response, decided the most important thing to do was ask questions
  - viii. "What is expected of a great university today?" – Framing Our Future; faculty were central to the development of a shared sense of direct that was needed at the time
  - ix. Commitment to academic excellence; interdisciplinary collaboration; preparing our students for careers and for lives of purpose and meaning
  - x. Framework can continue to guide and be a living document for continued decision-making
  - xi. Interdisciplinary collaborations: Neuroscience and Society Visioning Process; Environment and Sustainability; Entrepreneurship; Character and Leadership Education Movement
  - xii. Faculty work has been instrumental in raising funding for future work
  - xiii. Choosing where to lead: reflected in locations of faculty excellence
  - xiv. Spaces and places in which teaching and learning take place have been an area of emphasis; updating classrooms, technology, etc. Invested more than \$21 million dollars in renewing learning spaces: long-term commitment to renewing spaces
  - xv. Reopening of Alumni Hall - \$24 million investment
  - xvi. Building out laboratory spaces at Wake Downtown and other locations, including the Pearl in Charlotte
  - xvii. Leadership: a remarkable group of deans in place; gratitude to them and to Interim Provost Nell Newton
  - xviii. Faculty headcount has grown by 16% (8% in SPS)
  - xix. Academic Excellence and Student Opportunity strengthen one another: For Humanity Scholarship Initiative, First-Generation Early Action Pathway, North Carolina's Gateway to Wake Forest
  - xx. Students who might never had thought of applying now have access to the WFU education
  - xxi. 80% increase in applications from NC this year; applications over the past five years have grown: UG applications have nearly doubled (12,000 → 21,000)
  - xxii. We're in a strong position to adapt and innovate
  - xxiii. Hope is that pilot gateway for NC will pave the way for future possible expansions of access
  - xxiv. Foster a culture that recognizes the full humanity of all of the members of our community
  - xxv. Opening of the childcare center, for instance
  - xxvi. No president leaves office with every hope realized because we should never be content with status quo or become complacent
  - xxvii. Wake Forest has momentum; we are strong; faculty leaders will make sure that we stay the course
  - xxviii. Telling your stories; making faculty work more visible and recognizable both in our community and in the wider world; demystifying academia
  - xxix. Important to make the intellectual life of Wake Forest visible to all of our constituents
  - xxx. Wake Up marketing campaign to share the narrative further
  - xxxi. Cultivate more opportunities for BoT to see our work up close
  - xxxii. It's been a joy; we've had to navigate a lot of disruption and be comfortable with the unknown
  - xxxiii. Aimed to respond to challenges with optimism and seeking opportunity
  - xxxiv. Higher education is a public good: "Higher education creates knowledge, educates

engaged citizens, and imagines better outcomes for future generations.”

xxxv. Tremendous confidence in our position and momentum for our future

xxxvi. Deep gratitude that this most important chapter in academic leadership career unfolded here with us.

## 5. New Business

**Adjourned – 5:16p**

## End notes

### Executive Committee Membership:

- Steve Virgil (Law) - President
- Katherine Shaner (Divinity) - Vice President
- Ryan Shirey (College/English/Writing Program) - Secretary and Chair
- Bret Nicks (Medicine) - Member-at-large
- Saylor Breckenridge (College/Sociology) – Past President, Co-chair, College Senators
- Amanda Kaufman (Library) – Chair, University Integration
- Ellen Kirkman (College/Mathematics) – Chair, Fringe Benefits
- Kendall Tarte (College/French Studies) - Co-Chair, College Senators
- Rodrigo Castro (Library) - Chair, Capital Planning
- Mark Evans (Business) - Chair, Salaries
- Jason Parsley (College/Mathematics)- Chair, Athletics
- Michael Cartwright (Medicine) Chair, Medical School
- Sarah Morath (Law) - Chair, Committee on Academic Freedom and Responsibility

### Future Spring Meeting (Farrell Hall Room A17 @ 4:00

April 15, 2026