

Welcome to Faculty Senate!



Doug Downs
Professor, Faculty Senate
Chair
English

Leila Sterman
Professor, Faculty Senate
Chair-Elect
Library



Faculty Senate Meeting Reminders

- Faculty Senate is an open and public meeting
- Please, only Senators speak in the meeting, unless you are specifically called on by the Chair or Chair-elect
- Please let others speak; everyone should get a chance to speak before someone else speaks twice.
- The public may address the Senate during the designated public comment period (2 minutes per speaker).
- Be kind: assume positive intent and generate goodwill.

Approval of FS Minutes from Sept 16, 2026

- Motion to approve?
- Second?
- Discussion?
- Those in favor of approval?
- Those opposed?
- Those abstaining?

Consent Agenda

Items on the consent agenda include undergraduate and graduate new course and course change proposals and any program proposals. All proposals are included in the meeting agenda with links to CIM pages for each proposal. Senators should review these items prior to meeting.

- Removal of any items for separate discussion?
- Motion to approve the consent agenda?
- Second?
- Those in favor of approval?
- Those opposed?
- Abstentions?

FYI Items

- **Thanks to all who responded** to the survey on Provost qualities for the Provost search.
- **Faculty Senate Lunch with President – Weds Oct. 14, noon.** Check your email for survey link to RSVP by tomorrow, Oct. 1, or ask your alternate to attend if you can't.
- **The Future of AI Symposium** – Thurs/Fri. Oct. 1-2. RSVP at <https://www.montana.edu/ai/the-future-of-ai/>
- **Faculty Symposium**
 - **Reclaiming the Classroom: Cultivating Purpose, Connection, and Growth in Teaching** – Monday, October 26th, 11:00 am - 1:00 pm- Inspiration Hall
[Register here](#)

Information Updates

University Committees in Need of Members

- CORE Committee: meetings up to biweekly, currently scheduled Oct. 6, Nov. 3, Dec. 8
- Computer Fee Allocation Committee (CFAC)—two faculty openings. Chaired by Vice-Provost Sobek.
- Others?

Digital Accessibility Action Committee Update



Dr. Tracy Dougher
Vice-Provost for
Curriculum, Assessment,
and Accreditation

Dr. Shannon Willoughby
Director, Center for
Faculty Excellence



Montana State University Digital Accessibility Committee

Information and support for faculty



Accessibility helps everyone

Improves inclusivity

Shows dignity and respect for learners

Allows for more independent learning

Creates opportunity for open-ended exploration of curiosity

Outline

- The Provost's action plan (presented to Department Heads)
- The Digital Accessibility committee's plan
- Online resources
- Next steps

The Provost's Action Plan

- All faculty are to complete at least one accessibility training this academic year

The Provost's Accessibility Action Plan

- Instructional content needs to be reviewed
 - This is automatic in Canvas via the Yuja tool
 - If your course materials are online but not in Canvas, they still need to be reviewed for accessibility
 - Faculty to identify discipline specific remediation tools -> send to DH



Excellent



Fair



Poor



Student View

Digital Accessibility Committee

- Initial training is live Digital Accessibility Basic Training
- Panopto training October 7th at 10:30 am
- Yuga training October 15th at noon
- Instructional technology office hours October 22nd at 11:00 am
- We will start holding trainings and drop-in hours after Oct. 13th
- Remediation tools are being investigated

The rule of 5

1. Alternate text: provide a brief description of what the image conveys
2. Ensure high color contrast
3. Hyperlinked text should make sense on its own
4. Use built-in heading styles, bullet lists, and numbered lists to support navigation by assistive technologies.
5. A/V accessibility can be achieved through captions, transcripts, and/or audio descriptions.

Online resources

- [Montana.edu/accessibility/digital](https://montana.edu/accessibility/digital)



Next steps this semester

- Work with your department head on:
 - Identifying documents that need remediation
 - Discipline specific remediation software/tools
- Become familiar with the rule of 5
- Move away from PDFs when possible

The Rule of 5 for Digital Accessibility

1. **Alt text (image description)** on images.

“What would you **tell** someone if you could not **show** the image?”

2. **Color.** Do not rely on color alone to establish meaning.

Keep **color contrast** greater than 4.5 to 1.

3. **Link text** should make sense on their own.

click here is not accessible.

4. **Headings** are important! Don't fake them with ~~**bold text.**~~

5. **Audio Visual Accessibility**

- **Accurate captions or transcripts** must be used for video and audio.
- **Add audio description** for visuals not already described in video.

New Business: Guidelines for Review of Center Proposals

- First reading of proposed final draft of guidelines for Faculty Senate when considering Center and similar entity proposals
- Redlined draft provided with agenda
- Senate Discussion

Council and Committee Updates

Graduate Council

- As a result of Degree Works maintenance/downtime, the Graduation application deadline is extended to Oct 2nd. If you missed the last deadline, advisors need to put a note in Degree Works, then students can apply.
- A Graduate FreshStart Policy is being drafted, we will likely see it in Senate this fall.

Other Committee Reports

MUSFAR (Montana University System Faculty Association Representatives) – Board of Regents Breakfast

- Discussion of hallmarks of MUS education as personal interaction with faculty, local and place-relevant education, experiential learning, value, accessibility, and national standing (of faculty and learning)
- Discussion of the need to share stories related to these hallmarks both on the legislative and mill-levy education fronts

Senate-Sponsored Faculty Discussion Sessions

- **Next session Oct. 7:** *Faculty experiences with benefits-access, FMD, and related HR services.* Senators, see email and forward to colleagues.
- Weds 3:15-4:30, LJH 346
- ***All faculty welcome!*** These discussions are *hosted* by Faculty Senate but their intent is to engage faculty all around campus who have an interest in or experience with the discussion topic
- Purpose is gaining perspective, input, deliberation toward Senate initiatives and communication with other campus stakeholders and administrators
- Proposals for topics? (can also be sent to Doug, Leila, or Senate Steering)

Senate Open Discussion

Public Comment

(Two minutes per person)

Do I have a motion to adjourn?

Second?

Next regular meeting: **September 30, 2026**