



YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

1 Tressel Way, Youngstown, Ohio 44555

Academic Senate Meeting

Meeting Minutes – October 1, 2025

The Academic Senate met at 4:00 PM on October 1, 2025, Debartolo Hall Rm 132. Attendance at the meeting has been logged separately from these recorded minutes. This meeting was video recorded and will be made available, along with supporting documentation for presentations made during the senate meeting separately.

The meeting was called to order by Dr Chet Cooper, Chair. Dr Chet Cooper certified that quorum was present (Excused absences: Dr Shannon Dudash, Dr John DeSantis, Mr. Ali Aleliaw). The meeting began with a majority approval of today's agenda. The recording of minutes from the September 3rd meeting recording and minutes were approved by the senate majority.

The meeting began with President Bill Johnson addressing the senate. President Johnson highlighted his university address last Monday and indicated that everything is pointing in the right direction at YSU. President Johnson highlighted the hard work of faculty as a reason for the positive direction. In addition, President Johnson highlighted the following items and took questions from the audience:

- The positive direction of Youngstown State University, including record-breaking enrollment (2 years back to back of increasing enrollment) and graduation rates (highest number of students graduating last year in university history).
- President Johnson emphasized the importance of faculty in student education and motivation.
- YSU plans to establish a secondary operating location in Steubenville following the closure of Eastern Gateway Community College which was effective 9-30-25.
- The university signed a three-party agreement to manage operations in Steubenville, focusing on logistics and planning.
- Shannon Tyrone is heading up the team to get the Steubenville site ready. Steubenville location will be classified as a “secondary operating location..”
- Community open house in Jefferson county planned with media to be present to highlight the programs that will be offered.
- YSU is not going to mirror all the administration and all of the overhead that we have here. The plan is to manage that campus.
- We are the only university in the state that now has a community college structure.
- There is no longer a community college for this region since Eastern gateway went under and it's the only region in the state that has this many counties and this large of a region without a community college.
- Next Tuesday, President Johnson will have an event to answer questions that individuals may have following the university address last week. This event is scheduled for next Tuesday (10/7) at 10 am in Williamson Hall.

- This Friday (10/3) is the opening of Arsenic and Old Lace at Ford theater. President Johnson to play a role in the play (there will be a total of six shows). President Johnson extended an invitation to faculty to attend.

The meeting then shifted to a report from the Executive Committee by the chair, Dr Chet Cooper. Dr Cooper only had one announcement and that was the appointment of Jackie Mercer as the new chair of the general education committee.

Dr Bob Kramer, chair of the Elections and Balloting Committee, presented an update on the recent chair elections (3 initial candidates: Dr Mike Costarell, Dr Chet Cooper, and Dr Martha Pallante). The election which ran over the last week required a separate runoff election (there was a tie between Dr Chet Cooper and Dr Martha Pallante). There were 54 votes casted from about 94 eligible voters. The results were as follows: Dr Martha Pallante (30) and Dr Chet Cooper (24). Dr Martha Pallante to assume the role as Senate Chair next year with Dr Chet Cooper to become the Senate Vice Chair. Dr Kramer also reported that there is a need to fill a seat on the Elections and Balloting Committee for the WCBA rep. Anyone from WCBA who may be interested should let Dr Chet Cooper or Dr Martha Pallante know. Charter and Bylaw committee also needs two representatives that can be from anywhere. If interested, please let Dr Bob Kramer or Dr Martha Pallante know. Dr Kramer also announced that he is setting up elections for part-time senators in the next week or two. Dr Cooper expressed his congratulations to both Dr Martha Pallante and Dr Mike Costarell who was the 3rd candidate. Dr Martha Pallante takes over the Senate Chair role on January 1, 2026.

Senate Committee Reports

- Dr Thomas Wakefield submitted a report from the graduate curriculum committee. No senate members objected to the report. The report was recommended for acceptance by the Board of Trustees by majority consent.

Old Business

No old business was presented.

New Business

Dr David Graham, the new associate provost for student success, presented on a recently established “YSU Student Success Plan.” The YSU student success plan was developed in partnership with Noah Elevens. The final report was completed in February of 2025. The following are some highlights from Dr Graham’s presentation:

- The plan included a lot of people from across the university, faculty staff, and students to inform what are the some of the things that we can do as a university.
- The biggest recommendation that came from the report is the need to create a collaborative student success working group or task force. We have created a student collaborative group that has twenty members on it that represents all entities of the university. It represents the faculty staff, division of student success, division of enrollment services, enrollment planning, and financial aid. There are nine working groups to execute and move the plan forward.
- The student success document has several action plans that will be worked on (examples: improving data, improving advising through centralization, reimagine 1st year experience and orientation).

Dr Graham took questions from the audience. A question was raised regarding registration in banner for students who register for a future course but end up not receiving a passing grade for the required pre-requisite course. Discussion ensued with clarification provided on the banner system process. Dr Graham invited everyone to the provost tail gait on Saturday (10/4) before the football game. Dr Graham requested that interested individuals RSVP.

Dr Dawna Cerney presented a policy proposal from the Academic Standards Committee. Highlights of the proposal include:

- New freshmen that are coming in with a GPA below 2.0, are obliged to work under excerpt one of the policy.
- Recommendation is to drop item 6 under excerpt one in which case the students that are coming in from another institution are obligated to fill items one through five, and then they get treated like any other freshmen coming in. Rationale for recommendation includes allowing students to correct “bad habits” they may have acquired at other institutions they were previously at and it helps with retention and retaining.

Dr Cerney offered an opportunity for questions. No questions were asked. No further discussion was started. A vote was taken with senate majority voting in favor of the change with no abstains or votes against the change. The policy modification passed.

Paul McFadden, Heather Chun, and Tiffany Thomas presented on the Scholarship awarding program.

Highlights include:

- With the passage of SB 1, the university wanted to make sure the university was not exposed. They reached out to the state for a ruling, and that ruling was as long as your private, independent university foundation is the selector, then that is their business.
- We are awarding minority scholarships again this year, gender based scholarships, nationality based scholarships. We are awarding all scholarships, but moving forward, the foundation has to be the selector.
- In July, an initial memo was sent to Dean’s and Chairs and those listed as points of contact for scholarship committees. That memo just mentioned again that the process was going to change, that the foundation would be responsible for all endowed scholarships that are held at the foundation currently and those that are created in the future.
- The endowed programmatic funds that process is going to stay as it has. So you will see NO changes there. The information will continue to be communicated by the controller's office and your budgets will be continued to be communicated in that manner.
- Awards as of now will also continue to follow their traditional path.
- We have moved forward in contracting with the software company developing an application.
- We are simultaneously working on a new website for the foundation, which is not ready yet, but it will include some FAQs for students and parents.
- A second memo was sent today to hit high level items and to convey where the scholarship information can be found.
- We will have committees that will not include any YSU employees, their foundation employees, reviewing those, making selections, and passing those along to financial aid.
- We will be notifying students through letters, letting them know that they have been selected, letting them know how to go through the thank you process, which has always been required.
- We are reaching out to those deans to schedule a time to meet with them and their representatives or anyone that they feel should be in attendance to understand the process and to create a system

so that we can get you the information that you will need for that.

The group took questions from the audience. There were multiple questions that were taken with subsequent discussion.

Dr Cooper called for the meeting to adjourn. Dr David Asch voted in favor with Dr Donald Priour offering a second. The motion to adjourn was approved by senate majority.

Minutes submitted by:

Edmund Ickert

Secretary, Academic Senate