

University of New Orleans Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes, 25 March 2026

University of New Orleans Faculty Senate Meeting Roster, 25 Mar 2026

		Representation	First	Last	Term	Committee	Attendance
1	1	Administration	Scott	Pentzer	25-26		HP
2	1	Staff Council	Coleen	Maidlow	25-26		
3	1	SG President	Joshua	Trochez	25-26		
4	1	Alumni Assoc	Nerolie	Rayson	25-26		
5	1	Adjunct	David	Lambour	25-26		DB
6	1	COBA	Bridget	Bordelon	25-28	B	Bridget Bordelon
7	2	COBA	Kabir	Hassan	23-26	A	
8	3	COBA	DJ	Min	25-28	D	
9	4	COBA	Ray	Rodriguez	23-26	B	Ray Rodriguez
10	5	COBA	Cherie	Trumbach	24-27	SE, C	Cherie
11	1	COE	Satish	Bastola	24-27	C	SB
12	2	COE	Damon	Smith	24-27	SE, A, B	
13	3	COE			23-26	SE, D	
14	1	COLAEHD	Brian	Beabout	23-26	A	BB
15	2	COLAEHD	David	Beriss	24-27	B	DB
16	3	COLAEHD	Juana	Ibanez (S)	24-27	SE, B	Juana
17	4	COLAEHD	Max	Krochmal	24-27	D	Max
18	5	COLAEHD	Marc	Landry	23-26	Gen Ed.	
19	6	COLAEHD	James	Mokhiber	24-27	SE, D	James
20	7	COLAEHD	Andrea	Mosterman	24-27	D	Andrea
21	8	COLAEHD	Marla	Nelson	23-26	A	Marla
22	9	COLAEHD	Grace	Reinke	25-28	C	Grace
23	10	COLAEHD	Lisa	Verner	24-27	A	Lisa
24	11	COLAEHD	Michelle	Wade	23-26	A	
25	1	COS	Joel	Atallah	24-27	C	
26	2	COS	Rachel	Clostio	23-26	A	Rachel
27	3	COS	Corey	Dumesnil	25-28	A	CD
28	4	COS	Simon	Lailvaux	23-26	D	
29	5	COS	Steve	Rick	23-26	SE, B	SR
30	6	COS	Ben	Samuel	25-28	A	Ben
31	7	COS	Chris	Summa (Pres)	23-26	SE, A	CS
32	8	COS	Phoebe	Zito	23-26	Gen Ed.	PZ
33	1	Library	Abram	Himelstein	25-28	B	AH
34	2	Library	Connie	Phelps (VP)	24-27	SE, D	CP

Key: Bold: Elected Senate Governance

Blue: Senate Executive Committee

Committees:

A - Academic

B - Budget

C - University Curriculum Committee (UCC)

D - Administrative

Gen Ed. - General Education

1. Roll Call (Juana Ibanez (JI), Secretary) Quorum is confirmed.

2. Approval of the Minutes (JI)

25 Feb 2026 Minutes. Cory Dumesnil (CD) motioned to accept the minutes. David Beriss (DB) seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Slide Presentation commenced. Title slide included a raccoon-laden, unofficial UNO logo.



Laughter ensued.

3. Grace Reinke (GR) and UCW (United Campus Workers Union)

Slide:

- This semester UCW developed a platform of guiding principles that we would like to see reflected in the transition process:
 - Maintaining UNO as a comprehensive public research university (with R2 classification) that provides affordable education and innovative research to the New Orleans and Gulf South community
 - A commitment to involve students in determining any future increases to tuition/fees.
 - Protecting academic freedom for all faculty and resisting censorship on campus.
 - Structural independence—rather than becoming a satellite campus, the university will remain intact and will continue to offer degrees in liberal arts, sciences, and fine arts
 - Ensuring a balance of voices on transition team and its working groups, including participation of faculty members on all academic subcommittees and frontline staff in essential student-serving departments (e.g., enrollment services, financial aid)
 - No changes to healthcare insurance and other fringe benefits without including faculty and staff participation in reviewing and selecting alternatives.
 - No public subsidies for private real estate projects without equal investment in the university's core teaching and research missions

Discussion:

- GR shared with the Faculty Senate (FS) what the UCW [*United Campus Workers union*] has been up to. Thank you to the Senate for coordinating the triumvirate Town Hall with the Staff Counsel/UCW/FS.
- The floor was yielded to Max Krochmal (MK) who described the role of the UCW. Goal is to collaboratively work with everyone on campus to make sure that everyone works together across campus. If you earn a paycheck from UNO you can become a member. Dues are based on income. The next slide demonstrates the UCW platform with the core areas of agreement for the transition to LSU.

Slides:

- JR agreed at the beginning of the semester to meet with our organizing committee monthly, so we have taken this platform to her and appreciate her willingness to meet. She ensures that she wants transparency in these processes.
- On February 26th we met with JP Morrell and Matt Willard's offices at City Hall to fill them in on the transition process. They were concerned with the speed of the transition and the lack of transparency and sent a letter to the transition committee requesting a UCW member be added to the executive committee.
- In response to that letter, Rico Alvendia has agreed to meet with UCW members in the next week or so.
- City council members and their staff recommended we also meet with the Moreno administration. On Tuesday March 17th members had a meeting with the mayor's office who expressed support for UCW and a desire to be included more in the transition process.
- The new state representative for UNO's district, Ed Murray, has also agreed to meet with Organizing Committee members to discuss workers' concerns and the transition process.
- These meetings have shown us that there is strong support for UNO across city leaders. We hope that they will be more included as stakeholders in this process going forward.
- UCW is also planning to mobilize volunteers or movers around the move-out from LA building next month.

Discussion:

- MK - We do not have a voice on the transition team and the process isn't over yet so UCW needs to be at the table.
- Abram Himmelstein (AH) – We (UCW) are speaking with public officials to keep the University well-funded by the state. JR Weiland (JRW) questioned why a union was needed. This is a Union that links staff and faculty. The furloughs done last year would have been improved dramatically with UCW input. The last round of raises given were not doled out equitably and the union can help with that. The lack of adjuncts decision could have been dealt with differently if the UCW had been pulled in.
- GR – UCW organizes across the city. We have lots of active leaders, lots of organized labor, and lots of public officials that graduated from UNO. JRW is considered as the nexus of power at the University. She has agreed to meet with the UCW and agreed to transparency. In February we met with Councilmembers Morell and Willard. They know UCW is a pre-recognition union. They were not aware of many of the things that have occurred at the state level and the councilmembers have sent a letter to the LSU Transition Team asking for a UCW to have a seat at the Transition Team meeting. Rico Alvendia (RA - LSU Board of Supervisors, District 2) has been cc'd and will meet with the UCW next week. At City Hall it was recommended that they talk with mayor's office. The UCW got advice on how to approach the State. There is lots of strong support for UNO and almost all spoken with at City Hall are UNO graduates and so they are surprised at the speed of the transition and lack of information on it on the news. Lots of UCW members are impacted by the move out of Liberal Arts. The Union is using funds to help colleagues move out of Liberal Arts. We see power growing across the city from stake holders and people in high places.
- CS – Thank you. You are all doing great work. As it was explained to me, the Transition Team work is over. Now we are down to JRW and President Rousse (LSU A&M) calling the shots from this

point on. Darrel Kruger (DK) is consulting with Troy Blanchard (TB, provost at LSU A&M) but TB's role is advisory to DK only.

- MK – RA is the Louisiana Board of Supervisors representative for UNO so it is good to have a normal relationship with him. We are interested in the welfare of all workers on campus. The dream is to have collective bargaining strength so things like summer salary can be negotiated.

4. President's Updates (Chris Summa, CS)

Slide:

a. Town Hall Postmortem

Secretary (JI) is working on editing the recorded transcript.

What went well?

What could be improved?

Discussion

- It was well organized
- CS – too much floor space to cut across (between chairs and microphone) but we will fix that for next time.
- If there is another, we need marching orders as a meeting wrap up.

Slide:

4. President's Updates (continues)

b. Closure of Liberal Arts Building and Master Planning and Space Utilization Committee.

James Mokhiber and Steve Rick will speak on this.

Discussion:

- Steve Rick (SR) – The closing of LA demanded reconsideration of Milneburg closure and its problems.
- CS – Please review the history of this [Space Utilization] committee.
- Jim Mokhiber (JM) – When there were conflicts over rooms in the past, claims were then sent to the Space Utilization committee and discussed; collegial decisions were made and then signed off on by the President. The Space Utilization Committee was created around the time that the most recent Master Plan was created – pre-pandemic. It has been a zombie committee since the pandemic – there have been rare meetings. Recently there have been questions raised about who should be on it. But it has not been a very active committee under the current President's office. Because of the closing of Milneburg the remaining Space Utilization faculty members have tried to reconvene the committee. Mark Pyle (MP) was in charge of the meetings. It was frustrating at times but it did help with some of the heavy-handed decisions trying to be made. For example, Milneburg was the only building closed despite attempts to close other buildings at the same time. Liberal Arts is a very historic building, with a great courtyard. Money was reinvested in Liberal Arts in the last year. Some of mistakes with a Milneburg-like timeline are being done again. We think

there should be more flexibility, but the administration is coming down hard on a June 1 date to save money on HVAC use over the summer. Faculty had gone to the Space Utilization committee when first report on space came out. Now we are trying to gauge the reaction of the closing of Liberal Arts with the administration. There is still no process to meaningfully address building closure concerns. JRW, the President, and Provost felt that the process should have been clear to us and that the proposals being made about who is moving where is all tentative and only the President will finalize plans. MP has written to CS saying the Space Utilization Committee will be convened. 1/3 of the faculty placement decisions have not been made. Does the Senate want to participate in a meaningful space process on campus? We don't want to rubber stamp whatever the administrators are suggesting. If we don't have a charge, with clear processes on how changes are submitted, then I can't continue as a member of the committee as this [what exists] is not a meaningful process. I am hoping that this next Space Utilization meeting will allow for a new change. LSU doesn't have a space utilization process so it is not likely to continue after July 1.

- CS – “I’ve worked at a bunch of places and they tell me where to sit” is what has been stated, so it is a top down process for the administrators. Who here will be affected by the closure of LA? (About 7 raised hands). What went on in the process for you?
- We met with the Division of Social Inquiry in LA and it has been a frustrating process. I’ve been shown the Bicentennial Education Building (ED) and Kirshman Hall (KH). It was made clear that the first floor was the only floor available in ED. English and Philosophy will be on the second floor according to Dan Gonzales (DG). I didn’t have access to all the spaces. The Space Utilization Study says that there is lots of office space on campus but most of it is not consolidated. The spaces in ED need a lot of work. Faculty in the School of Education have sent a letter to the Dean with concerns about the safety of the building because of a cancer cluster – 6 over five years. For that reason many in History and Philosophy are concerned about being moved into that building. They say that testing has been done but the only report done was visual testing; “there is no asbestos falling from the ceiling or visible mold.” MP says that is all that is needed. The carpeted rooms are of concern. The smells in building are legitimate. We are not being offered a similar space to what we have in Liberal Arts. When we met with JRW she said ED would be tested but MP is saying we are unreasonable for asking for this. KH has space but there are no communal spaces and no reception area for 6 different programs. All the offices are spread around. How can you have departmental culture if it is spread out so far? There are ways to consolidate a floor for us, but the BA folks had endowments to pay for certain things in the building and so they cannot make space for us. It is an option to have an office there but that is not a way to keep us all together.
- The first tour was of ED so we got a floor plan and list and started marking potential offices but the floor plan is inaccurate. No one knows what is going on in each building. Facilities clearly does not know.
- CS – is there a reason we shouldn’t crowd source this so we can figure out where everyone is?
- If everyone could update their profile in UNO Workday with their office location that would help. [To change your profile address in Workday type in “change my work place” in the search bar and edit from there.]

- Moving people in means moving others around. Graduate students, emeritus, faculty who never come to campus, multiple offices for individual faculty for many reasons all have to be dealt with.
- What good is doing a space study when it doesn't provide specifics on where and what? We are being pushed into whatever space is available but not as a cohesive unit. Perhaps the high schoolers are producing an aroma. Or is aroma from no one being on the second floor? We don't know if anyone is really walking through the spaces and this Hunger Game aspect where we are pitted against one another so we are fighting over spaces is awful. So when JRW says where we are supposed to sit and space is re-created to match the existing space in a safe building that would be useful. We need to set up the principles for space. Students don't like campus. The administrators close the building and then find space. Perhaps the Senate should designate principles and processes for dealing with space.
- President KJ said that we do need principles to guide relocation. We have a proposed resolution. There is no effort by the administration to come up with a process.
- "First come, first served," is not a good way to move forward.
- DG is trying to figure out how to fit everyone into ED.
- I lobbied to get my colleagues to move into 2d floor [ED] but lost that argument. DG has no knowledge about KH.
- Is the resolution to make recommendations?
- What is the committee membership? Would the composition be Mark Pyle, Deans, Chairs?
- Facilities, planning and stakeholders are needed.
- There are other buildings that have no one making plans after Library was used to create PEC. The Master Plan is great but decision makers are not talking about what is in the buildings now and how to grow the University. If we wanted to reconfigure the Library we are constrained with no money. That has never been addressed. If we can plan the moves, then we would be a better campus. Libraries change over time but our library continues to be blindsided by decisions for space. Are you talking to the people that are giving up space? Long-term plans are needed.
- Was there ever a committee that laid everything out to make decisions?
- We have Administrative Policies that say the Deans have responsibility for assigning spaces but the Library has not been on those space committees. We need to discuss how to better utilize what is already in place. We are also not having conversations about how safe the buildings are as chunks of the façade fall off.
- A big problem is there is no vision. "Shut down the building." There is no holistic thinking about what to do with the space. How do we do that by May 12 to be in place by June 1? Everyone needs to consolidate their spaces instead of some buildings being more empty than others. Student and faculty friendly spaces are needed.
- We appreciate concerns and work from committee. For those of you in KH if you see a place that may work for the Division of Social Inquiry that would be helpful. We have money to help.
- In KH there is a plan being rolled out for student space. The intention is to make it multipurpose. Speaking symposiums are held on the first floor. Funding came from donors. A lot of spaces were donor funded for student spaces. There are more things to come. You need to have a space

utilization vision for growth and decline. KH does have room but not what is needed here for the Division of Social Inquiry.

- It would be a brain trust that the University will gather to make holistic decisions with all the stakeholders and make hard decisions for moving places.
- We need leadership. An example from MH is if you don't have a place to successfully do fundraising then we are making it harder to raise money.
- More time could be used to raise money to repair Liberal Arts but we are not given that option. There are new opportunities there. We all deserve to be in a place where we are wanted and welcome and with which we can identify. That is not what is being offered now. There should be an effort for the vision of what the spaces are and how to use them to grow the University.
- CS –A first draft for the resolution on screen. JM and I will add the information from today's discussion so that we can vote on it electronically.

Slide:

4. President's Updates (continued)

b. Closure of Liberal Arts Building and Master Planning and Space Utilization Committee

Charge:

The Master Planning and Space Utilization Committee consists of representatives of internal and external constituents and is; supported by an external consultant to develop a comprehensive campus master plan that takes into account such factors as the University mission, strategic goals, anticipated enrollment growth, the environment, sustainability, energy efficiency, core infrastructure needs, building priority needs, departmental/unit consolidation, technology infrastructure, campus safety and security, green space, transportation, campus design standards, and the integration of the campus with the surrounding community.

An ongoing task of the committee is space utilization. The committee reviews and recommends the effective, efficient, and equitable management, utilization, and modification of all university space to the President and Executive Cabinet. Requests for and notification of all vacated space, new space, and changes to the use of space are submitted to the committee and reviewed in accordance with the policies and procedures. The committee is responsible for ensuring that audits and assessments of the utilization of space are conducted and that policies and procedures are periodically reviewed.

Membership:

Mark Pyle (co-Chair), Taryn Len Chevis (co-Chair), Kathryn Dungy, Melanie Champagne, Joy Nicole Ballard, Kara Marie Bisceglie, Cliff Golz, Abram Shalom Himmelstein, Meredith King, Matthew Field, Edgar Gilberto Avila Jr., Tiffany Charise Soublet, James P Mokhiber, Bejide Legania, Steven W Rick

Slide:

Possible Resolution

- The UNO Faculty Senate affirms its support for a meaningful space utilization process, coordinated by an engaged and representative Space Utilization Committee with a clear charge and representative membership of all stakeholders, including the two members nominated by the president of the Faculty Senate. Transparent procedures to determine the use of campus space and buildings should be based on clearly-elaborated, shared beliefs about the way space shapes campus life, academic community, our teaching and scholarly activity. Collaborative and equitable recommendations should be a goal of those who participate and forward proposals to the UNO Executive Cabinet and President (and future) Chancellor.

Discussion:

- We have a short term problem where faculty have to be out by June 1. We need to make sure that that will work, too. Is there something that the Senate can put together to facilitate that?
- If we are not satisfied with charge, the resolution can be set up to discuss the June 1 move and then grow the charges.
- We ask that there is a meeting with stakeholders and informed members of the community. This is a UNO thing as it is happening before July 1.

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4. President's Updates (continued)

c. Faculty Workload Analysis (Summa - in process)

I have obtained the raw data from Kazuaki Mai and am writing some code to analyze it – an excel spreadsheet is clunky for this sort of thing – about 70% there (I haven't had much time)

Gist : sections like 7000 and 7050 can be labeled as irrelevant, and multiple simultaneous sections can be combined (either automatically or based on user input) to get true numbers)

Slide:

4. President's Updates (continued)

d. The 82nd Annual Conference of Louisiana Colleges & Universities (Friday, April 24th - all day)

Agenda Highlights

The day is designed for high-level insights and collaborative strategy:

Higher Ed Where We've Been: Barry Erwin, Chief Policy Officer — Better LA

Where We are Today: Higher ed leadership panel featuring Commissioner of Higher Education, **Dr. Kim Hunter Reed**; Senior Ed Policy Advisory to Gov. Jeff Landry, **Dr. Sabarah Kingham**; and leaders from the state university systems including University of Louisiana System President, **Dr. Rick Gallot**.

Strategic Breakout Discussions: Key Issues and Opportunities We Face.

The Future of Higher Ed in Louisiana: Where are We Going? What's Next?

Event Logistics

Date: Friday, April 24, 2026

Time: Registration & Breakfast at 8:00 a.m. | Program begins at 8:30 a.m.

Location: University of Holy Cross, New Orleans

Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/CLCU2026>

Discussion:

- CS – April 24 \$50 conference. Everyone is invited to attend.

4. President's Updates (continued)

e. Request from Registrar – Student Participation Verification

- Administrative purge (after 14 days) is important because we don't want students who signed up but never attended to be charged
- In the past this was done manually by faculty
- Currently it's being done by looking into Canvas and seeing if a student has "interacted with" Canvas
- Because faculty use Canvas in very different ways (some not much at all) this isn't the best solution
- Registrar asks if we could weigh in on whether or not it would be OK to reinstitute the "day 14 census" manual process again – it would make Charlotte's job much easier and fewer students would fall through the cracks.

Discussion:

- I would support that.
- I use Canvas a lot so is it something that we can opt in or out?
- CS – I will speak to her about having an opt in to allow Canvas users to not have to do a manual 14-day census again.
- Perhaps it is possible to create assignment for students to check off on in Canvas to get them in there?
- CS – I will ask about an op- in mechanism or a 14th-day assignment

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4. President's Updates (continued)

f. Upcoming Elections (not on agenda – apologies)

- Goal : seat incoming new Senators for next meeting (April 15th) which will be in the UC's Innsbruck Room
- Next Meeting : collect and read nominations for elected positions : President, Vice President, Secretary
- Final meeting of semester: Hold Elections

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5. LSU Transition

a. Provost's Academic Recommendations for Programs

- I'm going to let Rachel Clostio (RC) talk about this in her report from Academic Committee

slide:

5. LSU Transition (continued)

b. Fall Tuition and Fees

- We did a 3.37% increase – we'll increase tuition by 6.63% to the maximum allowed for Fall and consolidate some fees
- Perception matters – our ROI is phenomenal – and JR would like tuition and not fees to increase going forward
- Budget-wise: break even is at 9K students, based on our original footprint (Norman Barnum, CFO)
- If we do this correctly the intersection of affordability and value can create growth

5. LSU Transition (continued)

c. University Policies Across the Transition

- Bill Sharpton, Karen, and Norm Whitley have been looking at this through the lens of the substantive change proposal SACSCOC
- What policies do we need to: *Add? Discontinue? Revise?*
- Some will be a "before July 1 timeline", some "December" and some can be pushed into 2027
- In the LSU system policies just have consecutive numbers, and there isn't an automatic update
- At the campus level, we've always had APs – LSU has "Policy Statements"

- Bill has grouped the policies based on category - they are unequally spread across categories
- Now – organized by who supervises it – sometimes a faculty one really relates to HR
- Academic – almost no policies at either System because most of our policies are the Board of Regents
- Example: UL System has a “review of prior experience for credit” but LSU doesn't have one – that’s going away so we need to craft our own policy.
- Karen is doing HR – and has a template for what a policy statement might look like
- NOTE: Permanent Memorandum is at the System Level (LSU) and a Policy Statement is local

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5. LSU Transition (continued)

d. Meeting of FSEC with President, Provost, and CAO (2/23/2026)

- We hadn’t spoken with JR as a group for some time
- We talked about
 - Liberal Arts Building and Faculty – as mentioned by Steve and Jim, there was significant misunderstanding about the charge of the Space Committee and order of operations
 - Program Closures/Modifications -> reiterated that we don’t see the logic in closing programs (even low completer programs) that are “free”
 - Budget Model -> undecided
- We’ve scheduled our next meeting for 4/13
- Hopefully we’ll have Rico Alvendia for this one

6. Committee Reports

Academic Committee

slide:

- Starting Summer 2027 schedule will change to two 5-week sessions
 - Summer A (5 weeks) and Summer B (5 weeks)
 - A 10-week course may be an option for some courses.
- Request to add “Reading Days” at the end of each semester between the last day of classes and finals.

slide:

- Possibility that at least some of the current dean positions may be split in the future
 - Business & COLAED
- Split of chair positions ????

slide:

- Low completer programs
 - BA in Art History will be closing
 - MS in Tax Accounting will be closing
 - BA in Theater will be closing
 - B.S. in Mathematics may be changed to a B.S. in Data Science (4 year)
 - MA in Romance Languages – there are ~40 people in this currently
 - BA Film and Theater
 - BA International Studies – attempt to save this by producing an LSUOnline version
 - MS Applied Physics
 - M.Ed. C&I – still on the low completer list – they have persuaded the Dean to fight for it.

slide:

Academic Committee

- Low-earning programs
 - LA House Bill 229: (HB229)
 - Proposed law prohibits any political subdivision of the state from allocating or expending local public funds on low-earning outcome programs.
 - UNO Programs that “fail” the Do Not Harm test based on data from U.S. Dept of Education
 - B.S. Drama/Theatre Arts and Stagecraft.
 - B.S. Fine and Studio Arts.
 - M.S. Student Counseling and Personnel Services.

<https://www.aei.org/education/low-earning-degrees-will-soon-lose-access-to-federal-loans-is-yours-on-the-list/>

Discussion:

- BA Art History going away
- MS Tax Accounting going away
- BS Mathematics may be changed to BS in Data Science with no more discussion of 3-year program
- Film and Theater – just Theater portion is going away as a degree
- Still under discussion is the MA in Romance Languages.
- BAIS – has no faculty attributable to the program. 10-days ago it was the size of the program that is the concern from the BoR (200 programs are small across the state). The BAIS Advisory board met with counter proposal offers that were not immediately accepted including an undergraduate certificate in BAIS. At the last minute, the morning of a 2:30 pm decision deadline, a corollary online BA degree with in person degree was suggested. LSU Online is weighing in heavily on program delivery so it is worth understanding the role of LSU Online in saving or killing program decisions.
- Will they will allow in-person classes with LSU Online? What we were told is that we have to have a comparable program.
- Although the C&I program is still on low completer there has been significant enlistment for C&I.
- When is deadline for final suggestions?
- The report likely to have to be put in by April 9.
- Why is MA Romance Languages on the list?
- It is not considered a core offering for workforce development for our area.
- Saturday met with parents highlighting our programs and now to find out that some may be killed is crazy.
- What was on the low completer list in previous springs? What were the plans to make the programs succeed if they were on the list?
- Enhancement plans, curriculum changes, new courses, etc. in works to address low completer status.
- How much is focus on low completer process vs HB 229?
- There is some posturing for the legislature, likely.

Note: Discussions continued including perspectives for MS Applied Physics

Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction but JI had to leave the secretarial duties to teach class at 2 pm. No information on the other committee reports was relayed to JI to be included in these minutes.