

Faculty Senate President's Report- November 12, 2025, meeting

1). Faculty Senate Announcements

We need a representative from the senate to serve on the University Institutional Events Committee. It will provide strategic leadership and vision for key academic ceremonies, including Undergraduate and Graduate Commencement as well as Honors Convocation for Spring 2026. If you are interested, we will be asking for volunteers on Wednesday at our meeting. If more than one person is interested, we will hold an election.

Please let me know if there is anything exciting or interesting happening in your departments. I am compiling a list to let the BOR know about all the great work occurring on campus.

We will be looking for volunteers for the Budget Committee at Senate on Wednesday. We need to two senators with a preference for one person from the finance committee and one from at-large. If we have a lot of interest, we will hold an election

Reminder: You are invited to attend an important **Academic Freedom Town Hall** on **Friday, November 21, from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM** in the **Adanti Student Center Theater**. This event will also be streamed online for those unable to attend in person.

The session will include a presentation and Q&A about academic freedom, covering topics such as:

- The current climate for academic freedom in higher education
- Understanding what academic freedom is—and is not
- The First Amendment and academic freedom
- Academic freedom in the collective bargaining agreement
- Procedures for processing claims of academic freedom violations

3). The Faculty Senate Executive Committee and Faculty Leadership Council (FLC) meetings with administration –

The faculty leadership committee met twice this month. The first meeting was to discuss the idea of an internal search for provost starting soon, which is a suggestion brought up by President Bulmer. After much discussion, we decided to support the suggestion for several reasons. One reason has to do with the budget. These searches are ridiculously expensive, and we have a lot of

talented people within the system. The second reason is that having someone in a permanent leadership committee might be a nice idea. Currently, we are in an interim city. Having someone who can state their name with starting with interim will be a refreshing change. We did add some stipulations, however. We stated that if no one was found internally, we will switch to an external search. We also stated that regardless of how the search was conducted, there must be faculty representation on the search committee. We conducted a straw poll about whether it should be an internal or external search and whether it should occur sooner or later. 92% were in favor of an internal search and 67% were in favor of a search occurring now.

In our second, regular meeting, we met with Provost Irwin. President Bulmer was at another meeting. We received an update on Zoom. They will not sign the standard contract from the state. It, in effect, tells vendors that they cannot sue the university if something goes wrong even if it is the university's fault. The contract is going to the attorney general's office to see if we can use Zoom without the contract. Chances are very strong that we will not have Zoom past January 28, 2026.

We also asked about support and training to meet the deadline that our courses and postings are accessible. Provost Irwin is going to investigate that.

As many of you know, the incident with ICE being a mile from campus resorted in significant amounts of misinformation. We reiterated that there needs to be a clear line of communication in place quickly. I had brought this up at the town hall as well and Jordan Jones and I co-wrote an email to President Bulmer requesting action be taken. Regardless of political beliefs, I believe we can all agree that this was disruptive to the university. At the town hall, President Bulmer apologized for the lack of communication and during the FLC meeting, Provost Irwin assured us that plans were being made.

There was also significant discussion about the new AVP and budget managers' positions. There is a strong belief amongst the faculty that clerical staff is more necessary to the university than these positions. Provost Irwin feels that the budget managers will allow work to flow more effectively and perhaps reduce the need for as much clerical aid.

6). *BOR Meeting October 23, 2025*

At the BOR meeting, the president of the Student Government Association gave a speech about the impact of Eastern on its students and the pride they feel in being part of an institution that wrote and signed a declaration supporting the rights of immigrants and undocumented students. Chancellor Maduko gave kudos to all who educated our communities on the importance of Hispanic Heritage month. He also said that they were monitoring the impact of the federal government shutdown and communicating with the state government. One of the main themes of

the meeting was the budget and the strategic plan to spend down the surplus. There was a presentation by the CFO about the surplus and outlined how the surplus would be distributed to the various universities. He said that the buildup occurred over at least 10 years, and this would not be a yearly distribution.

There were several speakers from Central who reacted to the rewriting of the strategic plan. Several called it “anticipatory compliance”. President Toro defended her actions. Both Western and Eastern presidents stated that while they respected President Toro and her actions, each university was unique and addressed the federal government pressure in different ways. Chair Guay stated that no sort of compact or contract has come to System Office.

7). Contract negotiations

This is just a reminder that contract negotiations are ongoing. It is the first time it is an open negotiation with members allowed to watch. Consider joining the watch party on campus or streaming the negotiations. If you do watch, you are under the same restrictions as a member of the negotiating team, which means you may not talk to a member of the press about what is going on. Be sure to register for the link regardless of whether you are going to the watch party or watching on your own. It helps to ensure an accurate count and demonstrates that an open negotiation is what faculty want.

8). Senate Presidents meeting

We had our monthly meeting last Friday. We discussed several topics including reassign time and how it is distributed at each campus. I reported that at Southern, Provost Irwin has published all the reassign time she gives out and has urged the deans to do the same in an attempt to be transparent. President Adair said that at Central, President Toro has charged the senate with looking at reassign time and they have set up an ad hoc committee. He shared the draft of the charges with me and I am happy to share it with whomever is interested.

One of the best discussions revolved around how we can share with the BOR all the good work happening on campus. I had noticed that the last BOR meeting occurred at Eastern and the one before was at Western. I asked if they knew if it was common practice to hold meetings on campus. It has not been historically. I mentioned that one thing I liked about it was that the public speakers seemed to be mostly from the campus at which the meeting was being held. I would love to have the BOR hear more positive news from Southern. We talked about forming public relations committees to report at BOR meetings. I plan to sign up as a public speaker for

the next meeting and would appreciate it if people would funnel accomplishments and points of pride to me so I can highlight them in the 3 minutes I will be given to speak. I would be very happy if others would volunteer to do this at other meetings because I have class at 11 on Thursdays and last meeting; public comments occurred later in the meeting.

9). Preparation for the meeting on 11/12/2025

Chancellor Maduko will be joining us for this meeting, so please prepare some questions for him. We will also have Nina Cote and Dale Bodyk join us to answer any travel or procurement questions you might have. I will remind you that they will be holding Open houses every Friday from 10-1 in the Wintergreen Banner room.