

Faculty Senate Steering Committee Meeting
Wednesday, August 26, 2026
1:00 to 3:00 PM EST, Conwell 3B
Join Zoom Meeting:

Present: Bognanno (MB), Kolodny (RK), Newman (SN); Ahmad, Curtis, Gallagher, Gamero, Godel, Jiang, Jones, Letarte, Minhas, Norris, Porrata-Doria, Racano, Schirmer, Solow

Absent: Ferretti, Tierney, Bacani

AGENDA

(action items in **bold**)

1. Call to Order by MB—1:03 p.m.
2. Approval of Minutes: April 8, 2026—**Minutes adopted**
3. Introductions
4. President's Report:
 - a. Planning for the Academic Year - Priorities and goals for the year
After crediting Abby Dabrowski and RK for their work on the website, MB listed some priorities:
 - Advancing faculty governance
 - Window of opportunity for greater faculty governance with our new administration that must not be missed
 - Faculty representation in the budget process and budget transparency is coming
 - Stronger faculty representation on Committees of the Board has been requested
 - Consultation of Senate committees on matters that fall within their mission such as online program expansion, General Education, Honors College, etc. has been requested
 - Improve Senate organization and operation
 - More communication—monthly updates instituted
 - Putting inactive committees into abeyance
 - Keeping the website up to date
 - Other critical issues the Senate may address:
 - Budget townhalls are scheduled for November 5th and 19th.
 - Online education

- Limits on international students
- Departments struggling due to faculty attrition

- b. Updates from Meetings with University Leadership - Provost, COO, President
- 1) Meeting with Provost Wentz:
 - She is accustomed to a strong Faculty Senate from her time at ASU
 - We instanced the lack of consultation with the Senate and affected departments in the decision to add 4 year degrees at TU-Rome as the sort of process we want to improve
 - Asked about her agenda, Provost Wentz identified student success, the faculty experience, and community footprint as key elements
 - She confirmed that there will be a pause in the revisions to Gen Ed while she and our new Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies can review it
 - We asked about whether she would be initiating an Academic Program Review and stressed the importance of faculty involvement.
 - She agreed to monthly meetings with the Senate Executive Committee
 - 2) Rich Sobieray, COO
 - We expressed our concerns that the bad elements of RCM, including opacity, lack of sharing of rationale and broad involvement, which carried over to the recent budget cuts, not characterize the process going forward.
 - COO Sobieray assured us that he is committed to faculty involvement and transparency in the budget process.
 - He also discussed his experience helping to turn around academic health systems, which is certainly a plus given Temple's profile.
 - MB and COO Sobieray will be having a follow-up meeting tomorrow to zero in on the new budgeting process and the role of faculty within it.
 - 3) Meeting with President Fry, COO Sobieray, CFO Marino, Deputy Provost Esten, and Dean Boardman
 - We outlined our aims for the Senate for this year and our desire to work closely with the administration.
 - We discussed the place of faculty on the Board of Trustees and Pres. Fry asked us for a proposal
 - We also discussed possibilities for faculty representation on the Budget Advisory Committee.
 - Pres. Fry and Deputy Provost Esten discussed a meeting in October to unveil an audit by an outside group [NIS?]

of our student success strategies. We will be providing names of people from the Senate we would like to be invited.

- Dean Boardman, heading up Strategic Planning, confirmed that he had received the name provided by the Executive Committee for his Strategic Planning Task Force, Prof. Kim Williams (Anthropology).
- President Fry expressed his desire for the administration and the Senate to invite faculty to two sessions introducing them to the nuts and bolts of budgeting. We identified two possible dates.

4) Discussion:

In response to these reports, a member of the FSSC expressed a concern with MB spreading himself too thin—by, say, serving on the Budget Review Committee and multiple committees of the Board of Trustees.

MB agreed and also said that our aim is to broaden participation. It shouldn't just be the President and other officers in these key roles.

Kolodny noted that Prof. Amini last year in her role as President set a new mark for the involvement of faculty on the Board; she was able to attend the whole of Executive Committee meetings.

A member asked about the status of Budget Review Committees in colleges and schools, and it was agreed that it was important to keep them in the loop.

5. **National Call to Action:** Department of Education's National Call to Action - Discussion

<https://www.ed.gov/media/document/national-call-action-university-presidents-and-governing-boards-114351.pdf>

MB reviewed the prior compact, which was forcefully rejected by institutions of Higher Education. Regarding the recent National Call to Action, we invited faculty to contact us with comments and received only one comment, from Prof. Susan Sullivan (Political Science), a member of the Federal Impact Advisory Group. She noted the vagueness of the Department of Education letter and that most of it was probably consistent with what we already espouse. She suggests that an overly aggressive response is not warranted.

A member noted that the material on “intellectual diversity” is problematic, suggesting an attempt on the part of the Trump administration to short-circuit the right of scholars and artists in a discipline to define standards.

Another member noted that this is a real backing off from the 1st Compact and that if we’re going to respond, let’s just address topics in the Call that are important to us and ignore those that we find disagreeable or an overreach.

A third member agreed, and remarked that this might give us the opportunity to address some actual pressing issues, such as grade inflation and the role of AI.

SN expressed his profound distaste for the Call’s overreach and counseled that Temple see how it can act in concert with other universities and trade organizations like the American Council on Education to present a united front; but that he agreed it would better for us to respond on our own terms rather than refuse to respond at all.

MB will take these comments back to the Federal Impact Advisory Group. Further action from the Senate, such as discussion at the Representative Faculty Senate is possible.

6. Vice President's Report: Robin Kolodny

a. Committee status reports

- RK reminded the FSSC about the difficulties posed by Cheryl’s retirement, the lack of membership and other types of dysfunction on a few of our committees.
- Her meeting with VP for Research Josh Gladden was productive and highlighted the importance of the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee, which addresses research misconduct, which is unfortunately likely to increase in the age of AI.
- Steve Newman has agreed to Chair EPPC, although this is pending approval by the members of the committee; he has recruited many new members to serve.
- Electronic voting to approve nominees for committee will save time, and **the FSSC agrees that this method should be used going forward**
- Issues for potential revision through discussion by a bylaws and constitution subcommittee and the FSSC, with discussion and approval by the Representative Faculty Senate as set forth in our

governing documents, which mandate changes to the bylaws first get approved by the FSSC and then by the RFS:

- The maximum number of terms varies by committee and some are silent on the matter; this is something that we will have to attend to.
- Some committee charges need revising to bring them into line with what the committees actually do: e. g., International Programs and RPPC.
- 150 elected Senators is a very high number, and currently we have only 113 Senators serving. We may want/need to reduce that number.
- The RPPC has barely met and the zeroing out of the Faculty Senate Seed Grant was a blow, as was Provost Mandel's setting up of a Research Council, which has not met. Profs. Bellas (Engineering) and Smith (CLA) are eager to re-invigorate the FSSC and will come to the EPPC with a plan. They are particularly interested in policies around the shared use of university resources. Prof. Gilert has agreed to serve; given that there are new policies forthcoming about centers and institutes and her serving as a director of a center, she is a welcome addition.
- Honors Oversight is an active committee and Prof. Simon will be our guest in a couple of weeks. There is much still to be determined about the new Honors College. Among the questions: Will there be a Dean? Specific faculty housed there? 2-3 colleagues from our Honors Oversight Cmte will be on the planning committee
- **It is proposed that the following committees be declared inactive by the EPPC:**
 - Adjunct Advocacy Committee
 - CATA: The last time this committee submitted names for trustees was 1989 and they were all rejected. The quick turnaround required by the admin when they ask us for names makes this committee difficult to function.
A member: There needs to be a culture change—the administration waits too long to ask for these names.
SN: Agreed—we should signal this to the administration, and while not a formal motion, I propose that our normal procedure is for the Exec Committee to consult with the FSSC when we are asked for names if time allows.
- Faculty Disabilities Concerns committee: NO response from Chair or other members; no one wants to serve.

MOTION by RK: I move to make Adjunct Advocacy and CATA and Faculty Disabilities inactive.

SECONDED by Prof. Porrata-Daria

Discussion:

Q: What would it take to re-institute these committees?

MB: Another motion to re-activate

RK: We would let them know that these cmtes are now inactive

No amendments and motion carries unanimously

- **Patent and Inventions Committee:** VP Gladden has asked that this committee be reconstituted. But there are some questions to answer: How many people should be on it? What should the guidelines be for when a faculty member can pursue their own patent or when should Temple pursue it?

A member noted that we have a problem in the bylaws in how committees are specified.

RK moves that the Patent and Invention Committee be changed to active status

Discussion:

A member suggested that this be part of the RPPC.

SN asked if it could be made a subcommittee of the RPPC.

RK noted that VP Gladden wants to keep it separate from RPPC, and Profs. Gallagher and Minhas confirmed that faculty on RPPC are not necessarily knowledgeable about patents and inventions.

Motion unanimously adopted

7. Old Business

8. New Business

9. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn adopted unanimously at 3:02 p.m.

Next Meetings:

Faculty Senate Steering Committee, September 9, 2026

1:00pm-3:00p

m EST, Conwell Hall Conference Room 3B

Faculty Senate Steering Committee, September 23, 2026

1:00pm-3:00pm EST, Conwell Hall Conference Room 3B

Representative Faculty Senate Meeting, September 28, 2026

1:45pm-3:15pm EST, Center for Anti-Racism, 140 Mazur Hall

Guest: Richard Sobieray, COO