

ACADEMIC SENATE MINUTES

DATE: February 19, 2026

PRESENT: Suzette Nynas
Joseph Bryan
Debra Schoenfeld
Kari Dahle-Huff
Christine Whitlatch
Sue Balter-Reitz
Vern Gagnon (ex-officio)
Leslie Weldon (ex-officio)
Eileen Wright (ex-officio)

Matt Queen
Jen Lynn
Mel Walker
John Pannell
Melissa Boehm
Susan Gilbertz (ex-officio)
Lee Vartanian (ex-officio)
Kim Hayworth (ex-officio)

ABSENT: Heather Thompson-Bahm*
Alexandra Slade (student)
Tami Haaland (ex-officio)
Sam Boerboom (ex-officio)

Elijah Sneigoski (student)
Kurt Toenjes (ex-officio)*
Melanie Reaves (ex-officio)*

* *excused*

GUESTS: Brandon Gatlin
Bre Griffin

Kathleen Thatcher

PRESIDING: Suzette Nynas, Chair

Suzette Nynas called the meeting to order at 3:40 p.m. in the Chancellor's Conference Room.

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS

ADA compliance for accessibility on the web begins in April. The CTL can assist with making sure Canvas materials are accessible. There is also a training offered by University Communications & Marketing for CMS users.

The TCE Committee has extended the deadline for COLS 108 proposals one week, to February 27.

II. ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

The minutes of February 5 were accepted as presented.

III. PROVOST & VICE CHANCELLOR REPORTS

Lee Vartanian, Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

The Provost reported that City College held their Healthcare & Safety Expo today, with many workshops and demonstrations for high school students.

Next Tuesday is Faculty Excellence. The members of the student government will also be joining us for the event.

Leslie Weldon, Vice Chancellor for Administration & Finance

Vice Chancellor Weldon reported that summer starts the new biennium for tuition and fees.

Jacket Success training will be offered March 9-13 and 16-20.

Business Services is working closely with Financial Aid on the impacts of the One Big Beautiful Bill (OB3), which will likely change many business procedures, even dropping a class. Christine Whitlatch noted that the ASMSUB are working on supporting students who may have lost funding due to OB3, especially vocational rehab.

Budget workbooks will be out March 2.

The WellCheck will be April 14-15.

The Director of Information Technology candidate did not accept the position, so the search committee is going back to applicants who applied after the deadline.

Kim Hayworth, Vice Chancellor for Student Access & Success

Vice Chancellor Hayworth stated she would bring more information on the OB3 changes for the next Senate meeting. They are planning workshops and information sessions regarding the impacts on financial aid. ASMSUB students are acting as the sounding board for communications that will go out to all students.

City College will hold another expo, for Transportation and Industry, on March 12.

March 27 is Spring Preview Day.

The Native American Achievement Center is assisting students in getting their tribal IDs and encouraging them to carry the ID at all times. The NAAC's next Elder in Residence, Janice Wilson, arrives next week.

Student Health Services is offering their Mental Health First Aid training over Spring Break (March 2 & 4).

Brief enrollment report, with confirmed census numbers:

- Total headcount 4,209, up 3.8%
- Undergraduate headcount 2,600, up 3.6%
- Graduate headcount 226, down 5.8%
- Dual Enrollment headcount 1,383, up 6%
- Full Time Equivalent (FTE) is 2,195, up 2.5%
- For Spring 2026 we had 296 new transfer students
- As a result of everyone's hard work, retention fall-to-spring is 82.8%!

There will be a pop-up retention celebration on Tuesday, February 24 at 10:00 a.m. on the University campus and Thursday, February 26 at 12:30 p.m. at City College.

IV. OTHER REPORTS

None

V. UPCOMING ELECTION/CHAIR TERM

A. Vote to extend Chair Nynas' term one year

Since Dr. Nynas's term as a Senator runs out at the end of this semester, the Senate can vote to extend her term, as per the bylaws. Dr. Nynas handed the meeting over to Vice Chair Melissa Boehm and left the room.

⇒ Motion by Sue Balter-Reitz, seconded by Jen Lynn to **extend Suzette Nynas's term as a Senator one year.**

⇒ Motion carried unanimously.

Dr. Boehm returned control of the meeting to Dr. Nynas.

VI. ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Item 1		
Interdisciplinary Studies Exercise and Sport Leadership Master of Science Moratorium	Added	2/11/2026

⇒ Motion by John Pannell, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve Item 1.**

This program has not had enrollment for many years. The Department hoped to revitalize it, but they do not have the staffing to do so.

⇒ Motion carried.

Item 2		
Teaching Creative and Expository Writing Certificate	Deleted	2/12/2026

⇒ Motion by Jen Lynn, seconded by Matt Queen to **approve Item 2.**

Ana Diaz was unable to attend this meeting, but asked Kathleen Thatcher to speak on this item. As a result of program list reviews for the One App, Ms. Thatcher brought this program to the Department's attention. The program is one course (ENGL 510), which will remain after the program is gone. No students have ever completed this program.

⇒ Motion carried.

VII. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

A. Q&A with University Police Chief Brandon Gatlin

Chief Gatlin noted that the University Police Department (UPD) has good relationships with local law enforcement, as well as state agencies like Probation and Highway Patrol, and federal, such as the FBI. Non-local agencies will have officers check in with UPD, not only as part of procedure, but because they are unfamiliar with campus. If any law enforcement shows up to your classroom, call UPD immediately and also ask them to go to the Registrar's Office. Non-campus law enforcement do not have a way to find a specific person on campus, such as what class they are in. Don't try to intervene; keep yourself protected.

A clarification was requested regarding "private" areas of campus. Chief Gatlin responded that offices, classrooms when conducting class, Student Health Services, and anything behind locked doors are considered private. Public areas include hallways, common areas, and parking lots. If any law enforcement wanted to enter, for example, an office, they would have to have a search warrant. If law enforcement showed up with an administrative warrant (which is not issued by a judge), we would have to call MSU legal to decide how to proceed.

The concern was also raised with how far away UPD is for City College. If an emergency occurs, such as a student with a weapon in a classroom, UPD is 15-20 minutes away. Chief Gatlin noted that for emergency situations, dial 911. City Police will likely have an officer nearby who can respond faster than UPD. City Police and UPD also share a radio channel.

At this time, there is not an agreement that UPD cooperate with ICE. If one was requested by any agency, Chief Gatlin would inform the administration immediately.

It was cited that we need to make our students aware that we are talking about keeping them safe, that we are paying attention and care about them. The same is true for staff and faculty. Provost Vartanian noted that email messages to students may be helpful, but one-on-one conversations matter the most. He noted the administration will be working with ASMSUB on communication to students.

It was noted that some guidelines for various situations might be helpful, such as our faculty traveling to other countries, or speakers traveling here.

The Know Your Rights presentation has been delayed, but Dr. Lynn is searching for another presenter. The Women's & Gender Studies Center will have a guest lecturer on April 1 to talk about immigration issues.

The Senate thanked Brandon Gatlin for coming and answering questions.

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

rjrm