

FACULTY COUNCIL
Tuesday, October 7, 2025
3:30 – 5:15 pm
Executive Boardroom (2390), University Capitol Centre

MINUTES

Councilors Present: B. Ayati, A. Farag, J. Koch, P. McGonagill, N. Mohr, M. Schroeder, D. Shane, C. Vogel, E. Walker, E. Welder, K. Whitaker, F. Williams.

Officers Present: R. Curto, N. Greyser, C. Just, C. Sheerin.

Councilors Excused: T. Abel, A. Bassuk, C. Hogden, E. Johnson.

Councilors Absent: M. Abou Alaiwa.

Guests: M. Gardinier (Emeritus Faculty Council), E. Gillan (Office of the Provost Review Committee; Rules and Bylaws Committee), A. Nelson (*Daily Iowan*), S. Reddy (*Daily Iowan*), B. Thomas (Office of the Provost), L. Zaper (Faculty Senate Office).

I. Call to Order – President Just called the meeting to order at 3:30 pm.

II. Approvals

- A. Meeting Agenda – President Just noted that one more presenter had been added to the agenda after it was sent to Councilors. Professor Williams moved and Professor Mohr seconded that the revised agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- B. Faculty Council Minutes (September 2, 2025) – Professor Walker moved and Professor McGonagill seconded that the minutes be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- C. Draft Faculty Senate Agenda (October 28, 2025) – President Just indicated that changes may be made to the draft agenda prior to the Senate meeting. A final version will be approved at the meeting. Professor Williams moved and Professor Farag seconded that the draft agenda be approved. The motion carried unanimously.
- D. Committee Appointments (Roxanna Curto, Chair, Committee on Committees) –
 - *None at this time*

III. New Business

- *Federal Policy Task Force Communications (Craig Just)*

President Just directed Councilors to the handout listing the members of the Federal Policy Task Force, of which he is also a member. The Task Force had been meeting every other week, but now, because of the federal government shutdown, will likely meet more frequently in order to keep up with events unfolding in Washington, D.C. and their impact on the university. Federal updates are posted on a [webpage](#) hosted by the Office of the Vice President for Research.

President Just highlighted this statement at the top of the webpage, “[university] leadership is working closely with Iowa’s congressional delegation, relevant state and federal government agencies, legal experts, and associations such as the Association of American Universities (AAU), Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC).” He emphasized that these three associations are advocating on behalf of their member universities, including UI.

- *Office of the Provost Review Update (Caroline Sheerin; Ed Gillan, Chair, Office of the Provost Review Committee)*

Past President Sheerin explained that [reviews of central administration](#) are an important component of shared governance at the University of Iowa. She added that, while shared governance may sometimes seem slow and inefficient, it ultimately works well and is of great benefit to the institution, because it allows the voices of various university constituencies to be heard and acknowledged when decisions are being made. The UI Policy Manual gives Faculty Senate the responsibility for conducting periodic reviews of central administrators and their offices (President, Provost, Vice Presidents). The review committees are comprised of faculty members, some of whom are drawn from the Faculty Council and from the Senate’s Committee on the Selection and Review of Central Academic Officials. Past President Sheerin emphasized that these meaningful, impactful reviews are one of the Senate’s most crucial functions. She recalled that the review of the Office of the General Counsel, for example, resulted in that office receiving additional funding for more staffing.

Professor Gillan directed Councilors to the handout listing the members of the committee for the Office of the Provost review, which is currently underway. He added that the handout is also [posted](#) on the Faculty Senate website. In addition to the membership, the handout describes the purpose of central academic reviews and the process the committee will follow to conduct this review. The Office of the Provost was last reviewed in 2013; leadership changes and the pandemic have caused delays in the recommended seven-year review interval. Interviews are currently being conducted with university and collegiate leaders, with senior leadership and staff in the office, and with officials at the Iowa Board of Regents who work with the office. This interview plan mirrors those recently used in the reviews of the Office of the Vice President for Research and the Office of the President. Surveys will be used to capture feedback from a wider circle of individuals and offices. Professor Gillan emphasized that the Office of the Provost encompasses a wide array of campus entities, from Hancher to the libraries to the Registrar’s Office, to name only a few. He concluded by noting that the final report about the office will become a public document posted on the Senate [website](#), while the report about the office leader will remain confidential.

Vice President Curto asked if the reviews of the office leaders were required to align with contract periods. Professor Gillan responded that they were not. President Just thanked the review committee for their extensive work.

- *Executive Session*

Secretary Greyser moved and Professor Vogel seconded that the Faculty Council move into executive session, inviting Bylaws Committee Chair Ed Gillan to join them. The motion carried unanimously.

Councilors discussed Faculty Senate election process and policy.

Professor Ayati moved and Professor Walker seconded that the Faculty Council move out of executive session. The motion carried unanimously.

- *President's Report (Craig Just)*

President Just drew the group's attention to the handout entitled *University of Iowa Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Faculty Reviews*. He explained that Associate Provost for Faculty & Strategic Operations Barry Thomas had worked with the associate deans for faculty to draft these guidelines. Feedback was now requested from Councilors. Professor Vogel suggested that the guidelines explicitly state that only the two AI tools listed (Microsoft Copilot and ChatGPT Edu) can be utilized in a review; otherwise, reviewers might choose other tools and thereby perhaps compromise data security. Professor Koch questioned whether a faculty member being reviewed could opt out of reviewer use of AI.

Professor Ayati suggested that the guidance emphasize that reviewers are fully responsible for the content of their reviews. Professor Schroeder observed that people often use AI to save time. She then raised the larger question of the administrative burden on faculty members who conduct reviews. She pointed out that, because reviewers are responsible for the content of their reviews, the guidelines could perhaps serve as a reminder that reviewers must do the actual review work themselves and not rely heavily on AI to save time. Secretary Greyser commented that perhaps we should think about how we compile portfolios, so that AI usage is not a temptation. Professor Williams expressed concern that errors committed by AI might not be caught by reviewers. Councilors also worried that the development of guidelines implies that AI usage during reviews is not just permitted, but encouraged. Past President Sheerin suggested that departments could be offered the option to decide whether AI could be used in reviews of their faculty members.

Professor Mohr commented that the guidelines seem to have been primarily developed to protect the privacy of a faculty member's work, rather than to address the value of AI in facilitating reviews. Perhaps this narrow use of AI should be clarified at the beginning of the document, even within the title. Not only privacy, but intellectual property of the faculty member needs to be protected, Professor Williams added. President Just indicated that he would provide this feedback to Associate Provost Thomas.

President Just had earlier sent individual messages to all Councilors with some additional items to report: the deadline for [2026 Brody Award nominations](#) is October 24; the Faculty Policies and Compensation Committee has provided feedback on proposed revisions to [Policy Manual II.27.6 Ethics in Research](#); and a review of [Policy Manual III.15 Professional Ethics and Academic Responsibility](#) is underway. President Just also thanked Professor Walker for

representing faculty at a recent football game and Professors Koch, Johnson, and Williams for attending a recent shared governance event organized by Undergraduate Student Government.

Lastly, President Just requested that Councilors reach out to the Senators in their colleges and invite them to sit together at the upcoming Senate meeting. Please also consider inviting them for coffee beforehand or afterward to discuss faculty issues of importance. Gather insights from these conversations and bring them back to Council (feel free to email President Just in advance), so that this input can be used to better shape future agendas.

IV. From the Floor – Professor Vogel mentioned that several faculty members from her college had approached her with questions about accountability and about transparency of the process related to recent university investigations. She also observed that it was unclear how many investigations were currently underway. President Just responded that it was his understanding that the university was following its long-established policies and processes in relation to all investigations.

Professor Koch, who had attended the shared governance event, commented that it was a delightful experience. At her table, she spoke with a mix of students about the campus environment and about academic freedom. She noted that the students she spoke with were unaware of university academic freedom policies. Professor Williams, who had also attended the event, noted that the students at her table appreciated hearing about academic freedom, about which they had had little previous knowledge.

V. Announcements

- The next Faculty Senate meeting will be Tuesday, October 28, 3:30 – 5:15 pm, Senate Chamber, Old Capitol.
- The next Faculty Council meeting will be Tuesday, November 18, 3:30-5:15 pm, Executive Boardroom (2390), University Capitol Centre.

VI. Adjournment – Professor Koch moved and Professor McGonagill seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried unanimously. President Just adjourned the meeting at 5:00 pm.