

**University Council Minutes**  
**March 16, 2026**  
**3:30 p.m.**  
**Zoom**

**Present:** Tim Sands (presiding), April Myers, Julie Ross, Amy Sebring, Laurel Miner for Daniel Sui, Bryan Garey, Menah Pratt, Frances Keene, Kim O'Rourke, Aimée Suprenant, Jill Sible, Susan Sumner for Mario Ferruzzi, Daniel Givens, Laura Belmonte, Tsai Lu Liu, Kevin Pitts, David Knight, Saonee Sarker, Lee Learman, Tyler Walters, Sara Vandyke for Rebecca Bott-Knutson, Amanda Morris, Jennifer Johnson, Alex Kinnamen for Justin Lemkul, Rachel Miles, James Hawdon, Marlena Lester, Jennifer Jones, Nicole Connors, Amber Hagen, Gabe Petry, Jasmine Boyd, Emma Roshioru, Atharva Shashank Kokane, Thomas Feely, Lindsay Ricci, Pooja Bhagawat, Cyang Chung, Taylor Peele, Katie Drinkwater Gregg, Marc Michel, Nicole Pitterson, Eric Martin, Jerald Walz, Kim Loeffert, David Xie, Renée LeClair, Terr Pecora, Serena Young, Amber Robinson, Clay Crumpler, Jennifer Clevenger, Jim Tokuhisa, and Jan Helge Bøhn

**Absent:** Saskia van de Gevel, Ron Meyers, Rebecca Hester, and Ronnie Mondal

**Absent with Notice:** Guru Ghosh

**Guests:** Larry Cox, II, Harrison Blythe, Lynn Byrd, Kari Evans, Rachel Gabriele, Kat Nelson, Lori Rose, Sally Shupe, Demetria Somervell, Lauren Surface, and Charlotte Waggoner

President Sands called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. A quorum was present.

### **1. Announcement of Order of the Day**

President Sands announced the order of the day for the meeting. Items to be placed on the agenda must be submitted to the secretary at least ten days prior to the meeting date. Follow the procedures in Section 2(2) – University Council Bylaws, Article IX, Section 2(2-3).

### **2. Announcement of review and approval of minutes of March 2, 2026**

President Sands noted that these minutes have been voted on electronically and can be publicly accessed on the Governance Information System on the Web ([governance website](#)).

### **3. Unfinished Business**

#### **Commission on Faculty Affairs**

CFA Resolution 2025-26G

Resolution to Revise Faculty Handbook Section on Sanctions

Jim Hawdon presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded. This resolution addresses a gap in the Faculty Handbook, which currently does not define or provide guidance on minor sanctions, despite their use in practice. It proposes a formalized process intended to improve transparency, consistency, and faculty involvement in sanctioning.

The proposed process begins with a conversation between the administrator and the faculty member to seek resolution. If resolution is not achieved and the matter proceeds, a college-

level faculty committee reviews the evidence and determines whether a sanction is warranted and, if so, recommends an appropriate sanction. The administrator makes the final decision, with supervisor approval required if a more severe sanction is imposed than the committee recommends.

Consultation with University Legal Counsel confirmed that relevant information, including sensitive information when necessary, may be shared with the committee, that legal representation is available to those performing their duties, and that having a formal policy is preferable to none. Since the first reading, several updates were made based on this consultation and additional stakeholder input. These include clarifying that administrators may propose sanctions and that committees may request additional information as needed; adding limited exceptions that allow an administrator to bypass the committee in rare and exceptional circumstances with approval from the Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs in consultation with the President of the Faculty Senate, as well as affirming the authority of the President or Provost to impose sanctions directly; specifying that grievances may only be filed when an imposed sanction is not consistent with the committee's recommendation; and adding language to ensure that this process does not begin until any related investigations under other university policies, such as civil rights processes, have concluded and that the process cannot relitigate those cases or alter their outcomes.

Faculty Affairs has committed to developing implementation guidance and providing training for committee members. The resolution is expected to increase faculty participation in defining and enforcing professional standards, provide clearer guidance and protection for administrators, establish a mechanism for progressive discipline, and reduce the likelihood of grievances while strengthening the university's position in dispute resolution.

The resolution was developed through extensive consultation and revision with faculty governance bodies, administrative groups, and university offices, including the Department Heads Forum, Council of Deans, Faculty Senate, and the Office for Civil Rights Compliance and Prevention Education, and was approved by the Commission on Faculty Affairs and the Faculty Senate.

Feedback was shared based on internal Human Resources (HR) discussions and their experience managing employee relations across the university. While expressing support for the goals of fairness, consistency, and transparency in faculty discipline, they raised concerns about the proposed addition of a committee review process for minor sanctions.

It was emphasized that disciplinary processes typically function along informal and formal pathways. Informal discipline, such as conversations or counseling letters, is intended to address issues early in a timely, private, and constructive manner. It was noted that these early interventions are often effective but may be undermined if additional procedural steps make the process slower or more formal. Formal discipline, by contrast, already includes structured processes and opportunities for review, including grievance procedures.

Concerns were expressed that making committee review the default for minor sanctions could delay resolution, introduce confidentiality and bias risks, and discourage leaders from addressing issues early. It was noted that even with the addition of exceptions allowing administrators to bypass the committee in rare cases, inconsistent use of such exceptions could create challenges in maintaining and defending equitable processes.

It was further indicated that increased procedural complexity may make corrective feedback more difficult to administer and could lead to more adversarial outcomes, potentially allowing issues to escalate rather than be resolved early.

It was stated that HR does not support the resolution as written, and a recommendation was made to explore alternative approaches that maintain fairness while preserving the ability to address concerns promptly, privately, and constructively. A willingness to collaborate on potential revisions was expressed.

Comments were made in support of the resolution, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a faculty-centered approach to discipline that aligns with principles of academic freedom and shared governance. It was noted that the proposed process preserves an informal solution as the first step, with committee involvement occurring only when those efforts are unsuccessful.

It was stressed that the resolution addresses a longstanding gap between informal actions and severe sanctions, which has often left minor but persistent issues unresolved. It was also suggested that the inclusion of a faculty committee introduces peer evaluation, enhances fairness and transparency, and supports the faculty's role in defining and upholding professional standards.

Questions were raised regarding the practical implications of the process, particularly in relation to tight timelines for merit-based pay decisions. It was clarified that sanction processes and merit cycles operate independently, and that sanctions could be applied in a subsequent cycle if timing does not align.

Additional comments reflected strong support from department heads, who expressed appreciation for clearer guidance and a structured process to address ongoing behavioral concerns that do not rise to the level of severe sanctions. The resolution was described as providing both needed support for administrators navigating complex situations and a more consistent, less ad hoc approach to discipline.

It was also noted that evolving policy environments and recurring issues with unaddressed conduct emphasize the need for a formalized process. This resolution seeks to improve accountability, foster collegiality, and enable more effective and timely corrective action.

A vote was taken and the motion passed.

#### **Commission on Research**

COR Resolution 2025-26A

Resolution to Revise Research Faculty Non-Professorial Rank Structure in Faculty Handbook

Jan Helge Bøhn presented the resolution for second reading and made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded, and the motion passed.

#### **4. Announcement of approval and posting of UC Cabinet, Commission, and Committee Minutes**

These minutes have been voted on electronically and will be posted on the University web ([governance website](#)). Note that the purpose of voting on minutes of the University Council Cabinet, Commissions, and Committees reporting to University Council Cabinet is to accept

them for filing. University Council Bylaws require that policy items be brought forward in resolution form for University Council action.

- University Council Cabinet  
February 23, 2026
- Commission on Faculty Affairs  
January 30, 2026  
February 13, 2026
- Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies  
November 10, 2025
- Athletics Committee  
November 13, 2025
- Campus Development Committee  
December 2, 2025
- Climate Action, Sustainability, and Energy Committee  
February 2, 2026

## **6. Adjournment**

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 4:03 p.m.

## University Council Voting March 16, 2026

First name	Last name	Do you approve CFA Resolution 2025-26G?	Do you approve COR Resolution 2025-26A?
Laura	Belmonte	Yes	No response
Pooja	Bhagawat	Yes	Yes
Jasmine	Boyd	Yes	Yes
Gyang	Chung	Yes	Yes
Jennifer	Clevenger	Yes	Yes
Nicole	Connors	Yes	Yes
Clay	Crumpler	Yes	Yes
Katherine	Drinkwater Gregg	Yes	Yes
Thomas	Feely	Yes	Yes
Bryan	Garey	No	Yes
Dan	Givens	Yes	Yes
Amber	Hagan	Yes	Yes
James	Hawdon	Yes	Yes
Jennifer	Johnson	Yes	Yes
Jennifer	Jones	Yes	Yes
Frances	Keene	Yes	Yes
Alex	Kinnaman	Yes	Yes
David	Knight	Yes	Yes
Atharva Shashank	Kokane	Abstain	No response
Lee	Learman	No	Yes
Renee	LeClair	Yes	Yes
Lu	Liu	No	Yes
Kimberly	Loeffert	Yes	Yes
Marlena	McGlothlin Lester	Yes	Yes
Marc	Michel	Yes	Yes
Rachel	Miles	Yes	Yes
Laurel	Miner	Yes	Yes
Amanda	Morris	Abstain	Yes
Terri	Pecora	Yes	Yes
Taylor	Peele	No response	Yes
Gabe	Petry	Yes	Yes
Nicole	Pitterson	Yes	Yes
Kevin	Pitts	No	Yes
Menah	Pratt	Yes	Yes
Lindsay	Ricci	Yes	Yes
Amber	Robinson	No	Yes
Emma	Roshioru	Yes	Yes
Saonee	Sarker	Yes	Yes
Amy	Sebring	No	Yes

Jill	Sible	Yes	Yes
Susan	Sumner	Yes	Yes
Aimee	Surprenant	Yes	Yes
Sara	Vandyke	Yes	Yes
Tyler	Walters	No	Yes
Jerald	Walz	Yes	Yes
Hehuang	Xie	Yes	Yes
Serena	Young	No	No response
Kim	O'Rourke	Abstain	Yes