Faculty Senate Minutes
Southwest Tennessee Community College
Tuesday, October 21, 2025, 3:00 PM
Macon Cove Campus, MAA 107 (Academic Building)

1. Call to order and roll

Joyce Johnson called the meeting to order at 3:00. Doug Branch took the roll.

Joyce Johnson (24-26) **President**

Division Senators, Humanities, Social Sciences, and Mathematics

Doug Branch (25-27) **Secretary**
David Huffman (25-27)
Thomas King (25-27) **Vice-President**
Lake Newton (24-26) **Parliamentarian**
Annie Sultana (24-26) **Treasurer**

Division Senators, Business and Technologies

Gary Holder (24-26) Absent
Salahuddin Mohammad Masum (25-27)

Division Senators, Health and Natural Sciences

Carl Chiong (25-27) Proxy
Carolyn Jensen (24-26) Proxy
Gerren Herndon (24-26)

Department Senators
Lindsey Shaidnagle (24-26) Allied Health Absent
Arnetria Taylor (25-27) Business and Legal Studies
Tad Lauritzen Wright (25-27) Communications, Graphic and Fine Arts
Shelley Trigg (24-26) EMS
Melanie Jones (24-26) Computer Information Technology
Baxter Buck (25-27) Languages and Literature
Gayathri Kaushik (24-26) Natural Sciences
Kristi Griffin (24-26) Nursing Proxy
Khalil Rassy (24-26) Mathematics Absent
LaPetria Rhoe (25-27) Social and Behavioral Sciences Absent

2. Reading and Approval of the Minutes

The body approved the minutes from the September 2025 faculty senate meeting.

3. Special Guests

A. Dr. LeVetta Hudson, Vice President of People and Culture

LeVetta mostly addressed faculty questions and concerns about the new process regarding faculty contracts, specifically the fact that new contracts would have August 1 as a starting date, per TBR policy, even though Southwest has a longstanding tradition of not requiring faculty to report to work until August 15. Some faculty members had questions, for instance, about how the new start date would affect sick leave. LeVetta presented several different scenarios involving faculty asking for sick leave and whether or not they would be "charged" for those fifteen days at the beginning of August, in cases where, for instance, faculty members might ask for sick leave for a surgery happening in late July with a recovery date after fall term begins. In such a case, the faculty member would indeed be charged.

LeVetta's goal is to have faculty sign contracts well before August 1, 2026. Some senators were concerned about whether people who do not check their email during the summer would know that contracts were to be signed, but LeVetta hoped that people could be given plenty of advance warning or be contacted by their chairs by phone. LeVetta expressed certainty that HR could work with people to resolve such issues that might arise.

B. Dr. Jose Da Silva, Vice President, Strategic Enrollment Management

Jose wanted to talk about some changes in his area that have happened or are about to happen. He is interested in moving up dates for student registration and encouraging earlier registration by, for instance, asking advisors to meet with classes. This will involve a change of the culture so that students begin understanding that early registration is the norm.

His area is working with high school superintendents and getting contact information for students so that we can begin auto-enrolling dual enrollment students for Fall 2026 Jose believes this will have a positive impact on enrollment. He acknowledged, too, that the college had a difficult experience with dual enrollment this fall, with many students attending classes but not appearing on official rosters as a primary problem. He is certain that enrollment of dual enrollment students will be a smoother process in the future, as his department is actively working on finding solutions to issues we confronted this fall.

Jose wishes also to renew his area's focus on building the infrastructure to support first year students, declaring that "we don't have a retention problem, we have a first year

problem," meaning that we really lose far too many students especially after their first semester and first year.

4. Reports from senate officers and senate committees

A. Thomas King: Regular SEC meeting report

TeKay reported that the SEC met without Dr. Ash, who was not available for the group's usual monthly meeting. He noted that the SEC is aware of a problem with printers not allowing faculty to make scans and that Michael Boyd has been appraised of the problem. The SEC was also looking into what seemed to be a new requirement in at least one department, Languages and Literature, that faculty members teach at least three in-person classes per semester, and whether or not this was a new college, division, or simply department policy. (It seems to be only departmental.)

Another issue addressed by Lake Newton was that interpreters for students with disabilities do not have PAWS access, which creates difficulties. It was suggested that Lake ask Digital Learning if it was possible to provide such access rather than letting the matter drop with the Center of Access, which had told him that such PAWS access was not possible.

B. Joyce Johnson: President's Cabinet meeting report

Joyce said that she was asked to strongly encourage faculty participation in President Hall's Reform 3.0 initiative. She asked that senators ask faculty members in their area to get involved. She also hopes senators will encourage faculty members to join standing committees that interest them. She reminded the senate, too, that the former faculty advising committee had been abolished and replaced with a new faculty dual enrollment committee, reflecting college changes.

C. Marjorie Rothschild: Academic Matters committee meeting report

Marjorie reported that the committee looked at the college academic misconduct policy and TBR AI policy. The committee agreed that the misconduct policy is far too cumbersome. The committee thought it best that faculty be able to handle most misconduct issues within the classroom without filling out a lot of reports unless a faculty member decided to fail a student for the semester or pursue suspension or expulsion options.

A subgroup will meet on drafting a new policy. That subgroup will try to have a proposal for the next senate meeting.

It was moved, seconded, and voted upon that the senate accept the report.

5. Old Business

6. New Business

   A senator registered his concern about the scenario presented earlier by Dr. Hudson that faculty members might be charged for sick leave taken from August 1 to August 15, under the new contract dates. He asked that the SEC follow up on this with appropriate bodies.

7. Adjournment

   Joyce Johnson adjourned the meeting at 5:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Doug Branch
Faculty Senate Secretary