



Faculty Senate 2025-2026

MINUTES: December 10, 2025

Location: Griggs Hall Council Chamber

Time: 6:00-8:00 pm

A. Bosman, Chair; J. Lim, Executive
Secretary

Attendance (20): M. Bacchicocchi, A. Bosman, J. Cadet, K. Cave, R. Choi, B. Davis, E. Gallos, S. Hatfield, L. Hamilton, N. Hess, N. Isaac Dennis, K. Koudele, J. Ledesma, J. Lim, D. Ortiz, Z. Plantak, J. Skinner, K. Thompson, T. Watson, A. Will

Attendance Via Zoom: (1): S. Badenas

Staff Senator: M. Cervantes

Regrets (7): J. Fraser, R. Gatón, B. Gibson, D. Gonzalez-Socoloske, P. Gregor, W. Scott, B. Sheppard

Guests (33): L. Ahlberg, K. Bailey, K. Basurto, G. Burdick, Y. Cantillano, K. Denslow, S. Elkins-Bates, M. Gayle, K. Harris, C. Hess, M. Keller, W. Kuhn, G. Lovhoiden, J. Markovic, B-C. Ng, D. Randall, J. Joseph, J. Johnson, G. Romo-Cardenas, E. Rudatsikira, D. Sciarabba, R. Schmidt, E. Semitoak, T. Shilling, T. Smith, J. W. Taylor, A. Thorpe, S. Trecartin, C. Troy, C. Vanderwaal, D. Young, K. Walker-Fraser, C. Woolford-Hunt

Guests Via Zoom (4): P. Navia, N. Nosworthy, R. Portecop-Prentice, I. Slikkers

Votes and Actions taken (numbers [n] represent items on original agenda)

[2] Minutes of Prior Faculty Senate Meeting (J. Lim)

MOTION: VOTE passed [unanimous]. To approve the minutes as presented.

[3] Council Reports (K. Cave)

No Council Reports were received.

Senate Discussion & Announcements

[1] Devotional. (J. Skinner). Worship thought. Through difficult times, we should always remember that God knows our struggles and remember that He is working in ways according to His plan for us even when we can't see it.

(4) Reorganization Update and Conversation with Administration (A. Bosman).

The Faculty Senate Chair set the stage for the discussion of reorganization.

The President and Chief Academic Officer provided background information on higher education challenges, including enrollment trends, financial pressures, and international student policy impacts. They noted improvements in enrollment within the Lake Union region and enhanced marketing efforts targeting domestic students. Administration expressed confidence in the university community and God's leading, emphasizing the goal of achieving a sustainable and thriving future for Andrews University.

While the university has adjusted personnel over recent years by approximately 20-25 percent across faculty, staff, and administration categories, the organizational structure has remained unchanged. The stated goal of current restructuring efforts is to create opportunities for academic areas to work together more collaboratively and effectively.

Administration shared the current draft of the departmental mergers and reorganization, which was shared with Undergraduate and Graduate Councils the previous day. Some changes were already evident.

The Faculty Senate Chair facilitated conversations, questions, and feedback on the specific draft for reorganization, followed by more general overarching comments and questions.

Faculty questioned what key performance indicators would measure the restructuring's success and how the administration would assess whether the plan worked. Administration outlined several metrics, including financial benefits such as faculty members picking up additional courses to reduce adjunct costs. Longer-term goals focus on increased collaboration, course sharing between disciplines, and channeling students into larger class sections to improve the student-faculty ratio. The university currently operates at an 11.4:1 ratio, up from approximately 10:1, with goals to increase further. Administration emphasized the need to create revenue margins that would allow investment in new programs and faculty remuneration. Administration noted that Andrews has considerably lower adjunct usage compared to peer institutions in the CIC, acknowledging that while adjuncts offer lower costs, there are trade-offs given Andrews' philosophy of mentoring students. Administration referenced examples like Grand Canyon University but emphasized the need for thoughtful movement rather than wholesale shifts to contract faculty.

Faculty questioned whether class size numbers accurately reflect the student-faculty ratio reported to parents, with administration acknowledging the complexity of these metrics and noting they track enrollment patterns across 100/200 and 300/400 level courses.

Faculty challenged specific departmental mergers, particularly in allied health programs. Faculty expressed concerns about lack of overlap in teaching abilities and difficulty sharing resources, time, and content. Faculty also questioned how actual efficiencies would be achieved, asking whether this meant eliminating administrative positions or adding adjuncts as people retire, with some noting these seemed like small adjustments to really big problems.

Administration acknowledged that some combinations create greater synergies than others and emphasized they are listening and considering alternatives. They clarified that chairs would not be fired, and suggested efficiencies could come through shared electives, interdisciplinary courses, and strategic position management during retirements, with the possibility of additional position cuts in the future.

Faculty expressed frustration that departments receiving morning emails were required to merge while those receiving afternoon emails were not included in any administration proposed combinations, even though some department proposals included merging with a stronger department. Some departments stated they had not requested their proposed pairing and questioned whether decisions were predetermined, noting this represented multiple meetings on the issue.

Faculty proposed alternative groupings, particularly for allied health, suggesting rehab sciences combining PT, OT, and Speech, which would align better with workplace environments, versus the proposed combinations. Administration noted that benchmarking shows various combinations at different universities with no single formula and confirmed they remain open to suggestions.

Faculty questioned the timeline for full integration and the amount of work required to implement these changes. Administration outlined completion by the end of the calendar year, with spring semester activities including choosing new names and chairs. Computer systems, records, and financial integration work will occur during spring semester to be in place May 1, with full implementation by the start of the next academic year. Course scheduling for the following year, due in February, will initially reflect only nomenclature changes, with potential program integration occurring in subsequent academic cycles.

Faculty raised concerns about external communication and reputation impact. Faculty members noted they are hearing questions about Andrews restructuring from external stakeholders during recruitment activities. Faculty emphasized the need for proactive

communication to key stakeholders and alumni and requested that messages come from senior leadership emphasizing institutional strengthening. Faculty also asked about potential impacts on national university rankings.

Administration acknowledged the importance of careful external messaging, noting this represents an internal reorganization of existing offerings rather than program elimination, and requested faculty input on communication strategies and channels.

Faculty pressed for clarity on the long-term vision driving the restructuring, questioning what the university is positioning itself to become and what hopeful future is being pursued. Faculty suggested that unclear vision might explain why efficiencies are not obvious and expressed desire to understand the broader strategic direction.

Faculty suggested exploring cost savings in other areas such as dining services rather than focusing solely on departmental mergers, questioning whether the savings from restructuring would be significant enough to justify the effort.

Administration contextualized the effort within Andrews' governance structure, noting obligations to the General Conference, NAD, and Lake Union, and the goal of adding 400 more students to achieve \$2.5 million difference between revenue and expense. They emphasized this restructuring as one component moving the university toward sustainability.

Faculty expressed both support and anxiety about the process, affirming their love for Andrews and commitment to serving there while acknowledging this as the fourth restructuring some have experienced. Faculty raised concerns about the process appearing predetermined, questioned whether expert consultation in higher education had occurred, and called for broader transparency. Faculty emphasized that transparency is necessary in risk situations and called for enhanced marketing and communication efforts to address enrollment challenges.

Administration acknowledged input from entities beyond the university, including the blue ribbon commission, and emphasized their commitment to hearing faculty feedback.

Faculty asked about the future structure of colleges, opportunities for program directors in merged departments, and mechanisms for ongoing faculty input. Administration confirmed that college restructuring is a separate subsequent process, that program directors will continue according to existing policy, and that department naming decisions will involve faculty creativity. They emphasized that nothing is locked in for these combinations and welcomed continued feedback.

Faculty raised concerns about the socio-emotional costs of the restructuring process, noting that the alignment process and compressed timeline are taking an emotional toll on affected faculty members, with some questioning whether the same level of engagement and intensity could be maintained throughout the short implementation cycle.

Faculty emphasized the need for enhanced marketing and communication efforts to combat the broader enrollment challenges facing higher education, noting that a significant percentage of prospective students don't understand institutional functions and how they translate to student enrollment.

In the conclusion, the Graduate Dean emphasized the critical need for constant communication throughout the restructuring process, suggesting a strategy of overcommunication particularly with graduate faculty. She outlined multiple external challenges facing the university, including attacks on graduate education and upcoming SEVIS policy changes that will impose a four-year limit on international students time in the U.S. The university is exploring strategies such as increasing teaching outside the US and hybrid delivery models to address these challenges. The Dean noted that major universities nationwide are also restructuring in response to similar pressures, emphasizing that every student matters in the current environment where losing students creates significant institutional challenges. She cited additional concerns including reduced grant resources, border restrictions affecting student mobility, and a significant drop in Canadian student enrollment. She concluded by pledging to keep faculty informed about developments affecting graduate programs as the university navigates these challenges together.

The meeting closed with the Chief Academic Officer leading the group in reciting the Lord's Prayer.