

CFR Meeting Minutes
24 October 2025
Zoom & VDEN 129
9:15 – 10:45AM

Members attending: Bonamy, Dimitrov, Drapela, Fortin, Grigar (Chair), He, LoSavio, Olson, Reisz, Schimelpfenig, Spradlin

Senators in attendance: Phelps (TT)

Guest: Christine Portfors, Interim Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Research and Graduate Education

Recording Secretary: Paul Bonamy

The meeting began with a far-ranging discussion with Christine Portfors.

Looking ahead, Portfors is starting an Academic Affairs (AA) newsletter that will have updates from the AA Office along with highlighting interesting research, teaching, community engagement, and staff activities. It will be maintained in parallel with the Curiosity Chronicles newsletter from the Office of Research and, hopefully, have its first installment before the end of the semester.

The annual Research Showcase will take place on April 14th, 2026.

Portfors is supporting *an experiment with Georgina Cox in the School of Biological Sciences to bring social media into the classroom*. Two undergraduate TAs are being funded to run a social media channel currently focused on Cox' anatomy class. The goal is to communicate interesting course content and activities to prospective students via channels they already follow (e.g. TikTok, Instagram, etc.).

At present, units could elect to run these sorts of channels themselves, but there is not currently official support for doing so. Depending on how the experiment in Biology goes, a more formal, though optional, program may be started with real guidelines, oversight, and so forth. Per Portfors, there is full support for academic freedom, so faculty should not be concerned about material in courses with politically unpopular topics. Crucially, nothing is being posted to University channels without specific clearance from the relevant professor.

Interested parties can reach out to Portfors to get involved. Bio's Instagram profile can be found at <https://www.instagram.com/wsuvbiology/>.

The conversation then turned to a brief discussion of apportionment for the purposes of CFR representation. (Recorder's Note: See the minutes for Oct 10th of this year for more context.) Per the FA and CFR Bylaws, units are allocated 1 CFR representative for every 10

FTE faculty. Historically, apportionments for adjunct faculty have not been included in this count. It was noted that adjunct faculty counts fluctuate from semester to semester and show some variance between fall and spring semester. For example, CAS typically has about 40 adjunct faculty in the fall, and typically a bit less than that in the spring. Portfors identified three major categories of adjunct faculty: people who are not grad students and are teaching one or more lab sections, people teaching full courses, and some field supervisors in Education and Nursing who primarily oversee students doing field work.

In response to a question raised in a previous meeting, *faculty FTE is just a percentage of full-time employment*. Under the standard assumptions about workload, teaching a single 3-credit class would account for 20% FTE, though this is variable and faculty may have responsibilities other than teaching.

Regarding faculty raises, *chairs and directors originated decisions in this year's increases, in collaboration with their deans*. Portfors provided input at the Dean's level per college, and final decisions were decided and approved in the Provost's Office. It is unclear what next year holds, with changes potentially coming both from the State and the Provost's office. It was suggested that health insurance could be a good place for the university to support faculty independently of salary increases.

State law provides a threshold for employment, above which adjunct faculty are required to be given benefits after consecutive terms above 50% FTE. *A question was raised about to what extent adjunct faculty are deliberately being denied positions to keep them under the benefits threshold*. Portfors reports that in her one semester so far of approving requests for adjunct faculty, she has not looked at anything beyond the person and position before signing a letter. She does not know what the previous VCAA might have been looking at, but promises to look into where this directive is coming from.

Finally, *regarding implementation of the workload policy for upcoming annual reviews*, Portfors notes that the Provost's original timeline was ambitious, and colleges are currently varied in their progress toward creating and approving workload policies. Her understanding is that, for the most part, people's workloads will not be changing. What may change, in some cases, is that people will be expected to fulfill their workload requirements if that is not currently happening.

Following the conversation with Portfors, the meeting turned to other business.

The October 10th minutes were unanimously approved.

There followed some announcements:

- President Cantwell's listening sessions have been cancelled for fall semester and postponed until 2026.

- The General Education Reform Committee is seeking feedback through public focus groups. The last scheduled meeting is November 5th.
<https://ucore.wsu.edu/2025/10/01/share-your-voice-in-shaping-general-education/>
- rpk GROUP's data could be made available to units as early as next week. Directors should be sharing that information with their faculty.
- Shiloh Green Soto is stepping down as CT Faculty Senator at the end of the semester. Grigar would like to get a new Senator elected by mid-November.

Reports included information from the Senate and Chancellor's Advisory Board.

The Senate is debating DEI-related language in the faculty manual. "Women and minorities" were explicitly added in 1982, with the most recent change in 2024 specially calling out issues of "diversity, equity, and inclusion".

The President's Co-Design Council is lacking in faculty representation. At present, only two faculty are on the committee: the Senate Chair and a Regents professor. This *lack of representation is a growing concern in the Senate*. When asked about the lack of representation from the non-Pullman campuses, it was noted that traditional approaches to campus representation was not prioritized in the selection of Co-Design Council members.

The Chancellor's Advisory Board is showing a consistent focus on private-sector employers, while neglecting the public sector and private non-profit organizations. This downplays the importance of major stakeholders in WSU generally and WSUV in particular.

There appears to be some confusion about space allocation on campus. While there is currently no space allocation committee, requests for space are slowing pending committee feedback. The Provost's decision to consolidate student services is causing a search for suitable space, but it's unclear how that interacts with space allocation generally.

According to Grigar, *WSU Tri-Cities doesn't require people to pay for parking on campus*. Interim Chancellor Haynes is looking into why WSUV does use paid permits, and if anything can be done about that. Haynes is also looking at our event scheduling policies to see if they can be streamlined.