

Winthrop University – Faculty Conference
Friday, August 21, 2026
2:00pm
Whitton Auditorium

Agenda

1. Welcome and Call to Order (Adam Glover)
2. Approval of Minutes from the April 24, 2026 Meeting (Appendix A)
3. Greetings from the President (Edward Serna)
4. Report from the Provost (Sebastian van Delden)
5. Enrollment Update (Amanda James)
6. Update from the Registrar (Maria D’Agostino)
7. Update from IT (Patrice Bruneau)
8. Update from Student Affairs (Shelia Higgs Burkhalter)
9. Reports from Faculty Conference Standing Committees
 - a. FCUP (Danko Tarabar)
10. Old Business
11. New Business
 - a. Proposed Bylaws Amendment — motion to place proposed amendment on the agenda for the next regular meeting
12. Announcements
13. Adjournment

Note: Quorum (35% of Faculty Conference membership faculty) is 107 faculty members.
The minimum attendance required to do business (20% of Faculty Conference membership) is 61 faculty members. In the absence of a quorum, a vote of 75% of those present is required to conduct business.

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14. Welcome and Call to Order (Adam Glover)
 - a. 2:02pm
 - b. Introduction of New Faculty and Newly Tenured Faculty
15. Approval of Minutes from the April 24, 2026 Meeting (Appendix A)
 - a. Minutes approved
16. Greetings from the President (Edward Serna)
 - a. Legal action update: Officially filed on behalf of Winthrop, an official ethics complaint against former council.
 - b. Sep 14, fencing will go up for new residence hall. Beam signing in April.
 - c. In January, the new Careers Center will open.
 - d. Launching Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering
 - e. Last year of our first strategic sprint, so we need to announce our next initiative
 - i. We need to announce our next 3-year sprint. That is upcoming.
17. Report from the Provost (Sebastian van Delden)
 - a. Jam Session on September 4 inspired by the CAS Faculty Assembly
 - i. Talk about college reorganization, Fort Mill project, videos released about Winthrop, etc.
 - ii. One topic at the meeting with CAS was the unflattering videos about Winthrop released last semester on social media. One question that was asked during that meeting was how can we counteract these videos? What could that look like? Can we “fight fire with fairy dust?”
 1. By 6pm today, email Sebastian something positive about Winthrop and he will put a positive reel on Instagram.
 - b. Chairs and Dean’s Boot Camp
 - c. BlackBeltHelp: if you are teaching online, you can contact 877-371-8837 24 hours a day
 - d. ACUE Extended Subscription
 - i. CPE Virtual Academy: Weekly on Daily Digest
 - ii. Congratulations on those who have completed the certification
 - e. Watermark
 - i. Syllabus storage in Faculty Success
 - ii. Tenure and Promotion Applications will happen in Watermark
 1. Be aware of small changes
 - f. Career Pathways: Tenure and Promotion timeline

Ginger Williams: “I would rather have made these remarks to the President, but I do appreciate your report. I just want to say, when we’re talking about the videos, I suppose I’m worried now that we’re just sort of covering them up. There’s a lot of disturbing facts in those videos. Not everything in those videos is false. Most everything in the audio tapes of actual meetings going on at Winthrop is true. I want to say too, that I respect my colleagues in Mass Communication who oversee our student journalists, and the journalistic spread they did in October of last year about the racism in the President’s office, not by the

President but by one of his employees, was very well done. That writer won an award that year for the best student journalist in the state of South Carolina. Let's not forget that. So those are facts that came out in that paper, and those are facts that also came out in the Herald article in December. So, I have no problem with "fairy dust" but I do have a problem with spraying some perfume on maybe some toxic issues that we need to deal with here at Winthrop. It's insulting to all of us that someone in the President's office has used racist language and is visibly everywhere. I would ask, please don't let that happen this year. Please, if you're hearing anything. I think you all should study those videos, like a professional coach studies videos after a game, for everything we did right and everything we might do better. Instead, I fear from hearing the president and sort of who you're saying, "Winthrop is great." Winthrop is great; I've spent half my life here. But we need to make it better, and we need to deal with our problems. Those videos show that we have some problems that we need to deal with. So let's deal with them and not cover them up. I want the President here. Another thing I want to say is that our African American colleagues, students, and alumni are hurting. Someone is not getting that message. If you're not getting that message, it means you're not talking to the right people. So, I would like for your office and the President's office to get some better advice. I don't think the advice you're getting is that good, because this defensive tactic isn't working. People aren't buying it. And another thing is, there is still a culture of fear here at Winthrop. The reason I'm saying this and other people aren't saying this is that they're afraid to. Thank you for listening to this, but I hope you'll make a concerted effort to deal with these issues. Thank you."

Provost: "I appreciate the feedback Ginger, I will make sure to pass that on. There are other members of the cabinet here to that can all process hearing this and then pass it on and figure out how we can do a better job. Winthrop is not perfect, but it's not what those videos portray. Like I said at faculty assembly. Some of those are not true, even ones with the recordings, it's just not true. It paints a picture of something that literally didn't happen. Period. So, that's also something that we need to keep in mind. No, we're not perfect; we've got a lot of work to do, and we'll pass on the feedback and continue to do the best we can."

18. Enrollment Update (Amanda James)
 - a. Up 4% compared to last year
 - b. Our students are returning, retention holding steady at just shy of 74%
 - c. Presidential Ambassadors: students representing all 4 graduating classes, 18 majors represented
 - i. Moving forward with referral only
 - d. Joynes Hall is back open and there will be an open house to come see the new spaces.
19. Update from the Registrar (Maria D'Agostino)
 - a. Convocation is Monday Aug. 24, lineup will be in Kinard
 - b. Interim grades are due Oct 8 at 5pm, remember we have UU and UF
 - i. Don't use incomplete at midterm
 - c. Look out for FERPA training
20. Update from IT (Patrice Bruneau)
 - a. Cyber security: fake phishing campaigns, watch out for spoof call from Help Desk
 - b. MFA
 - i. Winthrop laptops connect to VPN when off campus. In a couple of weeks, MFA will be turned on the VPN
 - c. Microsoft is ending SMS or voice for authentication, so will have to change if you're using that
 - d. Zoom license is going away, if you recorded meetings in the cloud, they will go away so you must download anything you need

- e. Teams – New user interface in the next few months
- f. Phones: 99.9% done with new system
 - i. The lines that are still outstanding are elevators, parking lots
 - ii. If you have a single phone line, and you would rather swap your physical phone for a soft phone, just ask Help Desk
 - iii. Directory Updates: check the Outlook Address Book (Help Desk) and the People Search Page (HR) on main website to make sure they are correct phone numbers

Q: Last year I was told I was overdue for a new laptop according to the way they used to be rotated, so will I get notified when there is a new one available?

A: Reach out to the help desk and say, “I think my laptop is old, can you replace it?” They’ll know how old it is and if it’s time for a new one.

Q: Is the soft phone for MAC and PC?

A: I believe so. It should be okay.

Q: If you still type in the 5 digit number for MFA, how do you change?

A: It’s called Microsoft Authenticator, but be careful because it’s totally free and you might get an add for something paid. It’s totally free; you shouldn’t have to pay for anything.

Q: With the new phone system will you get an email saying you have a voicemail?

A: With the new system, it doesn’t store the voicemail on the phone. When you listen to the attachment, you shouldn’t have to authenticate anywhere, so if you click on the message and it asks you for a authentication, that’s phishing.

Q: The scanning of documents is taking a long time in email.

A: I haven’t heard anything about that.

Response: I found that if you close your Outlook and then reopen it, that tends to trigger the scan.

21. Update from Student Affairs (Shelia Higgs Burkhalter)
 - a. 1900 students moving in this year.
 - b. Wellness Center has moved back into Joynes Hall.
 - c. Eagle Books roll out has gone well.
 - d. Dining Services Updates
 - i. No Longer have Einstein’s, but there is a bagel concept that will switch over to sandwiches and soups at lunch
 - ii. Sushi options are back
 - iii. Few cosmetic updates in Eagle Eatery
 - iv. First Fridays is Back: check out what’s available for a reasonable price
 - v. Student Experience Survey this Fall
 - e. Hannah Clayborn
 - i. Onboarding
 - ii. Have an opening in Office of Student Conduct at the Director’s level
 - iii. Code of Conduct Review beginning in October, open to campus community being involved
 - iv. Continuous Improvement: will be doing training and development throughout the year
 - v. Has an Open Door Policy
 - vi. Welcome Week Events: so many events over the next couple of weeks

22. Reports from Faculty Conference Standing Committees

- a. FCUP (Danko Tarabar)
 - i. Serves as a conduit for faculty prospectives and concerns, communicates with administration for a resolution
 - ii. Find previous FCUP reports on Faculty Conference website
 - iii. Contact a committee representative to report a concern
- 23. Academic Council Nominations, replacing Mike Sickels, 2-year term
 - i. Nominate Dr. Ondula, Dr. Scott
 - ii. Vote next week
- 24. Old Business
 - a. Creation of Council of Chairs: vote to put this on the agenda to vote at the October 9th meeting
 - i. Proposed Bylaws Amendment — motion to place proposed amendment on the agenda for the next regular meeting
 - ii. Motion Carries

Q: Why are the chairs being singled out to do this as opposed to the faculty that might do this more naturally?

A: This came out of feedback that we got last spring, as well as the discussion of restructuring. There has been a lot of siloing amongst the different colleges, and redundancies in producing new programs and curriculum. It seems to me that the chairs know their faculty well, and if we could meet together we could help eliminate a lot of the redundancies and lack of communication. If we restructure the colleges, this would ensure a collective faculty voice moving forward. I thought the chairs was a natural fit.

Q: Some schools don't have chairs. It seems that all schools/programs need representation on a committee like that. So put representation for all programs, even if they don't have chairs.

A: If you flip to the second page we do list the Library and the Honors College, so it sounds like a good idea to add the School of Graduate, Continuing, and Online Education. The intention is to be inclusive with this.

Q: Are we allowed to amend this document between now and the next meeting?

A: Yes.

Q: Since we would be voting on committing other people to sit on a committee, so the chairs are all on board with this?

A: Yes. All the chairs have been consulted about participating.

As the rules committee looks it over, they may have other language to make it consistent with other language in the By-laws. There is maybe some consistency in language as we look to integrate it into the larger document.

- 25. New Business
 - a. Proposed Bylaws Amendment — motion to place proposed amendment on the agenda for the next regular meeting
- 26. Announcements
 - a. Migration Conference: cost for faculty is \$45, cost for students \$25, cost for community is \$35

- i. Migration of all kinds, proposals open
- b. Winthrop McNair
 - i. 11 new students to conference, and 8 of them took away top 3 awards!
 - ii. First-gen students who meet low-income criteria, apply by Nov. 1
 - iii. FAR Update: if you have any questions about athletes and how athletics works, contact Stacy Martin
 - 1. Negative media about college athletes, but that's not the Winthrop experience
 - 2. Our athletes want their degree; they are not going on to play professional sports
 - 3. The sports gambling that is going on campus is rampant, and the athletes then get messages and it effects their mental health. Please keep an eye on the athletes in your classes and if there is a concern, reach out.
 - 4. Team Impact
 - 5. 6 national championships, huge publicity
 - 6. Get involved and go to their events.
- c. Save the Date: Sep 29th 9am-noon, Richardson Ballroom A: accessibility day event to acknowledge the hard work going on around campus to make all digital materials accessible
 - i. April 26, 2027 is when this goes into effect
- d. Immigration Update: planned to start on Sep 15, 2026 – impact the way that we advise international students: students will not be allowed to change their major in their first year at the undergraduate level
 - i. International students will have 4 years total to complete their degree programs at all levels
 - ii. Other changes for grad students: not allowed to change their major at all
 - iii. These students will not be grandfathered in, they will be under this new policy in September.
 - iv. Will have information sessions throughout the fall semester
 - v. Might impact how we recruit international faculty as well
 - vi. Tuesday Sep 17th – SuccessFest, will fold in HMXP
 - vii. Study Abroad Fair, Sep 22
- e. Sep 23rd in Whitton: Will be talking about careers and internships
- f. Please see what's happening in CVPA; there are weekly events
- g. Reminder about our faculty Ombuds:
- h. Next Faculty Conference, Oct. 9

27. Adjournment, 3:33pm

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