UNLV | FACULTY SENATE

MINUTES OF THE UNLV FACULTY SENATE
Date: 09/08/2026
Location: Student Union Room 208 B & C and via Zoom

Senators Present: Sajjad Ahmad, Maryam Ahranjani, Rabea Alhosh, Djeto Assane, Kavita Batra, Satish Bhatnagar, Sheila Bock, DeLyle Bowen, Dan Bubb, Elaine Bunker, Benjamin Burroughs, Carla Bywaters, Esmeralda Clark, Kaitlin Clinnin, Dustin Clow, Donovan Conley, Honghui Deng, Jessie Devine, Zhonghai Ding, Daenne Dolce, Marni Dow, Nancy Esposito, Jordan Fischette, Paul Forster, Kerie Francis, Jarod Giger, Patrick Griffis, Amanda Haboush, Neamat Hassan, Isabel Herrera Pedro, Jason Hortin, Jill Humphrey, Alethea Inns, Keoni Kins, Jacquelynn Lee, Samuel Lee, Necole Leland, Gilberto Murillo, Steven Nelson, Michael Nussbaum, Bill Robinson, Andrew Sabour, Supa Shah, Alex Talonov, Craig Topple, François-Nicolas Vozel, William Werner, Dana Moran Williams, Monica Williams, Sarah Wolff, Hassan Ziada

Senator Proxies: James Andro-Vasko for Jorge Fonseca Cacho; Patrick Griffis for Samantha Godbey; Sajjad Ahmad for Neil Opfer; Michael Nussbaum for Chad Scott; Marni Dow for Jesse Taylor

Senators Absent: Rohan Dalpatadu, Barry Kamen, Rassilee Sharma

Executive Committee Leadership Present: Michael Kagan, Maria Roberts, Julian Kilker, Susanna Newbury, Rafael Oganesyan, and Minnie Wood

Ex-Officio Present: Trey Curtis-Brown, Nicholas Irwin, Kelechi Odunze, Lakshmi Reddi

I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Chair Kagan at 12:00 p.m.

Chair Kagan welcomed senators, especially new senators, and noted that the agenda would be taken out of order to reserve a full hour for discussion of the UNLV presidency. He thanked the Faculty Senate administrative staff, especially Elisa Emett-Watts, for their work supporting the Senate.

II. Appointment of Parliamentarian

Chair Kagan recommended that the Senate appoint a parliamentarian and that Senator Bill Robinson again serve in that role.

Motion to Approve: Satish Bhatnagar; Second: Unknown Senator

Approved by show of hands with no opposition.

III. Public Comment

- Sue Wainscott: I am speaking as President of the UNLV chapter of the Nevada Faculty Alliance (NFA). The NFA amplified the Senate's call for comments over the holiday weekend. Comments received ranged from support for permanently appointing President Heavey to concerns about transparency, DRAM, and other initiatives he has led as Provost, Officer in Charge, and Interim President. We entrust the Senate with this important conversation, honoring the feedback senators have already received, and hope this body's collective voice is respected by the leadership of this institution and the Board of Regents.
- Senior Senator of Lee Business School: I discussed the statement with several faculty, who made two points. First, President Heavey has shown the capability and passion to lead UNLV to a new stage. Second, UNLV cannot afford another two or three years for a new search. Faculty of international origin, while less inclined to speak publicly, expressed strong support. I call them the silent majority, and I hope our faculty can support this.
- Senator Francis: As Senior Senator for the College of Liberal Arts, I spoke with colleagues and found mixed feelings about the presidency. Senator Francis deferred further comments to the Senate discussion later in the meeting.
- Glen Nowak: There is still work to be done stemming from the workload policy ad hoc committee, including 6-credit design studios that meet for 11 hours per week on top of a traditional three-credit seminar. Universities earn their legitimacy by following the rules they establish. When the Senate considers concerns about tenure, promotion, workload, or review procedures, the central question should be whether the university's policies, guidelines, and regulations were followed, not whether a violation

changed the outcome for an individual faculty member. Required evaluations, committee procedures, conflict of interest disclosures, workload standards, and notice are safeguards, not optional administrative preferences. If the university can disregard its own rules whenever it considers the outcome unaffected, those rules no longer protect anyone. Faculty are held accountable for following policy, and that accountability must be reciprocal.

IV. Written Public Comment

Chair Kagan noted that written public comments were solicited and received, and that they are included in the meeting packet. He encouraged senators to read them. The following is a copy of those submitted written comments:

- I am writing this to support the appointment of Interim President Chris Heavey to be officially named President of UNLV. I have been a faculty member of UNLV since 1997. In that time, UNLV has had eight president, in either an official role or an acting role. Nine of those years were under the leadership of Carolyn Harter. Therefore, since 2006, UNLV has had seven individuals in that role, or nearly one new UNLV leader every three years. Such turnover is not conducive building consistency in achieving the goals of the university. A new search also would raise red flags for any highly regarded candidate given the turnover rate in the current position. President Heavey has demonstrated the engagement and visibility needed for this top position. While there is much left to improve at the university, President Heavey appears to be up to the task.

  Chris Cochran

- Dear Faculty Senators in Liberal Arts:

  Thank you for your message seeking faculty input on the Faculty Senate's plan to make a presidential recommendation to the Board of Regents. I appreciate the opportunity to be heard on this crucial matter.

  In my opinion it would be a grave mistake for the Faculty Senate to make this recommendation. The rush to do so on such short notice, even if fully above-board, bears all the markers of a corrupt backroom deal. At the least, that is the only impression I can take away from the message sent by Faculty Senate President Kagan. It was quite disheartening to read his challenge to speak up fast or lose the opportunity. He could have, but apparently chose not to, poll the full faculty prior to scheduling the vote. That is inexplicable, if the goal is faculty input and governance.

  The planned vote makes a mockery of best practices in academia. If the campus needs a new president, there must be a full and open national search. If not, the university loses both campus trust and public legitimacy.

  Should Interim President Heavey emerge as the best choice from a national search, he would earn that trust and respect. Without the search, however, he will never have it. The planned vote is thus harmful to the university, and to the person it is being taken to favor.

  I urge the Senate to review guidance by the American Association of University Professors: https://www.aaup.org/presidential-searches and to insist on a national search.

  Yours truly,
  Susan Byrne
  Professor of Hispanic Studies
  Department of World Languages & Cultures
  UNLV
  suebyrne.com

- Dear Faculty Senators,

  I am writing to express my strong support for removing the interim designation from Chris Heavey’s position and appointing him President of UNLV.

  During my service on the UNLV Faculty Senate Executive Committee in 2022-23, I had the opportunity to observe Chris Heavey’s leadership—then as Provost—through our monthly meetings. I became confident that he consistently sought to act in the best interests of UNLV and the broader Las Vegas community. I was particularly impressed by several instances in which he made decisions that he knew would create considerable challenges for him as a leader but nevertheless chose the course he believed would best serve the community.

At this moment of significant change and uncertainty in higher education, UNLV needs a leader who understands the institution and is deeply committed to both the university and the community it serves. I believe Chris Heavey has demonstrated that commitment. A new leader would need considerable time to understand our university's specific and complex institutional context, build relationships across the campus and community, and develop the trust needed to lead effectively. Continuity of informed and committed leadership would serve UNLV well.

For these reasons, I strongly support the UNLV Faculty Senate recommending that the NSHE Board of Regents appoint Chris Heavey President of UNLV.

Sincerely,
Yvonne Houy, Ph.D.
At-Large UNLV Faculty Senator, 2021–26

- Hello,

  As a student and worker at UNLV I believe strongly that Chris Heavey should not be president. I know many students that would share the same opinion as me that the institution is poorly ran, and it almost feels as though it does not want its students to succeed. The following is an email I sent to a higher up in cashiering describing a personal experience I had that serves as proof of just how terrible the state of this institution is, and while I was able to come to a resolution, I would not have if I never reached out myself:

  I hope this email finds you well. I am contacting you directly because I require urgency, and I have already tried contacting the cashiering, financial aid office, and the support center as well. No one has been of help, and if anything they have made the problem worse and I am getting increasingly frustrated and depressed with this situation. This is as follows:

  On June 8th I get a call from cashiering telling me that if I don't enroll into a summer pay plan I will be dropped from my courses (at this time I was enroll in six classes), so then I went home and did it. However, the payment plan expects me to make 3 payments of over 1,000 dollars. I am a broke college student that makes 12 an hour, without a lot of parental help with finances. I would love to hear how I'm expected to pay that. Remember how I said I was only made aware of this issue on June 8th? Explain to me why I was made aware of this so late when my first payment is expected June 12th!

  So, I went to financial aid and explained the situation and they told me about the parent plus loan and how I can qualify for that. I'm sorry, is it genuinely expected of me to make my parents take out a loan of over 24k? I can not do that. THEN I went to cashiering and was told there's basically nothing they can do and to contact support.

  Support was simply downplaying my abilities as a student and just telling me to essentially just drop my classes and delay my graduation. If that's my only option so be it. So last night I panic dropped my classes and I am now only enrolled in three for the summer. I scheduled an advisement appointment as well since now I have to reschedule academics incredibly late all because of these financial issues.

  HOWEVER, my account is still showing the over 1,000 charge due and still says I owe over 5,000 dollars for the summer. Can these please be adjusted and can I at least know if it's a specific class that's making my summer tuition so much? And why is my financial aid not paying for anything? I just want all these fees taken care of and to at least be in a payment plan that is actually something I can manage. I'm already delaying my academics cause of this, any support would be helpful.

  Hyacinth Corsaro

- Greetings,

  I do not support Chris Heavey for permanent President. Many of our long term problems are directly related to his poor leadership and eye for leadership. We will suffer his poor choices long into the future.

  I hope there will be no retribution for sending this email.

  John Gallob

- Universities derive their legitimacy not from titles, traditions, or organizational charts, but from the consistent application of their own rules. Policies, bylaws, guidelines, and procedures exist to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability. When leaders permit those standards to be selectively interpreted, ignored, or rationalized away, they undermine the very foundation of institutional trust.

  The greatest threat to a university is not an occasional mistake. Errors occur in every organization. The greater danger is leadership that normalizes departures from established policy by treating them as

inconsequential, excusable, or irrelevant to outcomes. A transparent process becomes "opaque but acceptable." A required evaluation becomes "unnecessary." An undisclosed conflict of interest becomes "unclear." A documented workload inequity becomes "resolved" without addressing years of impact.

Such reasoning transforms policies from governing principles into optional suggestions.

Strong leadership recognizes that institutional integrity depends as much on process as outcome. Rules are not important only when they change a decision; they are important because they create confidence that decisions are fair, impartial, and worthy of respect. When leaders allow flawed interpretations of policy to permeate an institution, they send a message that compliance is expected of faculty and students, but optional for administrators.

Public trust in higher education is fragile. Faculty morale, student confidence, accreditation, and institutional reputation all depend upon the belief that universities will follow the standards they establish. Leadership must therefore do more than enforce policy—it must champion a culture in which policies are understood, respected, and applied consistently.

A university's credibility is measured not by how it operates when rules are convenient, but by whether its leaders uphold those rules when doing so is difficult. Once institutional leaders lose sight of that responsibility, the legitimacy of the institution itself is placed at risk.

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Glenn NP Nowak, PhD, M.Arch, AIA, NCARB
Associate Professor of Architecture
Hospitality Design (HD) Lab - Founder
Architect Licensing Advisor: State - AIA Nevada
UNLV Sports Innovation Institute Affiliate
UNLV School of Architecture

V. Minutes of the May 5, 2026 Meeting

Chair Kagan asked for corrections to the minutes. None were offered. Minutes strand as they are (approved).

VI. University Budget Presentation

Chair Kagan introduced Chris Viton, Vice President for Business Affairs and Chief Financial Officer, noting that the Senate will begin hosting an annual budget presentation last year and that he hopes it becomes a norm, along with a future annual presentation on enrollment. Mr. Viton will return in the spring given the legislative session. Mr. Viton provided a condensed overview of FY26 results, preliminary FY27 budgets, and the upcoming legislative session:

- FY26 results are preliminary pending completion of the audit. The university reports on two bases: the internal budget basis (close to a cash basis), which is the format reported to the Board of Regents, and the audited financial statements prepared on a GAAP accrual basis. The slides presented reflect the budget basis.
- Revenues totaled approximately $1.2 billion, with expenses balanced to revenues. State appropriation accounts for about one third, student tuition and fees for about another third, and grants and contracts together with sales and service for most of the remainder.
- By classification, about 65% of all-funds expenditures go to compensation and benefits and about 15% to scholarships. In the state-supported operating budget, 83% goes to compensation and benefits, and expenditures are concentrated in instruction, academic support, and student services.
- The Board budgets only the state-supported operating budget and self-supporting accounts; grant and gift funds directed by outside sponsors are not budgeted by the Board. FY27 activity is expected to be comparable to or slightly better than FY26. Changes in the state operating budget between years are driven mainly by fee increases, offset by state-funded benefits that were front-loaded in FY26.
- The main base adjustment each legislative cycle is the caseload adjustment, a protocol carried forward from the 2013 funding formula. Last cycle's adjustment of roughly $10.5 million per year was allocated primarily to positions, including converting visiting lines to permanent lines and adding faculty positions. Items previously funded through salary and vacancy savings were moved to hard funding in FY26 and FY27.
- Caseload is based on weighted student credit hours (WSCH) for completed resident credit hours, counted in the even year before each legislative session. Weights are cost-informed and were based on a Texas cost study; upper-division weights at UNLV and UNR carry a 10% increase reflecting the research

mission. UNLV's WSCH growth from 2024 to 2026 was evenly distributed, with about one third each in lower division, upper division, and graduate (master's and doctoral) instruction.

- If state revenues hold, the caseload adjustment would translate to approximately $20.8 million for UNLV. NSHE's legislative priorities are weighted toward capital and deferred maintenance, with campus safety and security as the only program request.
- The state revenue outlook is mixed. Changes to Medicaid under H.R. 1 are expected to have a net negative effect on the state budget. The Economic Forum, which sets the official revenue forecast, meets three times through mid-November to set the forecast the Governor must use for the executive budget, and again before April 1 to set the forecast the Legislature must use.
- Cost of living adjustments (COLAs) are set by the Legislature. Following difficulties implementing the historic COLAs from the 2023 session due to split funding, the campus has planned its fee allocation so that a 2% to 3% COLA could be funded without difficulty. Merit has been suspended for several years; the FY28 to FY29 budget models include a 1% merit pool funded from the fee allocation, depending on how the session goes.

There were no questions. Chair Kagan asked senators to send budget questions to him by email within seven days. He will compile them and forward them to Mr. Viton, whose written answers will be reported to the Senate.

VII. Action Item: UNLV Bylaws Amendments

Chair Kagan, joined by Nic Irwin, Chair of the Bylaws Committee, explained that the slate of bylaw amendments in the meeting packet was approved by the Senate on May 7, 2024, but was never advanced to the President for action. The Chair noted that the bylaw amendment process has been handled poorly in the past and that the Senate is working to correct it this year. Re-approval restarts the process. In the interest of time, the Chair stated that if senators wished to debate the amendments, the item would be pulled and placed on the October agenda. No senator requested debate.

Motion to Approve: Senator Robinson; Second: Clark

Motion Approved (44-1-1)

The amendments will now go to a campus vote and then to the President and Provost.

VIII. Chair's Report

Chair Kagan provided the following updates:

- In Memoriam: The Chair noted that when the university community loses one of its members, he will invite senators from the unit to share a few words. Senator Griffis shared the news of the passing of Mary Dale Deacon, who served as Director of UNLV Libraries from 1982 to 1992. Her leadership led to increased funding for expanded collections, the implementation of an integrated automated system, and the creation of new staff positions, and she made a new library facility a top priority for the campus. She was the wife of James E. Deacon, Distinguished Professor Emeritus in Environmental Science and Biological Sciences, who preceded her in death in 2015. A private memorial service for both will be held in the fall.
- Committee vacancies: Several Faculty Senate committees still have vacancies. A second call for volunteers may be sent, and senators were asked to encourage colleagues in their units to volunteer.
- Committee charges: The Chair, with Executive Committee approval, has issued charges to Senate committees for this year, several with deadlines. Charges may be adjusted as needed.
- FAST Clinic: The FAST Clinic will suspend pediatric care. Only about 40 campus families use the service, which is not sufficient to employ a pediatrician and sustain competent specialized care. The Chair reported that the clinic has been very open in discussions with the Senate. Because health care access is a major faculty priority, one committee charge is to work with the administration on ways to expand the FAST Clinic and health care services.
- Reduced Credit Degree is a major preoccupation with all Faculty Senate Chairs within NSHE and will provide an update at the October meeting but there are a lot of discussions behind the scenes going on.

IX. Remarks by Interim President Chris Heavey

- I came to UNLV in 1992 as a young professor and served on the Senate in my early years. In 2019, while serving as Interim Provost, I applied for the presidency and was the runner-up to President Whitfield, then served as his Provost until he left. I have now served as Interim President for about 16 months and believe even more strongly that I can be an effective leader for this institution.

- Your voice in this conversation will be crucial. Leadership is about aligning the work of academic faculty, administrative faculty, and classified staff toward a shared purpose; the president cannot do the work of the university alone. It has been great to partner with the Senate Executive Committee.
- UNLV is a thriving university in turbulent times. The federal administration is using every lever it can to reform higher education. AI is changing work and education; the university provided enterprise AI access to promote equity of access and is building scaffolding to help students, faculty, and staff use it productively. Reduced-credit (90-credit) degrees are also coming, and while the academic faculty control the curriculum, these degrees will change the competitive landscape.
- UNLV is financially successful and well managed. It has led the state in weighted student credit hour growth over the last four years, used the resulting funding to hard fund key parts of the mission, and is prepared to fund its share of a state-approved COLA and merit.
- The Board of Regents holds the votes and would lead any search, but the Board will want to know what the Faculty Senate, administrative faculty, classified staff, and students think. I will respect your choice. I come to this without any sense of desperation; I am a tenured full professor, which is the best job there is. I am not applying for jobs elsewhere, and my wife and I intend to spend the rest of our lives in this community.
- Many decisions I have made as Provost and President were close calls, and people have disagreed with them. Regarding DRAM and transparency, DRAM is a complicated system that involves deans in prioritizing lines within colleges, but it allows the university to respond to shifting student enrollment. As President I am responsible for the institution's financial health and am proud of the strong financial foundation UNLV has built.

Questions/Comments:

- Senator Roberts: Gifts were one of the smallest parts of the revenue presented, at about 3%. How can we bring in more contributions?
    - President Heavey: As President I added oversight of the Foundation, Athletics, and the central budget office, and we have made substantial reforms at the Foundation. Philanthropy rose from $62 million the year before I took over to $75 million last year. Benchmarking suggests UNLV should aim for $150 million or more, which will require a long-term, coordinated effort. A current focus is the new business building, which has raised roughly $5 to $8 million toward a $60 million goal. For stability, we hired a new Provost and a new CFO this year and need to launch additional searches.

Chair Kagan noted that President Heavey's CV was included in the meeting packet.

X. Closed Session

Chair Kagan called for the meeting to be closed for the discussion of the UNLV presidency. He noted that Senate discussions of searches and similar personnel matters have historically been held in closed session, that the Senate needs its own space to deliberate on the university's highest leadership, and that an open discussion could reduce the credibility of the vote. The Chair had informed all parties in advance. The meeting recessed at 12:59 p.m. and resumed in closed session at 1:06 p.m. with a new Zoom link.

XI. Action Item: Sense of the Senate Regarding the Presidency of UNLV

Chair Kagan presented the Executive Committee's unanimous recommendation that the Senate urge the NSHE Board of Regents to appoint Interim President Heavey as President of UNLV, ahead of the Board's expected decision at its October 16 special meeting between a regular appointment and a national search. He outlined the relevant NSHE Code provisions, the Board of Regents' control over any national search, the importance of leadership stability, and both the concerns raised about President Heavey's leadership and his record as Interim President.

Discussion: Senators, along with the CSUN and GPSA Presidents, discussed the recommendation. Speakers reported that views among their constituents were mixed, with support generally outweighing opposition. Points raised in favor included leadership continuity, the risks and past outcomes of presidential searches, and President Heavey's knowledge of and commitment to UNLV. Concerns raised included transparency, responsiveness to administrative faculty and support units, support for language education, and faculty diversity. Senators asked that these concerns be communicated to President Heavey.

Motion to Approve the Sense of the Senate: Moved and seconded.

With the agreement of the second, Senator Robinson withdrew the motion and moved to replace the Executive Committee's proposed language with the following:

"The UNLV Faculty Senate urges the NSHE Board of Regents to appoint Dr. Christopher Heavey as President of UNLV."

Motion to Replace Language: Moved and seconded.

Motion Approved (38-8-7)

Chair Kagan then called for a final vote on the Sense of the Senate as amended:

UNLV Faculty Senate
Sense of the Senate Regarding the Presidency of UNLV

"The UNLV Faculty Senate urges the NSHE Board of Regents to appoint Dr. Christopher Heavey as President of UNLV."

Motion Approved (44-7-1)

XII. New Business

No new business was raised.

XIII. Public Comment

- Senator Robinson: Responding to earlier remarks, stated that there is ample evidence the December 6 shooting was racially motivated, noting that the shooter passed other people before singling out a faculty member of color, and that the shooter's social media posts have not been released by Metro. Encouraged senators to read the report.
- Senator Oganesyan: The following day I accessed the website while it was still up and there was a lot of racist language on there.

XIV. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 2:06 p.m.

Jorge Fonseca, Secretary