



YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

1 Tressel Way, Youngstown, Ohio 44555

Senate Executive Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes – August 21, 2025

The Executive Committee met at 1:30 PM on August 21, 2025, in the Biology Conference Room in Ward Beecher.

Attendance:

Dr. Chet Cooper, Dr. Martha Pallante, Dr. Edmund Ickert, Dr. Brian Vuksanovich, Dr. Robert Gilliland, Mr. Ross Morrone, and Dr. Kevin Ball.

Excused Absences:

Dr. Karen Larwin, Dr. Ron Davis, and Ms. Sofie Myers.

Guests:

Dr. David Graham, Ms. Hillary Fuhrman, and Dr. Joe Palardy.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dr Chet Cooper, Chair. Dr David Graham was introduced to the executive committee.

i. Dr David Graham

Dr David Graham spoke with the committee regarding student success, academic plans, and collaborative efforts to improve retention rates. Emphasis was placed on the importance of student-centered initiatives and the need for effective onboarding processes. Dr Pallante suggested that the student success plan to members of the senate to ensure broad dissemination before endorsement. Will be looking to add this item to the agenda in October/November. Dr Graham to be introduced at the first senate meeting. Will look to make a link available prior to the senate meeting for review. Question raised by Dr Gilliland on the procedure for introducing the success plan, adoption vs endorsement. Dr Pallante echoed that it would be an endorsement that would not require a vote.

ii. Artificial Intelligence – Joe Palardy and Hillary Furhman

Dr Joe Palardy and Ms. Hillary Fuhrman provided an update and report on AI. Youngstown State to participate in the AAC&U Institute on AI, Pedagogy, and Curriculum. This is an online, yearlong team-based institute that supports a campus AI action plan through mentoring and recurring convenings. Plan is to utilize outside resources where possible to help figure a way to move forward. The YSU team was introduced: Joseph Palardy (lead), Hillary Fuhrman, Christina Saenger, Mark Vopat, Sebastian Giraldo, Richard Rogers. The following goals were established:

1. Produce a campus-ready AI pedagogy/curriculum plan.
2. Pilot assessment and course redesigns that are resilient to AI.

3. Build faculty capacity and shared guidance on effective, ethical AI use.
4. Establish a governance/measurement cadence to sustain change.

Dr Palardy raised 2 major concerns: adapting to rapid changes in AI technology and its impact on curriculum and assessments (sheer number of changes). A timeline was introduced:

- September 11-12, 2025 (kickoff online)
- Mid-Institute: January 9, 2026
- Capstone: April 6-7, 2026
- Ongoing: mentoring+webinars between milestones

Prepare to provide an update on the AI pedagogy curriculum plan at a future Senate meeting, potentially in January or February with subsequent updates leading up to the April meetings. Ms. Fuhrman mentioned that there was a recent budget bill passed that says AI needs to be incorporated into general education as well. Ms. Fuhrman and Dr Palardy to be added to the agenda for a 5 minute report on the continuation of the ad hoc committee. Ms. Fuhrman and Dr Palardy to send AI information to Chet for review per his request. Dr Pallante brought up AI detection tools and whether there will be some available for faculty. Per Dr Palardy, AI detection tools can be useful for detecting inexperienced student work, but it is harder to detect more experienced students. Discussion ensued on human detection vs AI detection software. Challenges with assessments were discussed.

iii. Senate Bill 1 Impact

Collaboration with BoT on Academic Matters

Dr Chet Cooper communicated with the provost regarding the recently passed budget bill. Dr Cooper has also had conversations with Mr. Joseph Kerola from the board of trustees. The board reiterated that in light of SB1 that they want to continue to have a very positive relationship with the senate. Dr Cooper has also had a conversation with the president to discuss the role of the Senate with respect to SB1. The president is working on a way to ensure that Academic Senate still has a major role, but needs to figure out how that will look. Mr Kerola conveyed that they are very serious in keeping the senate's role, but to change the language from "approving" to "recommending".

Charter and Bylaw Amendments

Dr Cooper has emphasized the need to ensure the Charter and Bylaws committee is fully staffed. Will work with Dr Bob Kramer from Elections and Balloting to ensure that these positions are filled (this is the first month goal). Update from Dr Kramer is that C-STEM elections have been completed.

"Civics Course"

Discussion ensued regarding the civics course requirement from SB1. Dr Martha Pallante presented information on this topic. The university currently has a course, History 1501, which has most of the content required in it. This course already had 4-5 of the required 7 documents in it. The course is already Ohio 36 approved. Paperwork has already been filed with a small number change and description change. The president is currently reviewing the course. After the president's approval it will go to Kim Vardone and then submitted to ODHE higher education committee for further approval. Anyone taking History 1501 will be grandfathered into the requirement. A discussion is being initiated regarding a one semester history or the United States or American History. Only 2 schools in Ohio have a course like this. The law also mandates the course to be available for CCP. Kyle Starkey, Amy Fluker, and Dr Pallante worked on

updating the history of CCP. Anyone graduating from 2030 and beyond has to pass the course and final in order to receive a higher education degree by law. Final exam will be pass/fail, allowing students two opportunities to pass; early assessments align with final content. Students will be given 2 opportunities to take the test. Brief discussion ensued on the course by committee members. Dr Cooper thanked Dr Pallante for her work. Dr Pallante brought up a potential concern regarding a new classroom content guideline and suggested it be brought forth to the senate for endorsement in the future. Discussion ensued among committee members.

BEE Committee Dissolved

Dr Chet Cooper announced that the BEE committee has been dissolved at this time. The committee information page will be removed from the webpage.

iv. Provost/President Presentation

Reviewed tentative agenda items. Dr Chet Cooper stated that provost wishes to have 30 minutes at the senate meeting. Dr Cooper plans to touch base with the provost before the upcoming meeting, particularly about the classroom content guidelines to see if a separate session is needed. Dr Cooper to confirm if President Johnson will attend the next senate session.

v. Elections

Dr Cooper stated that elections are the first order of business for chair/vice chair. Dr Kramer will lead this topic at the next senate meeting. Dr Cooper mentioned that we need to replace Dr Peter Reday the WCBA executive committee representative. Dr Edmund Ickert mentioned that CCCA might also need a representative for the executive committee.

vi Other Business

Dr Cooper mentioned that Dr Adam Earnheardt has withdrawn from General Education and that Dr Cooper will work with the Provost to discuss the issue. Dr Brian Vuksanovich nominated Michael Costarell for consideration to fill the vacancy. Dr Cooper added Dr Michael Costarell to the list of candidates.

Future Invitation – Ron Strollo

Dr Cooper mentioned that Mr. Strollo would like to come to talk to the senate about athletics. Dr Cooper mentioned that invitations have gone out to faculty to attend sporting events. Mr. Ross Morrone added in some perspective to try to build a culture that transcends through the different communities. Mr. Morrone talked about changing the culture in the future and voiced that he feels this is an important issue.

Future Senate Meeting Dates

Dr Cooper reported that Dr Ickert confirmed the senate dates for fall but will have to confirm spring in December. Dr Ickert requested that Dr Pallante have the webcam ready for future meetings. Dr Cooper reiterated the Senate Attendance Policy and said that virtual attendance is only for ADA compliance. Dr Ickert to reiterate this to the senate body.

Other Items

Dr Cooper requested any other items to be presented. Dr Ickert reported the current draft. Dr Cooper will introduce Dr Graham and announce BEE dissolved as part of the report. Dr Pallante mentioned that

interested faculty should use the committee webpage for assignments (to be added to report). Dr Vuksanovich has emphasized the need for enforcement of attendance during committee meetings. Dr Gilliland also seconded this. Dr Cooper stated the need to receive minutes from different committee meetings (at least once each semester). Mr. Morrone mentioned the use of TEAMS for committees to upload the minutes for meetings. Dr Pallante and Dr Ickert will visit Debartolo Rm 132 prior to the meeting to review equipment.

Dr Cooper adjourned the meeting at 2:45 pm

Minutes submitted by:

Edmund Ickert

Secretary, Academic Senate