Wharton County Junior College

Faculty Council Meeting Minutes

Details	
Date	October 6, 2026
Time	3:00
Location	Zoom and Library

I. Attendance

ATTENDEES						
Chair	Sandra McCarstle					
Vice Chair	Grady Smith					
Note Taker	Gina Wilson					
Attendance	**Member**	**Present**	**Absent**	**Member**	**Present**	**Absent**
	Jessi Snider	X		Holly Merta		
	Julie Rodriguez	X		David Woods		
	Ken Grubb	X		Matthew Bennett	X	
	David Voulgaris		X	Melissa Moore		
	Bracha Silverstone	X		Sharla Walker	X	
	Stacie Ringleb-Krutilek	X		Jeff Tix		
	Gabriel Escobedo,	X		Bay Potila	X	
	Varun Gupta			Darlene Giesalhart	X	
	Ranya Ali			Sean Valdez		
Others Present						

Call to Order

1. The Faculty Senate President officially calls the meeting to order.
2. **Adoption of the Agenda** - the agenda was presented by the Faculty Senate President at the start, there was no objection, it's was considered adopted without needing a formal motion
3. **Approval of Minutes**- Motion to approve minutes from previous meeting.
4. **4. Review of Meeting Rules / Position Guidelines**

II. Old Business

DISCUSSION

Sandra McCarstle reported on her meeting with Millsap and shared administration's responses to the September Faculty Senate motions. The following are reports on prior motions, not new motions made on October 6.

1 Sugar Land Lease - Prior motion: Inquire with administration regarding the status of the Sugar Land lease. Motion passed at the September meeting.

The current lease extends through 2029. No renewal decision has been made yet. Administration indicated that maintaining a Sugar Land presence is important, an engineering pathway is in place, and efforts continue to build enrollment and additional pathways at Sugar Land. The campus is expensive to operate, so enrollment growth remains important.

2 Facilities Renovations - Prior action: The item was tabled until after the scheduled facilities meeting.

Funding may sometimes be earmarked for specific areas and must be used for those purposes. Other renovation priorities may be based on which areas have the greatest need. Faculty feedback is being gathered. Members asked about the proposed building between the student center and gym, which was expected to include a bookstore and other services. Sandra McCarstle agreed to ask administration about its status. No action to take the tabled item up again was documented.

3 Sugar Land Bookstore - Prior motion: Ask administration about the status of bookstore services at Sugar Land and access to materials students need.

Bookstore services are connected to Follett, and a decision to establish a bookstore would depend on Follett's assessment of demand. Matthew Bennett reported that there is no bookstore at Sugar Land. Administration indicated that interest in bookstore services could be communicated to Follett. Kenneth Grubb asked about the previously discussed vending machine option and reported that Scantrons are sold through the learning or tutoring center. Sandra McCarstle reported that administration had expressed limited interest in vending machines because Scantrons are available elsewhere. The exact campus location for purchasing Scantrons remains to be clarified; Grubb noted that students need materials beyond Scantrons.

4 Salary Transparency - Prior motion: Request a conversation with administration regarding salary transparency, published pay scales, how salaries are determined, and the timing of salary information relative to contracts.

Administration is still working on a full response. Website information includes new-hire salary placement and minimum, middle, and maximum ranges, but the criteria for those ranges were not clear. Millsap will seek further clarification from Human Resources. Concerns that some employees did not receive the 2 percent increase discussed at a town hall will also be addressed with Human Resources.

5 Bookstore Concerns at Wharton and Richmond - Prior motion: Bring concerns about bookstore operations at Wharton and Richmond to administration, including textbook availability and operating hours.

Millsap proposed regular meetings with the bookstore representative, Dr. Byrd, and division chairs to improve communication and address concerns promptly. The proposed schedule would be monthly, with more frequent meetings, potentially weekly, before semesters begin or when needed. Faculty were reminded that changes to instructors, CRNs, or meeting days may cause a course to appear canceled in a bookstore system and result in canceled book orders. Changes should be communicated to the bookstore representative to help prevent this problem.

6 Financial Aid Student Concerns - Prior motion: Bring concerns about financial-aid staffing and location changes to administration.

Administration indicated that summer staffing will be reviewed in the spring to make sure appropriate coverage is in place. Dr. Byrd is responsible for this area, and faculty may share questions or ideas with him.

7 Long Term Disability Benefit Changes - Prior motion: Request explanation, transparency, and justification from administration regarding the disability benefit change, communication surrounding the change, and possible replacement options.

The response relayed from administration was that employee contracts are renewed yearly and benefits may change from year to year. Employees accept the offered salary and benefits package when they sign their annual contract. No additional explanation or replacement option was reported during the meeting.

8 Brightspace Attendance - Prior motion: Bring concerns about Brightspace attendance functionality and gradebook integration to administration. These concerns had previously been brought to the attention of the Distance Education department.

Administration is still working on a response. Sandra McCarstle expressed hope that additional information would be available by the next meeting.

9 Off Contract and Summer Work Compensation - Prior motion: Recommend that the College establish a process for compensating 9-month and 10.5-month employees for required work performed outside of their contracted employment period, including work performed during the summer. The motion passed at the September meeting.

The issue is being looked into further. PPA responsibilities and related compensation will be reviewed throughout the year, with attention to transparency, consistency, and fairness. Possible scales or tables were discussed as a way to clarify compensation expectations. Administration indicated that the current budget has already been approved, so changes would need to be considered in a future budget. The review will include all PPAs, not only those affecting 9-month and 10.5-month employees.

III. New Business

DISCUSSION
1. Peter Anderson was scheduled to bring questions about the Fitness Center. He was not present when the item was introduced, and no Fitness Center discuss took place at this meeting.

IV. Announcements

DISCUSSION
1. Pathways Town Hall
2. Faculty should look for an email from Millsap about a town hall on pathways and career clusters. Faculty input and participation will be encouraged. Members were asked to share the announcement with their constituents.

3. Office Hours on All Campuses **4.** Millsap plans to hold office hours on all campuses. Faculty were encouraged to watch for the schedule and stop by to discuss questions, needs, and ideas.

V. Other Items

DISCUSSION
1.

VI. Action Items

	ACTION/DISCUSSION ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING	OWNER	DUE
1.	Ask administration about the proposed building between the student center and gym.	President McCarstle	As responses become available
2.	Clarify where Sugar Land students can purchase Scantrons and other needed materials.	President McCarstle	As responses become available
3.	Continue seeking salary-range criteria and clarification of concerns about the 2 percent increase.	President McCarstle	As responses become available
4.	Continue follow-up on Brightspace attendance and off-contract compensation; share additional responses with Senate.	President McCarstle	As responses become available

VII. Adjournment

ADJOURNMENT		
1.	The meeting adjourned at:	3:30pm Grady Smith made motion; Bay Potila seconded
2.	Signature Approval:	Gina Wilson