

University Senate- September 14, 2026



University Senate Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2026
3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Beers Lecture Hall

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Roll Call
2. Approval of April Minutes
 - a. Approved by general consent
3. President's Report
 - a. 26/27 budget approved in July, provided level funding for all public post-secondary institutions. Board of Governors approved an increase in tuition by \$172 per semester in undergraduate in-state tuition. Fall 2026 enrollment is 5,980 students. This is a 1.6% increase in total enrollment which is our 6th year of enrollment growth. We should anticipate a structural reduction in both institutional financial aid and compensation over the next few years. There are no plans for layoffs or retrenchment of regular faculty or staff.
 - b. General education assessment committee continue to evaluate our general education program and make recommendations. Their charge is not to develop a new program, but to assess what we currently have and make recommendations.
 - c. As reported, we successfully reaffirmed through Middle States for accreditation.
4. Fix Agenda
 - a. University Senate Orientation moved under the SGA President's Report
 - b. Change the order of New Business to put reports that the Registrar, Karen Johnson, will discuss together
 - c. Leave of absence policy discussion will be moved up as well
5. Committee Reports
 - a. Most committee have yet to meet this semester and will be providing updates as the semester continues
6. SGA President's Report
 - a. Goals for SGA this year:
 - i. Increase awareness of student organization
 - ii. Improve transparency for students to receive information from faculty and administration
 - iii. Support student success and development
 - iv. Connect with campus resources in efforts to foster student development
7. University Senate Orientation
 - a. See attached presentation
 - b. Discussion of the significance of shared governance
8. Old Business
 - a. Follow Up Q&A from April Meeting with Provost Ball and Omar Mayyasi
 - i. Discussion on course sharing and the potential impact
 - b. E&G Budget Presentation- Omar Mayyasi

University Senate- September 14, 2026

- i. Budget based on 5,806 student FTE's, which generates about \$123 million in revenue
 - ii. Looking at an 8 million dollar deficit
 - iii. We have fallen below the PASSHE recommendations for reserve maintenance
 - iv. Compared to other universities, we are 3rd in terms of financial sustainability, we have the 2nd highest enrollment growth, and the 2nd lowest debt on our books
 - v. Plan is to not replace open positions and to reduce scholarship aid
 - c. Propose moving the other two proposals to the October meeting
 - i. No objections
 - d. Building a Sustainable Program Array-Provost Ball
 - i. See attached presentation
 - ii. ESU must balance:
 - 1. Student demand
 - 2. Faculty resources
 - 3. Financial sustainability
 - 4. State performance expectations
 - 5. Institutional missions as a regional public university
 - iii. Each division is evaluating these metrics:
 - 1. Enrollment
 - 2. Faculty FTE
 - 3. Number of course sections offered
 - 4. Student-to-faculty ratio
 - 5. Credit hour production
 - 6. Retention
 - 7. Graduation rate
 - iv. High demand does not always equal high financial return.
 - 1. Visual and performing arts
 - 2. Clinical programs
 - 3. Laboratory sciences
 - v. Programs are expensive because:
 - 1. Low student/faculty ratios
 - 2. Specialized laboratories/facilities
 - 3. Clinical placements
 - 4. Accreditation compliances
 - 5. Expensive equipment
 - vi. Discussion on the future of program array at ESU and how to best serve students
- 9. Committee Approvals
 - a. New committee members have been added to all committees to infuse new ideas and give all senators a chance to serve in that capacity
 - i. No objections, approved by general consent
- 10. Announcements
 - a. Constitution Day event in lower Dansbury from 6-7 this evening.
 - b. 17th Constitution Day will be celebrated in the Library with cake on 9/17 from 2-4

University Senate- September 14, 2026



University Senate Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2026
3:00 - 5:00 p.m.
Beers Lecture Hall

In Attendance:

Ball, Margaret; Boyce, Greg; Brooks, Christopher; Carver, Marguerite; Cole-Malott, Donna-Marie; Dailey, Deena; Dillmuth-Miller, Susan; DiPipi-Hoy, Caroline; Dong, Stella; Drummond, Darla; Eliasson, Johan; Gallup, Scott; Gartner, Samantha; Gruneiro-Roadcap, Nieves; Hoffman, Jan; Hunter, Lorna; Keat, Jennifer; Kim, Heon; Kimm, Kaklin; Knickerbocker, Heather; Langan, Brooke; Long, Kenneth; Lopez-Rodriguez, Emely; Lovett, David; Martinez, Raquel; Mayyasi, Omar; Mullan, Margaret; Mustafina, Zarina; Nickens, Rabin; Philippeaux, Nathalie; Postupack, Mary Francis; Rodriguez, Elaine; Rosen, Melinda; Ross, Jerry; Saker, Connor; Scott, Elizabeth; Smith, Jennie; Smith, Robert; Snyder, Brandon; Solis, Santiago; Soto, Autumn; Thorn-Hauswirth, Damian; Zhang, Xuemao

Absent:

Amador-Rosario, Mary; Brannigan, Kyle; Carlo, Alex; Carter, Sean; Casebolt, Kevin; Cavauiolo, Domenico; Domanski, Christopher; Fredette, Mary; Green, Ainslee; Harris, Brock; Jones-Wilson, Michelle; Ju, Youngwood; Kavanau, Chris; Scott, Steven; Thomas, Rayshon; Turay, Ansumana; Varcoe, Kelly; Watkins, Shawn; Watson, Bethanie; Williams, Isiq; Williams, Rosemary Samantha; Williams, Sylvester; Yoder, Xenia Barakos

1. Roll Call
 - a. Introduction of all senators and representatives
2. Approval of minutes
 - a. Approved by general consent
3. President's Report
 - a. Provide an update on a couple items. In July, the commonwealth approved the 26-27 budget that provided level funding for all public post-secondary institutions. In response to the flat appropriate, board of governors approved an increase in tuition by \$172 per semester in undergraduate in-state tuition. Fall 2026 enrollment, 5,980 students. 1.6% increase in total enrollment, should be official soon. This is our 6th year of enrollment growth. Increase for undergraduate is 2.4%, graduate declined by 3.3%. Expenditures continue to outpace revenue. Structural budget deficits approaching 8 million dollars. Omar Mayyasi talking to others about challenges in an attempt to address them. We should anticipate a structural reduction in both institutional financial aid and compensation over the next few years. No plans for layoff or retrenchment of regular faculty or staff. Will be some adjustments in what we do in order to get us back on track. Omar

University Senate- September 14, 2026

will continue to meet with different groups and provide different presentation to help us understand what our challenges are. Would like to clarify things about the general education assessment committee. Their charge is not to develop a new program, but to asses our current curriculum, analyze the data and provide recommendations to administration and to the curriculum committee.

Recommendations will be presented to the campus community, they are still collecting data. the committee does not create, revise or implement a curricular change. GEAC remains focused on assessment instead of curriculum development. Middle states updates: as reported ESU successfully reaffirmed for accreditation. Pleasantly surprised by the way in which the reaffirmation was granted. The issuance of the report was unorthodox under normal standards. No letter was issued, we didn't receive one. This is their new process. As we begin the new academic year, encourage all university community members to actively participate in enriching our community. This past family weekend, the excitement was really strong, let's keep that going. In October, we will have the board of governors meeting here for the first time in history. Great opportunity for ESU to showcase what we have.

4. Fix Agenda
 - a. Move University Senate Orientation to under the SGA President's report due to so many new senators
 - i. No objections
 - b. Change the order under New Business, Karen Johnson is coming so we can put those presentations together.
 - i. No objections
 - c. Leave of Absence policy will be moved up so that Karen can address that as well.
 - i. No objections
5. Committee Reports
 - a. Executive
 - i. Met two weeks ago to set the agenda.
 - b. Academic
 - i. Haven't met
 - c. Rules and by laws
 - i. Haven't met
 - d. Budget, finance
 - i. Ready to present, but will move presentation to October
 - e. Campus life
 - i. Haven't met
 - f. Research
 - i. Haven't met yet, helped out with summer grant work.
 - g. Ad hoc free speech
 - i. Submitted a proposal, President Long will be reporting in October.
6. SGA President's Report
 - a. Nathalie is a senior psychology major with a counseling concentration. She has been in SGA for 3 years and was previously secretary. The goals for SGA this year are:
 - i. Increase awareness of student organization

University Senate- September 14, 2026

- ii. Improve transparency for students to receive information from faculty and administration
 - iii. Support student success and development
 - iv. Connect with campus resources in efforts to foster student development
 - b. Involvement Fair was a success, election process just started. Many students extremely eager to join, a lot of petitions coming in to express their opinions and experiences. Ballots will be open as soon as tomorrow. September 24th 2-4 next open meeting in senate chambers.
7. University Senate Orientation
- a. Explanation and instructions for clickers
 - b. See attached presentation
 - c. Representative forum that works to promote the mission of ESU and function as a deliberative body. We aren't a reporting body, but we actually deliberate.
 - d. AAUP defines shared governance as the joint responsibility of faculty administration and the governing board for running the institution. AAUP draws a sharp line that I think we should sit on for a second. There's a version of shared governance that just means a lot of conversation happens before or after a decision, and then the decision is made anyway and there's a version where in the areas that are genuinely this body's responsibility, the administration and the board routinely concur with what this body recommends, where our input doesn't just get heard it carries real weight. And departing from it is the exception that requires justification, not the norm that requires no comment at all. So that is the standard that is already written in our constitution, as you can see. Our constitution says that this senate exists to promote open discussion, frequent and timely communication and direct involvement with how this university is run. It names only 5 areas where we don't get consulted. Critically, the constitution doesn't leave the follow through vague. Our constitution says the president must give our recommendations full consideration and when a recommendation is rejected or modified the president is required to communicate the rationale for that back to us and do it in a timely fashion. That is a specific written commitment. Too often this body's role and practice looks less like the joint responsibility the AAUP describes and more like the version it warns against. We are a body that has changemakers, consisting of administrators, faculty, staff and students. We can offer solutions and solve problems. for us to operate with true shared governance consultation has to happen while the decision is still open, not when it's final. The test is simple, could this body's input still change the outcome when we're hearing about it? If the answer is no, we weren't consulted, we were informed. Those are different things and our constitution asked for the first one. We ask for transparency. We should be able to see at a glance what happened to our recommendations over the course of the year, were they adopted, modified, rejected, and why? We are here to offer solutions. We are here to make ESU a strong, efficient, effective institution. Decisions that are shaped with real input from faculty, staff, and administrators and students land better, get implemented with less friction and hold up better under scrutiny. Genuine shared governance isn't a tax on efficient decision making, done well, it's what keeps a decision from having to be made twice.

University Senate- September 14, 2026

8. Old Business

a. Follow Up Q&A from April Presentation

- i. Johan Eliasson: Is the data available anywhere for others to see? They seem very vague as to what the actual criteria are for assessing programs.
 1. Provost Ball: Yes, we will be looking at all the things listed in the slides.
 2. Johan Eliasson: So when we asked what is included in direct and indirect costs and didn't get an answer, can you point to where those are?
 3. Provost Ball: This isn't my slide, I can't point to this slide.
 4. Omar: For direct and indirect costs, we used the data submitted for the CPP (Comprehensive Planning Process) to identify the direct and indirect costs.
 5. Provost Ball- president long mentioned where we were for enrollment this semester, retention is putting a lot of pressure on us this year. We have lost two points. We were hoping to get to 77-78 this year. Steady incline, but back to 73% this year. Don't have the detailed data on retention, but will be exploring that. Retention is so important for us that 1st to 2nd, 2nd to 3rd year. We get a healthy group coming in but don't retain them. So, we have low enrolled upper division classes. Causing us to not have as many general education courses we want to get in to our first years. Pulling us back and Costing us a lot to hire additional adjuncts. Retention is a very important part. Never have we had a cliff that most of this country is hitting regarding students. Very different time. Aren't as many students out there, competition is immense for those students. The fact that we were able to get the class we did get in here is really exciting. So how do we keep those students? Got a grant for how to improve our scheduling. All scheduling stuff is being analyzed, course dog will help with the analytics as well to let us know how many classes we need and what. Hopefully, getting better at scheduling may help with retention. Financial aid situation has made it harder for students to stay in the game. Financial aid pressure wasn't there in the same way before. For people who said we've seen this before, this isn't true. Sadly, things are very different now. When we are discussing what programs to sunset, redesign or take course sharing seriously.
- ii. Brandon Snyder: Can you speak to course sharing a little and how much of that is going on? Financially, I know there has been push and pull concerning aspects.
 1. Provost Ball: Problems with it that haven't been worked out. There is course sharing going on. There is some definitely going on.
 2. President Long; presidents have agreed to not let that be the hold up for course sharing. We've been talking about course sharing since he was VP. Holdup has been on who gets money when students move. Agreed to offer the programs across institutions if

University Senate- September 14, 2026

there is a demand and then figure out the money on the back end rather than first. Provost teams are coming up with what works for course sharing and this opens up opportunities for our students. At Kutztown, they suspended certain language programs, they might not have the major there but they can take courses other universities are offering at commonwealth or ESU.

3. Provost Ball: Jeff Ruth, chair of modern languages, a few years ago put out a proposal to see if people wanted to set up course sharing. Modern languages was the perfect try out. He applied for a grant and has been working with other schools in the system, really started something this year. Similar course shell, all been through distance ed training. Talk to Jeff, he's been instrumental in it. Eric Schumacher applied for a grant from NASH to develop a philosophy consortium, has had two conferences here with our philosophy departments to see what this could be and what courses could be shared, training, etc. physics between Slippery Rock and IUP have a strong course sharing plan. Pockets of it that are intentional.
4. Rob Smith: every semester each institution has to submit courses, banner systems have to talk to each other so that your seat management talks to each other and doesn't overload that section. Technology side, it's being built by the Ireland Group, that part is not 100% in production. Technical side is being worked out so that the experience is successful for everyone involved.

b. E&G Budget Presentation (Omar Mayyasi)

- i. Please see attached presentation
- ii. E&G budget is where the tuition comes in, appropriations come in, fees are paid into the E&G budget, that is used to pay for all instructional costs. Different from auxiliaries that are required to be self-sufficient. Budget based on 5,806 student FTEs generation about \$123 million in revenue, with those revenue profiles we are looking at an 8 million deficit this fiscal year. Scheduling is one of the levers we have to improve student retention. CPP has built in student retention. ESU has been doing a fantastic job getting students in the door and have then enrolled in programs. Maintaining that and also improving retention is important. Adds about half a million to our bottom line over the next few years. Expense profile, roughly 65% compensation, 14% financial aid, 20% utilities, 2/3 budget is fixed within compensation, really can't impact that in any meaningful way in the short term. Fiscal year 25 to 26/27, compensation grew by 4.8 million, student aid grew by 0.4 million and utilities by 2.8 million. FTE has been relatively flat, compensation costs have been going up, but that's based on the CBA, don't have much control over that. The disconnect between our revenue and expenses has to be funded somehow. Reserves are being used to balance E&G, the funding for reserves is down, if we do nothing, our cash balance will decline to about 10 million by fiscal year 28-29.

University Senate- September 14, 2026

- iii. Haklin Kimm: How do you get the prediction for compensation, the amount to increase it? Where do you get that?
 - 1. Omar: Up through 25/26 are actuals, 26/27 is the budget and beyond is the budget. Budget escalations are based on the CBA, utility cost increases, and are offset by tuition and enrollment, showing a disconnect between those two.
- iv. President Long: How does a structural deficit play into this? If we do nothing what will happen?
 - 1. Omar: enrolment has been growing steadily, costs structures growing at a faster pace. Disconnect between revenue streams and expense profile. What can you pull to improve the instability? Try to work on enrollment, can't adjust compensation because of CBA, look at workforce but that's also longer term and will impact services delivered. Perhaps rely less on financial aid or delay some hiring for open positions. Really don't have much we can pull on. Will need to rely on looking at program array and scheduling, workload to try to get those two diverging lines to meet.
- v. Susan Dillmuth Miller: 2025 looks like an outlier, what did we do differently that year?
 - 1. Omar: I'm not sure, I can find out and get back to you.
- vi. Bill Broun: Are there statutory requirements for reserves that we have to be at? Where are we in relation to that?
 - 1. Omar: We are required to maintain certain reserves and have fallen below the passhe recommended guidelines. We need to find a way to pay ourselves back and replenish the reserves.
 - 2. Bill Broun: What is it?
 - 3. President Long: The Board of Governors policy is that you have 2% of the costs of the facility operations. We don't do a good job with the E&G side of this. We cannot keep up the 8 million dollars a year. By 2032-2033 ESU will have almost no E&G debt. We are one of the only schools that will be able to pay this back in full. The negative is that we don't have a reserve to fall back on if we can't balance our budget. We are eating into that due to the institutional aid package that we out together, spending about 19 million dollars a year in institutional aid. We need to have that be about 12 million.
 - 4. Bill Broun: Where do we stack up with the other universities?
 - 5. Omar: We are 3rd in terms of financial sustainability, 2nd highest enrollment growth, 2nd lowest debt on our books.
 - 6. Bill Broun: So it's the perfect storm but we have a pretty good boat.
 - 7. Provost Ball: where we are lucky is that we didn't make the huge expansion in a lot of programs that other universities did about ten years ago. We have been able to balance things as of now.
 - 8. Omar: the last slide I have was following the Board of Governors increasing the tuition that added 1.2 million to our budget. If we

University Senate- September 14, 2026

- were to eliminate some open positions it would help, about 2 million dollars. Also we could shave off 2 million from our existing scholarship pool, we would then have a 2.8 million deficit.
- vii. Johan Eliasson: Was there a mention of another early retirement incentive program?
1. Omar: No, we did not talk about that. We will be providing more information on the early incentive program we already had.
 2. Provost Ball: We don't make money from retirement incentives.
 3. President Long: We really don't. More than half of the positions we have to refill. The first year or two it costs us more money up front. Other universities needed the incentive program more than we did, it hasn't really saved a lot of money.
- viii. Margaret Mullan: The danger of not replacing a position is that you have less upper division classes so that a student can not find upper level classes. Then they think that maybe they should go somewhere else. The challenges are in looking at the implications of not hiring to replace things.
1. Provost Ball: Course sharings could be effective here for some departments.
 2. Margaret Mullan: Students also want more in person classes too sometimes.
 3. Omar: The burden of fixing this gap isn't going to be solely on the faculty. We are looking at positions across the university.
 4. Provost Ball: Demand is shifting, we are trying to figure out how.
- ix. Question from the audience: How much money would it save if we focused on retention?
1. Omar: An increase in 3% in retention would cause a one million dollar increase.
- x. Bill Broun: With course sharing, the two departments you mentioned were grant funded. Is that the only way to do it?
1. Provost Ball: No, these were specific ways to do it that applied 2 years ago.
 2. Bill Broun: Do you have to have a grant?
 3. Provost Ball: No, you just have to work with another department and be serious about it.
- xi. Susan Dillmuth Miller: What were the changes with scholarships to save money?
1. Omar: We are still trying to see how we can adjust financial aid without impacting enrollment. Reducing scholarships without negatively impacting it.
- xii. Brandon Snyder: Scholarship offers would impact incoming class, not current students, right?
1. Omar: Correct.
 2. President Long: We truly believe in affordability and access, but we will need to take a look at scholarships as well. It's

University Senate- September 14, 2026

- unsustainable. We aren't getting any increases in appropriations any time soon. We really have to tighten up.
3. Omar: Had ESU not deployed that strategy of using appropriations and dedicating them to aid, we would be in a much worse situation.
- xiii. Question from the audience: What criteria are you using to see what positions won't be filled?
1. Omar: We are examining open positions to see which will have a minimum impact on services to eliminate at this point. We are figuring out how much our need is in an areas.
 2. President Long: The only areas that we can't eliminate positions are with campus police. All other areas, including the executive branch, are on the list.
- c. Propose moving the other two proposals to the October meeting.
- i. No objections.
- d. Building a Sustainable Program Array- Provost Ball
- i. See attached presentation.
 - ii. Program array means all the programs that we offer. ESU never did that huge expansion that some of our sister schools did, right before the pandemic we did add a couple new programs that have added a little pressure.
 - iii. ESU must balance:
 1. Student demand
 2. Faculty resources
 3. Financial sustainability
 4. State performance expectations
 5. Institutional missions as a regional public university
 - iv. Each division is evaluating these metrics:
 1. Enrollment
 2. Faculty FTE
 3. Number of course sections offered
 4. Student-to-faculty ratio
 5. Credit hour production
 6. Retention
 7. Graduation rate
 - v. High demand does not always equal high financial return.
 1. Visual and performing arts
 2. Clinical programs
 3. Laboratory sciences
 - vi. Programs are expensive because:
 1. Low student/faculty ratios
 2. Specialized laboratories/facilities
 3. Clinical placements
 4. Accreditation compliances
 5. Expensive equipment
 - vii. Enrollment alone does not determine sustainability.

University Senate- September 14, 2026

- viii. Programs with similar enrollment may contribute very differently to institutional sustainability.
- ix. Three types of academic programs
 - 1. Revenue-generating programs
 - 2. Strategic/high demand programs
 - 3. Mission-centered programs
- x. High demand alone should not drive expansion. Growth must consider:
 - 1. Faculty capacity
 - 2. Classroom availability
 - 3. Laboratory capacity
 - 4. Clinical placements
 - 5. Budget limitations
- xi. Objective is sustainable growth and not unlimited growth.
- xii. Sustainability begins before the schedule is built, we are so excited to get the grant to help us plan better for scheduling. Academic planning should help us to find out which programs can grow, which programs need to sunset, which require additional investment, which support institutional revenue and how faculty resources are allocated.
- xiii. Low cost programs often generate surplus revenue but they cannot be expected to indefinitely subsidize expensive low-demand programs if doing so prevents them from meeting their goals.
- xiv. Question is which programs can grow sustainably within our faculty, facility, and financial constraints?
- xv. Johan Eliasson: In regards to institutional mission, that question is normative. That all depends on what you think the institution's missions should be. Aside from what the state says, not every one of them can meet every one of the institutional missions. I'm not going against any of the programs, but some of them are high cost programs. How does the university rectify a problem with hours and productivity if faculty are teaching across departments? This impacts the calculation of efficiency. That needs to be calculated accurately to rectify this situation since it has significant ramifications.
 - 1. Provost Ball: I agree with you, and different programs have used that roll up to make themselves look better too.
- xvi. Susan Dillmuth Miller: For retention rate, is that any student who has left the major or students who have left the university?
 - 1. Provost Ball: Both, we look at who stays and totally leaves also.
- xvii. Bill Broun: One of the things that concerns me with the workforce measurement is the way that they are understood and how much when we analyze workforce needs are we looking not just at want ads but also the array of skills the workforce means.
 - 1. Provost Ball: Bill I don't think you have heard me talk recently or over the last several years. I think we are teaching them incredibly valuable workforce skills, they don't always know how they are taking these skills and using them, and that's on us. We need to improve that.

University Senate- September 14, 2026

2. Bill Broun: There are jobs in AI training, one skill that is really valued is the ability to think and write on your own so that you can train AI.
 3. Provost Ball: we need to be able to explain this to our students. Not changing what we are teaching but more about how we frame it.
- xviii. Johan Eliasson: Quick suggestion to President Long. If you look back 20 years ago, there are so many jobs that didn't even exist now that exist today. The skills that students need are not the ones that policy makers think they need.
 1. Provost Ball: We have to advocate for ourselves and show the students how what they are learning will apply to their career.
- xix. Greg Boyce: Is it possible to get the ranges on how they are calculated in regard to program comparison?
 1. Provost Ball: Yes
9. Committee Approvals
 - a. For years our committees have been the same and some people have never had the opportunity to serve. Susan reached out to see if people are willing to serve. In the name of equity, give everyone the opportunity to participate. Wanted to have some new ideas being infused in our committees. Will send out an email with all committee members. Any objections to the committees? We do still have opening on the research committee.
 - i. No objections. Approved by general consent.
10. Announcement of the event tonight for Constitution Day in lower Dansbury from 6-7, talking about academic freedom and the history of free speech.
11. 17th constitution day in the library for cake and celebration. 9/17 2-4
12. New Business: All moved to October
 - a. Leave of Absence Policy
 - b. Middle states final report
 - c. Proposal: ESU shall require that all new students submit their enrollment deposit no later than the calendar day immediately preceding the first day of classes for their admitted term.
13. Open discussion
 - a. BIT
14. Meeting Adjourned 5:00PM