

Meeting Minutes
Executive Committee of the AFSE
December 5, 2025, in Zoom

Present: Barbara Smith (SBHSE), Avi Wiesel (SSEBE), Brian Atkinson (TPS), Yanchao Zhang (ECEE), Dianne Hansford (secretary *pro tem*-SCAI), Nancy Cooke (TPS), Shaopeng Wang (SBHSE), Hyunglae Lee (SEMTE), Treavor Boyer (SSEBE), Ron Calhoun (SEMTE), Xi Yu (MSN), Ted Pavlic (SCAI), Xiangyu Guo (MSN)

Absent: Guoliang Xue (SCAI), Yong-Hang Zhang (ECEE),

Guests: Kelli Haren, Dean Kyle Squires

1. Minutes unanimously approved from the meeting on November 7, 2025.

2. Dean's Dissertation Award

The EC discussed new methods of ranking nominees, which were tested in an Excel spreadsheet that was shared with the committee prior to this meeting. The methods included normalizing scores, counting top-1 ranked, counting top-2 ranked, average score, and average normalized score.

Ted reviewed the methods in the spreadsheet along with sample review data sets. He explained that "sum of ranks" is commonly used as it helps in an objective way to rank downstream candidates by breaking ties.

In the spring semester, the EC will use sum of ranks instead of counting top-1 ranked; however, the other methods will remain in the spreadsheet for observations. Average normalized score will be used to break ties.

These changes to the DDA evaluation process were unanimously approved.

3. Dean's Distinguished Lecture

Kyle shared a slide that described the goals of the lecture: broadly interesting, exposure to big ideas, promote engagement among the faculty, and serve as a bridge between FSE and broader engineering/science community. We want to bring in external thought leaders. The EC has been asked to help identify and connect with speaker candidates, lead coordination of the campus visit, and participate in the campus visit (meetings and lecture event).

Barabara was involved in inviting Gerooge Whiteside. Communication went back to Dean's office

once her initial contact was made.

Barbara: In the last meeting, the EC discussed a panel instead of a lecture, reaching out to regent professors to help identify a speaker, or asking (potential) Foundation donors to speak.

Nancy suggested "The Future of AI" as a topic. Missy Cummings, who worked for Pete Buttigieg, might be a good panel member, offering a negative opinion of AI. Elon Musk and Missy Cummings would be a dynamic pairing.

Kyle was interested in shifting from conventional lecture to a panel, but implementing this needs to be thought out and executed before the holidays.

Ted: How do we measure success of the lecture? How many faculty are impacted? How does it impact the ranking of FSE? Kyle: We cannot predict the positive impacts; local impacts are easier to assess.

Barbara: Do we want to reach out to Regents and President's professors? (The EC responded positively.) High visibility faculty might appreciate being asked. Also, members of national academies, who have many (lateral) connections, would be good to ask. The speaker's topic should be of interest to people in all schools.

Kyle suggested that in each school, EC members can contact all faculty through their directors.

Barbara will draft a template letter for all EC members to use, and this letter will be sent directly to all the high visibility faculty. Feedback can come through a Google form. Deadline is Dec 15 to get it out to directors. The letter should have guidelines for the speaker and goals of the lecture.

4. Faculty Service -- ASU 101:

Kyle: Should ASU 101 be a service contribution? We have concluded that ASU 101 is a course that contributes toward degree programs, thus it should be a teaching assignment. Starting in Fall 2026, faculty will not be paid to teach ASU 101.

In the past, there was a fixed curriculum that was prepared for faculty, making the course not as much work as a normal course. Should ASU 101 count towards teaching load in the same way as a normal course? Kyle thinks no because the outcomes are very different. The complication is in understanding how effective a faculty member is in teaching the course. Outcomes are determined by student success, which is not apparent for several semesters.

Ted: In his other unit, they came to same conclusion that teaching should not be service.

Should a faculty member's teaching load percentage be changed if a faculty member teaches

ASU 101 in addition to their normal load?

Avi: Other universities give “partial credit”, say 0.5 credit hour for each credit hour. Accumulate (or bank) enough of these hours, and then the faculty member will be released from a course.

Brian: In heavy teaching programs, the teaching load is not calculated in the same way as it is in other programs. Adding ASU 101 to the teaching load could cause problems.

The EC agreed that whatever method is used to add ASU 101 to teaching loads, it needs to be simple and clear.

5. Faculty Service –Assessment

Kyle: We need to examine how faculty service is assessed. Assignment of service needs to be clear. Service activities enhance a faculty member’s visibility at one or more levels, including the school, FSE, ASU, or the broader community. Service includes leadership roles. Some examples include editing or reviewing for journals, serving as committee chair, involvement in recruitment, mentorship, participating in E2, or helping with the ABET process. We need an equitable process that is formalized. Faculty need to understand how they are doing.

Currently, inconsistencies exist in assessing service contributions. What tools might help evaluators assess? How can we value and recognize high-impact service? Should the assessment of service be consistent across FSE?

6. Meeting Adjourned

Next Meeting:

Friday, January 16, 2025, in BYENG 660

12:00 – 1:00pm in [Zoom](#)