The University Senate

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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Senate Consultative Committee (SCC)
November 10, 2025
Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions or actions reported in these minutes reflect the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration or the Board of Regents. The University Senate Office utilized notes taken during the meeting, video recording and transcript of the meeting, and AI to assist in summarizing substantive parts of the meeting transcript to compose these minutes. Minutes are reviewed by the committee before posting.

[**In these minutes:** Proposal from Medical School Senators / Faculty Advisory Council Executive Committee Members; University Senate Rules Proposal from Chase Krug; University Senate Docket Preview; PEAK Update; Threat Safety Protocol Resolution]

PRESENT: Perry Leo (chair), Toni Abts, Molly Bendzick, Mark Borrello, Rosemary Burns Velez, Jerry Cohen, Tony Fussy, Niloufar Hadidi, Timothy Johnson (vice chair), Jennifer Goodnough, Andrew Kornitz, Ron Krebs, Chase Krug, Daryl Lawrence, Anna Manshack, Sonali Pahwa, Dominic Scavullo, Sam Schmall

REGRETS: David Brown, Jess Larson, Dominic Scavullo, Sam Schmall, Subree Subramanian

ABSENT: Munira Alimire, Hailee Eidelbes

OTHERS ATTENDING: Professor Sasha Zagoloff, faculty senator, and chair, Medical School Faculty Advisory Council (FAC); Professors Christophe Lenglet and Aaron Corfield, faculty senators and FAC members; Emily O'Neill, program director, Karol Laux, communications manager, Shadon Ghassemlou, change management lead, and Tracey Kane, workforce transition lead, PEAK; Michael Volna, vice president and assistant chief financial officer, University Finance; Gregg Goldman, executive vice president, and Janelle Broesch, assistant vice president and assistant chief operating officer, Finance & Operations; Interim Chief Erik Swanson and Captain Ashlee Lange, University of Minnesota Police Department (UMPD); Heather Dorr, director, and Julie Bodurtha, administrative associate, Medical School Office of Faculty Affairs; Nancy Sims, University Senate parliamentarian; Jaclyn Adair, senate associate and policy liaison; Deena Barker, senate associate, and Laurie Cooper Stoll, director, University Senate Office; Michael Gallope, Teri Caraway, and Katie Hill Gallant, faculty senators

1. **Proposal from Medical School Senators / Faculty Advisory Council Executive Committee Members**

Professor Timothy Johnson, vice chair, called the meeting to order and announced that Chair Perry Leo would be joining the meeting shortly. Johnson announced that the Senate Office was working to schedule a special SCC meeting in December, for the purpose of holding a discussion with the president and provost.

Johnson then welcomed Professor Sasha Zagoloff, faculty senator and chair of the Medical School's Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) Executive Committee. She introduced her colleagues, Professor Aaron Corfield and Professor Christophe Lenglet, who were also faculty senators and members of the FAC Executive Committee, as well as Heather Dorr, director, and Julie Bodurtha, administrative associate, Medical School Office of Faculty Affairs. The group was present to propose an agenda item for the University Senate.

Zagoloff provided background, noting that multiple senators from the Medical School had submitted unaddressed questions for the president in advance or through the

queue system at the September and October Senate meetings. She stated that the FAC believed it was crucial for the SCC and senate to hear directly from Medical School faculty, given the enormous transitions and changes the Medical School and its faculty were currently undergoing. She stressed that the Medical School was interconnected throughout all colleges and campuses, and its internal changes impacted the broader University.

The proposal requested 45 minutes on a senate agenda for a robust presentation from various speakers, representing both faculty practice and providing education on their unique clinical practice, as well as ample time for questions and discussion.

Jenn Goodnough expressed full support for adding the item to the agenda and asked about the FAC's communication with the Faculty Advisory Committee on the Health Sciences (FACHS) and the Faculty Consultative Committee (FCC). Zagoloff admitted she had not personally corresponded with FACHS but took it as an action item to connect with that group. Regarding the FCC, Zagoloff had spoken with FCC member David Redish but was yet to speak with Subree Subramanian, who was out of the country. She acknowledged that making that connection was another action item for the FAC. Zagoloff noted, however, that neither Redish nor Subramanian were clinically active, making it especially important for groups to understand the distinct nature of the clinical practice space. Lenglet added that he had previously been invited to speak at FACHS on a communication sub-item the prior April.

Jerry Cohen asked if the presentation would be more appropriate for the Faculty Senate, given that the issues and the originating committee were faculty-specific. Zagoloff replied that their group was flexible, but emphasized that their deep involvement in the educational mission meant their issues had broad impact beyond faculty alone, thus providing utility for presentation to the larger University Senate.

Johnson asked if the presentation would discuss how potential changes in the Medical School would affect faculty. Zagoloff confirmed that this would be a part of their presentation, but their focus would be on moving forward and the impact on their group.

Leo thanked the visitors for their time and proposal, and said that he and Bathke would work with Zagoloff to get this topic on the senate agenda. Zagoloff thanked the committee.

2. University Senate Rules Proposal from Chase Krug

Next, Leo turned the floor over to Chase Krug, for further discussion on his proposed amendment to the University Senate Rules, which aimed to add a rule relating to motions to consider to the senate rules. Key points of the proposal were as follows:

- **Mechanism:** A “motion to consider” would allow a topic that was proposed to the SCC for consideration for the senate docket, but that the SCC ultimately decided not to put on the docket, to be taken up with a simple majority vote of the senate.
- **Context:** *Robert’s Rules of Order* generally calls for a body to amend and adopt an agenda with a simple majority at the beginning of each meeting. However, the University Senate bylaws do not allow for this practice, as the SCC is charged with setting the agenda.
- **Purpose:** The proposal would allow senators to submit legislation that the SCC might not choose to take up. A senator could then propose a motion to consider it during a meeting.
- **Benefit:** Krug argued the change would reduce the number of special meetings the senate holds, because senators who want the senate to consider legislation other than what the SCC puts on the agenda wouldn’t have to call a special meeting in order to make that happen.

Members then engaged in discussion of the proposal.

Goodnough posed two questions to Nancy Sims, University Senate parliamentarian:

- Could this motion happen without the Rules change?
- If an issue was already sent to committee, wouldn't there have to be a separate process to discharge it from the committee, which this rule change seemed to circumvent?

Goodnough also commented that the proposal seemed like a “solution in search of a problem,” arguing that the existing options of New Business and the ability to call a special meeting were sufficient. She cautioned that the proposal could potentially complicate proceedings.

Sims confirmed that the current situation was somewhat unclear, as the senate as a whole does not vote on its agendas, which is not how Robert’s Rules typically deals with agendas. She noted that in a past instance, a rule change was allowed to be considered without being new business when the body seemed willing to consider it. Sims said that she and Miriam Simmons, parliamentary advisor to the president, considered the proposal a potentially functional rule. She confirmed that the proposal would create its own process for taking an item away from a committee, potentially leading to a committee's work being obviated by a later vote. She also noted that the rule would apply to items merely proposed for inclusion on the agenda, which is an area the senate lacks great processes for addressing.

Krug then explained that the rule change was necessary because the senate does not adopt the agenda, which is why a motion to consider—a special rule for bodies that do not adopt—is required, in his opinion. He also explained that the rule addresses the automatic referral of new business to the SCC; the rule states that if a simple majority wants to take up the item, the automatic referral is unnecessary and the body can take it back.

Bathke asked what this change would mean, in practical terms, for putting together the senate docket. Krug said that the proposal would provide for notice to the Senate Office, the committee, and senators, unlike a motion coming up through the adoption of a normal agenda proceeding. The legislation would come in before the docket deadline, allowing the SCC to view it. The difference from normal business is that the SCC might decide *not* to put it on the agenda, but the body could still force consideration with a simple majority.

Cohen supported the change, stating it had the potential to make the senate “a little bit more democratic” and would counteract the view of the SCC as “insular.” He also

argued that if the rule resulted in fewer special meetings, it would decrease the workload for senators and staff.

Ron Krebs, seeking clarification, asked if there was a current way for the body as a whole to bring back an item that was referred to the SCC and that the SCC then decided should not be presented on the agenda. Krug clarified that, under current rules, if the SCC does nothing with the item, it “dies in committee.” The only alternative for senators to revive it is to call a special session, which requires a threshold (a small percentage of senators, including at least 2 from each constituency: faculty, P&A, civil service, and student senate). Krug stated that his proposal, requiring a simple majority, would be a higher threshold by number but would maintain the structure of a normal business proceeding, adding a path for an item to avoid dying in committee without a special session.

Krebs questioned why Krug preferred the simple majority approach, arguing that the senate's construction is not straightforwardly democratic (e.g., all constituencies do not have equal representation) and the current special session requirement ensures broad constituency representation is required to schedule an extra meeting. Krug countered that "democracy is made of simple majority votes," and while he acknowledged the potential for "tyranny of the majority," there was also the "tyranny of the minority," where popular legislation might be blocked. He asserted that the simple majority vote was the best option for a functional democracy in the body.

Chair Leo expressed discomfort with changing a single rule without a broader review of the rules overall. Krug asked that the proposal be placed on the February SCC agenda for further discussion, and Leo agreed.

3. Threat Safety Protocol Resolution

Next, Leo turned to a discussion of the Threat Safety Protocol Resolution, which had been raised under New Business at the University Senate meeting in September. He noted that Bathke had made some proposed edits based on previous conversations. He noted that further discussion on this item would take place later in the meeting, with Gregg Goldman, executive vice president and Interim Chief Erik Swanson and Captain Ashlee Lange, University of Minnesota Police Department (UMPD).

Leo raised his primary concern, which had been discussed at a prior SCC meeting: the clause calling for protection to “effectively ensure the safety of the persons targeted along with their families, classes, and coworkers." He questioned if this scope was too broad and placed too great an onus on UMPD to protect too many people. He found the general request for the administration to develop and communicate a protocol to ensure safety acceptable, but sought feedback on the protective scope.

Key points raised were as follows:

- Goodnough felt that overly broad resolutions often lead to unsatisfactory general responses from the administration. She asked for clarification on **to whom** the protocol should be communicated, suggesting options like the targeted individual, the senate, or the SCC. She also highlighted the tension, often noted by the between *being* safe and *feeling* safe, stressing that the two are different and what makes one person feel safe might make another feel unsafe. She recommended the resolution should be clear about what is being asked for.
- Cohen proposed changing the word “promote” to “ensure” in the clause regarding campus building closures and digital locking mechanisms. He argued that it was a stretch to suggest those measures don't *promote* safety, but they certainly don't *ensure* it.
    - Krebs suggested that “ensure” was too high a bar, and proposed changing the phrasing to “do not adequately promote safety,” as this reflected the thrust of the original concern.
- Krebs questioned the overall purpose of the resolution, stating that a previous presentation had indicated that pretty good protocols already exist. He said that an effective resolution must clearly identify what is inadequate about the existing protocols and target those specific issues. Johnson agreed with Krebs, stating that he believed the administration and UMPD had acted appropriately in a past faculty threat situation, but acknowledged that such actions do not always make someone *feel* safe.

- Leo agreed that protocols exist, but thought that people wanted UMPD and Gregg Goldman to report regularly to the SCC. Cohen argued that it was not a bad idea to rethink faculty protection in the current environment. He stressed that life has changed for professors, and the current level of police protection might be inadequate to handle the increased number of threats.
- Daryl Lawrence shared his experience of being threatened, stating he was primarily communicating with his OHR contact, who told him what they could. Lawrence said that he trusted the systems in place, knowing a threat assessment was happening, and felt safe without needing to know every detail. He also pointed out that weekly safety reports listing police incidents above a certain threshold are already distributed. Lawrence also cautioned the body against focusing too narrowly on faculty threats, as he, a staff member, had also been threatened.
- Leo suggested a revised focus: asking the administration to communicate their protocol to governance bodies, rather than asking them to develop one. The scope of protection could be narrowed to “persons targeted, along with their colleagues in the University community.”

At this point, Leo paused the discussion, to be continued later in the meeting.

4. University Senate Docket Preview

The meeting briefly touched upon the next agenda item, a preview of the University Senate docket for December. Leo noted that the Medical School discussion was likely scheduled for February. No further comments were made on the preview.

5. PEAK Update

Leo turned the floor over to Emily O'Neill, program director; Karol Laux, communications manager; Shadon Ghassemlou, change management lead; and Tracey Kane, workforce transition lead, PEAK; and Michael Volna, vice president and assistant chief financial officer, University Finance. They were present to update the committee on the PEAK initiative.

The Peak Initiative is a four-phase project, currently deep in Phase 3 and beginning preparations for Phase 4.

- **Phase 3 Timeline:**
    - **April:** Started engaging with Phase 3 units.
    - **May:** Formal kickoff for Phase 3.
    - **November 10:** Kicking off the Expression of Interest and staffing process, offering positions to staff whose work is moving to Operations Centers with the goal of retaining talent.
    - **February 2026:** Goal to complete the staff transition.
    - **End of March 2026:** Goal to complete the service transition.
- **Phase 4:** Informal engagement has begun over the next couple of months, with a formal kickoff expected in January.

The presenters said that the PEAK team has focused on three main areas for improvement based on feedback from Phase 1 and 2 units:

Providing More Support to Units

The team is focusing on helping units reimagine processes and roles left behind after the transition.

- **Discovery Survey:** Launched to gather insights from employees and service users about their experiences.
- **Shared Services Roadshow:** Helps units understand how to work with and **optimize their relationships** with the new Operations Centers.
- **Workforce Realignment Meetings:** A new series of meetings to specifically help units plan how to realign or reimagine the work that remains within their unit.
- **Listening Sessions:** Feedback was collected from Phase 1 and 2 units, including sessions with Greg Goldman, and incorporated into the Phase 3 approach.

Simplifying the Implementation Process

Efforts were made to streamline the data collection process required for the transition.

- **Tool Change:** The initial Responsibility Tracker tool, used to identify and quantify work moving to Operations Centers, was simplified into a new tool called the Work Insights Exercise.
- **In-Person Sessions:** Staff were offered in-person sessions to complete the Work Insights Exercise and ask questions in real-time.

Improving Communication and Collaboration

The team recognized the emotional aspect of change and increased communication efforts.

- **Targeted Communication:** Partnering closely with unit communicators and transition teams and directing more communication to staff and supervisors.
- **In-Person Events:** Focused on more in-person events, such as meet and greet events for employees to learn about positions (over 150 people attended recent HR and finance events).

The biggest priority for Phase 3 was centering the employee in the process, ensuring staff understand what the change means for their current work, how their work will shift, and how they will stay connected to their unit's mission.

Key implementation steps include:

- **Step 1:** Onboarding Transition Teams: Working with unit senior leadership to form Transition Teams (change agents) composed of unit experts to manage the process.
- **Step 2:** Using Data to Drive Decisions: Using transaction data and Voice of the Employee and Voice of the Customer surveys to identify most impacted staff and potential pain points (e.g., only one person in a unit can handle a specific transaction, causing delays when they are absent).
- **Step 3:** To Be Workshops: Led by the Operations Centers and Talent Acquisition, these workshops allow staff to see how work is changing and what the Operations Centers will specifically be doing.

- **Step 4:** Shared Services Roadshow: Prepares units for optimal interaction with the shared services team.
- **Step 5:** Workforce Realignment Workshops: A two-part series in November/December to look at eliminating duplicated services (e.g., homegrown systems replaced by the TDX form) and help leaders shift remaining work toward more strategic, unit-specific tasks.

Staffing Approach (Expression of Interest)

The staffing approach for Phase 3 is two-pronged: Expression of Interest (EOI) and internally posted positions.

- **Expression of Interest (EOI):** This process gives the most impacted staff (based on job code and amount of work moving) the first option to move into an Operations Center role.
- **Lateral Movement:** EOI is designed as an internal lateral movement, meaning employees are not required to go through a formal posting and interview process to move into these roles.

Committee Feedback and Concerns

Following the presentation, committee members expressed strong concerns, primarily regarding the efficiency and quality of service post-PEAK implementation.

- Cohen argued that processes have not become more efficient but have increased the burden on faculty.
- Sonali Pahwa questioned the role of automation in PEAK, suggesting that excessive automatic emails and procedures, combined with a lack of humans in the loop, lead to information gaps and missed steps.
- Krug raised two specific concerns:
    - **Queue Time:** Financial transactions sometimes sit in the queue for a very long period of time (weeks to days).

- **Knowledge Gaps:** Finance reviewers sometimes lack the necessary scientific background to understand why certain purchases are needed or whether they should be charged to a sponsored vs. non-sponsored grant.

Response from PEAK Leadership

- O'Neill acknowledged the feedback and stressed that the team needs specific examples of where things are not going well to properly address them.
- Volna explained that it is difficult to respond without understanding the specific context of the issues. He offered to have his PEAK Finance Operations Center team review the specifics if provided with details and offered to meet with the department to discuss concerns.
- Volna acknowledged the limitations of the current technology. He confirmed that he and Gregg Goldman, executive vice president for finance and operations, have discussed a timeline for developing a replacement solution to TDX, which he agreed is likely not the best tool for their needs.
- Volna reiterated the importance of using specific examples as a data point to understand how to fix broader issues with the tool and the process.

Leo thanked the presenters for the update, and the presenters departed.

6. Threat Safety Protocol Resolution, Continued

Leo announced the arrival of Goldman, along with Interim Chief Erik Swanson and Captain Ashlee Lange from the University of Minnesota Police Department (UMPD). Goldman stated that UMPD takes the resolution seriously and has an extensive plan to ensure the entire community feels safe. Lange provided a brief overview of the UMPD threat response process, which involves patrol officers meeting with the victim, documenting the incident, and forwarding the report to the Investigations Division. A dedicated investigator then triages the threat level in collaboration with local and federal partners, including the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA) and the in-house Behavioral Consultation Team (BCT).

Swanson clarified that UMPD must assess whether they have the statutory authority to act (if a crime was committed). If not, they determine other support mechanisms to put

in place, often working with the threat assessment team to protect the individual or the institution.

Key Concerns and Administrative Response

The discussion highlighted several key concerns, particularly regarding funding and efficiency of the existing protocol:

- Michael Gallope, a faculty senator who had received a death threat, raised the core issue that after the initial investigation, he was asked to request security support for his department and provide a chart string (funding source). He stressed that protection should not be a discretionary departmental expense for someone threatened for doing their job. He also noted the amount of red tape involved in the immediate aftermath, including having to deal with department concerns and recommend building closure. Goldman committed to coming back with additional thinking on funding protocols to avoid this situation. He acknowledged that decisions about police presence should be based on the threat assessment by UMPD and associated teams (including the FBI), not on cost.
- Cohen argued that the University should reexamine its response to the changing threat level for faculty and students due to external political attacks. He suggested exploring alternatives like more cameras instead of just officers. Goldman disputed the idea that the University is not recognizing the threat. He cited concrete steps taken, including increasing sworn officers from 42 to 63-64 (on the way to 72-73), conducting a comprehensive security review after the unfortunate events in Utah (including cameras and drones), and taking recent measures following a tragedy in Dinkytown. He confirmed they recognize the tense political landscape.

Leo said that he and Senate Office staff would continue to revise the resolution based on today's discussion. He adjourned the meeting.

Amber Bathke
University Senate Office