

University Senate Meeting Minutes

Oct 27, 2025

Call to Order

Senate President John Donnellan called the meeting to order at 2:01 PM after confirming quorum. He welcomed attendees and noted the meeting was being recorded.

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda for the October 27, 2025, meeting.

Moved by Rubina Vohra, seconded by Venessa Garcia. Motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of September 22, 2025, meeting.

Moved by Venessa Garcia, seconded by John Laski. Motion carried.

President's Report

No SACC meeting was held last month.

Ann Wallace reminded the SEC to enable the chat feature in future meetings.

Senate President emphasized the need for volunteers for standing committees.

Committee Membership Motions

Dr. John Donnellan and Dr. Hanae Haouari announced open committee positions and encouraged faculty to volunteer. Volunteers and student representatives requested to send nominations to senate@njcu.edu.

Motion to approve committee appointments:

Dr. Navin Saiboo – Academic Support and Services

Sai Jambunathan – Academic Standards.

Student appointments:

Jordyn Gaitan, Academic Standards Committee

Amal Salman, Planning, Development & Budget Committee

Lynessa Smith, Student Affairs Committee

Angelina Armijos, Elections Committee

Moved by Venessa Garcia, seconded by Kristina Harb. Motion carried.

Senate Executive Committee Motions

Motion 1: Request to pause the 30-day automatic approval process in CIM workflow until the December 2025 Senate Meeting due to unclear approval requirements from Kean University in the integration agreement.

Passed with 53% in favor.

Motion 2: SEC to request formal written disclosure of the process from NJCU Administration on how Kean University approvals will work during integration, according to the Definitive Agreement, including all existing and upcoming covenants, by December 1, 2025.

Amended and passed with 97% in favor.

Motion 3: Motion for SEC elected Senate representation on the NJCU-Kean Integration Working Groups.

Amended and passed with 97% in favor.

AI Ethics Advisory Board Update

Dr. Jason Martinek presented the updates.

The committee has elected Yufeng Wei and Dana Mason as co-chairs.

The committee will focus on student AI policy and academic integrity, alongside privacy, security, and trust.

The committee anticipates preparing a draft policy by Fall 2025.

The committee requires student representatives.

Senate Committee Reports

Academic Standards Committee:

Presented by Dr. Kristina Harb.

The committee proposed revisions to academic standing policy including winter session review.

The committee proposed students on probation cannot enroll for more than 13 credits and maximum of one course (typically 3 credits) per summer or winter session.

Proposed and passed motion for revisions to academic standing policy:

Include winter intersession in GPA review.

Limit credit load for students on probation.

Require dean/provost approval for overrides any request to exceed credit limits.

The Community Engaged Learning Committee report is tabled for the next Senate Meeting.

Graduate Studies Committee:

Presented by Dr. Eugene Cautillo.

The committee has established a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for catalog updates.

Planning, Development, and Budget Committee:

Presented by Dr. Hanae Haouari.

The committee shared report on a recent meeting with Vice President regarding budget and infrastructure updates.

The discussion centered around a \$15 million capital improvement plan, which is part of a broader initiative exceeding \$50 million. While detailed financial documents were shared during the meeting, they cannot be publicly released until December due to pending state approvals.

Transparency in budget allocation was emphasized, particularly considering ongoing merger planning. The VP has highlighted the importance of job retention during the transition, although some reductions may be inevitable. Job protection policies are still under development in collaboration with union representatives and university leadership.

The committee also addressed concerns about grant funding cuts, specifically those affecting Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs). These grants previously supported academic resources such as tutoring. The university is exploring internal funding options to mitigate the impact, though not all grants can be fully supplemented.

Positive trends in student success were noted, including a 0.09-point increase in average GPA and a rise in full-time student retention from 86% to 90%. These improvements were attributed to enhanced student support services and revised financial aid policies requiring FAFSA completion and Pell Grant exhaustion before accessing institutional aid.

During the Q&A, details were requested on specific programs affected by federal funding cuts. The committee to follow up with the grant officer for specifics. There were concerns about the transparency of Kean University's use of a reported \$10 million merger assistance fund. The committee agreed to include this topic in the next meeting agenda and share available details.

Merger and Program Review Discussion

A robust discussion addressed the rationale and timing of ongoing program reviews amid the merger. Dr. Scott O'Connor clarified that NJCU must maintain accreditation compliance until July 2026, necessitating continued program review. Faculty expressed concern over workload and the need for alignment guidance. It was noted that Kean intends to release program decisions imminently, and the Hanover Report is advisory, not definitive.

New Business

The faculty raised concerns about the continuation of sabbaticals, program reviews (since some programs may cease to exist), and requested SEC to share updates.

The faculty proposed forming a task force to support faculty, staff, and students during the transition, emphasizing mental health and counseling resources.

Announcements

Trunk or Treat Event: Friday Oct 31 at A. Harry Moore School.

Tibetan Music Event: Gothic Lounge, Oct 27 at 7 PM.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn by John Laski, seconded by William Calathes.

[Senate Meeting Minutes of October 27, 2025.](#)

Respectfully submitted by,

Moitrayee Chatterjee, PhD

NJCU Senate Secretary