



## SENATE AGENDA COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Friday, January 9, 2026 from 12:02-1:11 pm via Zoom

### Attendees

#### Senators

D. Fontana, J. Gilbert, J. Lorien (Chair)

#### Ex Officio

B. Britton, L. Burr, J. Fox, K. Lo, L. Moss, W. Norman

#### Regrets

S. Gopalakrishnan, R. Ng, N. Pindell

#### Senate Staff

C. Eaton (Clerk to Senate), B. Menard (Cmte Secretary)

#### Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement

The meeting of the Senate Agenda Committee (the “Committee”) was called to order at 12:02 pm by the Chair, Jasper Lorien. They also provided an acknowledgement of the land.

#### Agenda

**Motion:** *That the Committee adopts the January 9, 2026 agenda.*

Moved: J. Lorien  
Seconded: B. Britton  
**Adopted**

#### Minutes

**Motion:** *That the Committee approves the December 5, 2025 meeting minutes.*

Moved: L. Burr  
Seconded: L. Moss  
**Approved**

#### Adjustment to Committee Meeting Duration

The Chair noted that there was significant work to complete during the remainder of the current triennium. They recommended that consideration be given to extending the length of committee meetings from 60 minutes to 90 minutes.

#### ADJUSTMENT TO MEETING DURATION

**Motion:** *That the length of Committee meetings be amended to 90 minutes for the remainder of the 2023-2026 triennium.*

Moved: J. Lorien  
Seconded: D. Fontana

The Clerk, Chris Eaton, asked the Chair to clarify whether the proposed extension to a 90-minute meeting involved moving the end time, the start time,



or selecting another time. He reminded members that Senate rules did not permit changing the day of the meeting but did permit changing the meeting time.

In response, the Chair indicated a preference for extending the meeting to 1:30 pm.

The Vice-Chair, Joanne Fox, expressed support for the concept of a 90-minute meeting, noting that it would allow time for discussion beyond agenda materials. She explained that her teaching schedule created a conflict with both a later end time and an earlier start time, limiting her ability to attend beyond 60 minutes for the term.

The Chair elaborated on the rationale for extending the meeting length, explaining that significant time had been devoted to approval of Senate agendas, sometimes leaving insufficient time for substantive discussion of other items. They noted that upcoming priorities included the triennial review and matters related to the *External Review of the UBC Vancouver Senate*.

The Vice-Chair noted that the Committee could proceed with the change, indicating that she could participate for the portion of the meeting she was able to attend and could be consulted as needed.

W. Norman suggested that the Committee plan agendas to alternate items so that Senate meeting agendas, and strategic and policy matters could be addressed at different points in the meeting.

The Vice-Chair agreed with the suggestion and added that she would be willing to step down as Vice-Chair for the term if another member wished to assume the role, given her scheduling conflict.

The Chair responded that it might be practical to schedule non-Senate agenda discussions earlier in the meeting.

**Motion: Approved**

**Change Start Time  
of Senate Meetings  
– Next Steps**

The Chair provided an update on engagement with the Student Senate Caucus, noting that scheduling efforts were ongoing. They explained that an initial scheduling poll did not yield a result and that further polling was underway. They indicated that more data were being collected and anticipated providing an update at the next Agenda Committee meeting.

W. Norman suggested that considering dates further into the future might support broader participation.



B. Britton asked when suggestions needed to be submitted, noting an assumption that timelines aligned with the end of the current triennium and estimating a period of approximately six weeks.

The Chair responded that their goal was to have materials ready by the next Agenda Committee meeting and then for the subsequent Senate meeting. They added that Human Rights Advising had been contacted and was preparing a more detailed memo related to the human rights matter that had been previously raised.

W. Norman asked whether data were available on the proportion of students who held employment outside of class hours. She clarified that her interest was not specific to members of the Student Senate Caucus but focused on understanding barriers faced by students who had never been able to participate in Senate activities. She described an interest in identifying constraints related to external obligations that limited participation to normal school hours and noted that this context would be relevant for discussion with the Student Senate Caucus. She indicated that one objective of that engagement involved encouraging reflection on structural factors that enabled participation and exploring information about constraints affecting students who had not been able to contribute to Senate.

The Clerk responded that census data existed for students generally regarding employment but not for members of the Student Senate Caucus. He noted uncertainty about whether the available data provided sufficient detail to support broader extrapolation but suggested that the data could be reviewed.

**Topics of Broad  
Academic Interest  
– Next Steps**

The Chair recalled that, at the previous meeting, the Committee had agreed that they would work with the Senate Office to develop a proposal on how to advance this work. They explained that consideration of topics of broad academic interest fell within the mandate of the Agenda Committee but had not occurred in recent years due to the volume of requests received and challenges associated with reviewing them. They noted that the Clerk had provided background on prior practices and proposed issuing a call for topics limited to members of Senate in order to manage volume. The Chair explained that submitted topics would be reviewed by the Agenda Committee, which would then identify items suitable for inclusion on a Senate agenda.

W. Norman asked whether a formal process had previously existed within Senate to bring forward and refine topics of broad academic interest and whether any such process aligned with Senate's strategic role and the University's strategic plan. She asked whether an open call was the most appropriate mechanism or whether topics should be more closely aligned with existing institutional priorities. She also expressed concerns about timing, noting the volume of urgent procedural work arising from recommendations of the triennial and external reviews and



suggesting that available time before the end of the triennium might be better devoted to addressing those recommendations. She asked whether development of a process for broad academic topics might be more appropriate for the next triennium.

The Clerk described the origins of the process, noting that it emerged from a review of the Senate conducted in 2004, which identified that Senate functioned primarily as a regulatory body rather than as a strategic body. He explained that the intent of introducing broad academic discussions was to allow Senate to provide direction on academic priorities without tying discussion to specific agenda items or motions. He provided examples of earlier discussions arising from committee interests, including flexible learning and principles for admissions. He explained that the process gradually became inactive as Senate agendas became increasingly focused on required approval work and noted that, when meeting time became available, members sometimes preferred to reduce meeting length rather than engage in non-decision-oriented debate. He observed that any renewed process would likely need to consider curation of topics aligned with committee and institutional priorities.

L. Moss reflected on the role of Senate committees in strategic discussion and noted that many issues of broad academic interest were already addressed within committees. She indicated that canvassing senators for topics could support stronger connections between committee work and Senate discussions, allowing committee chairs to bring broader perspectives back into committee deliberations. She supported gathering input from senators without necessarily committing Senate agenda time during the current triennium, given existing priorities. She suggested that improved mechanisms for communication between Senate and its committees could strengthen strategic work and expressed interest in models that allowed committees to bring forward discussion topics without requiring a vote.

B. Britton explained that one of the recommendations in the external review encouraged Senate to engage in sessions to raise awareness among members of issues and trends in national and global higher education research, evolving institutional strategy, and faculty plans, priorities, and progress.

B. Britton added that certain senators frequently critiqued issues on the floor of the Senate where they were not fully aware of committee progress. He clarified that this was not an attempt to interfere with committee work, but part of their role in Senate.

The Chair observed that the external review emphasized the importance of providing Senate members opportunities to engage in these conversations. They explained that while many conversations occurred in committees, not every member could attend due to membership or scheduling constraints. They suggested canvassing to facilitate broader engagement,



L. Moss clarified that senators could attend committees as guests for specific topics of interest. She noted that other senators had attended her Teaching and Learning Committee for particular discussions.

D. Fontana suggested that committee agendas be circulated more widely so that senators could remain informed about topics even if they were not committee members. He raised the issue of resourcing and inquired about the proper process to request additional resources for the Senate Office.

The Clerk responded that motions were not appropriate under topics of broad academic interest, as these discussions were intended solely to understand colleagues' positions without resulting in formal outcomes.

The Chair agreed that resourcing should eventually be addressed by the Senate, likely through the Budget and Academic Buildings Committee, but suggested deferring detailed discussion for the present meeting.

L. Moss proposed canvassing senators with a brief email asking what topics of broad academic interest they considered current. She recommended returning the collected responses to the Agenda Committee to determine next steps, noting that different topics might require distinct approaches. She suggested compiling the topics and working through them collaboratively, leaving it to the Committee to determine how to structure the conversations.

The Chair agreed and added that the Committee could help distill the collected information based on developments across all committees.

The Clerk explained that in previous years, the Committee had approached the collection of topics in two ways. In some instances, senators were asked to simply submit topics, which the Committee then developed further. In other cases, senators were asked to provide more detailed submissions, such as a paragraph explaining why the topic warranted discussion. He noted that while the more detailed approach helped ensure topics were well thought out, it may also have discouraged some potentially valuable topics. He suggested that the Committee could adopt either approach or a hybrid.

W. Norman expressed support for calling for topics and using Senate time for substantive discussions. She inquired whether the Agenda Committee should consider potential risks, given that it was the final months of the triennium. She asked if topics submitted now could be carried over to the next triennium or if there would be an obligation to address them before the current triennium ended, and whether sufficient time remained to balance these new discussions with other commitments.

The Clerk responded that the Committee that issuing a call for topics at this stage would set up discussions for the next academic year. He explained that this approach would provide time to prepare background



materials, arrange presenters, and schedule the topics throughout the Senate year, giving senators the opportunity to prepare. He explained that this would establish reasonable expectations rather than creating pressure to address topics immediately.

The Chair agreed, adding that establishing this process would facilitate a smooth handoff to the next triennium's leadership and support orientation efforts noted in the external review.

W. Norman expressed relief that the approach allowed for compiling ideas, distilling them, and laying out a roll-forward agenda for the entire year. She suggested identifying opportunities to bring in staff or faculty with expertise to inform the discussions, rather than relying solely on senators' contributions.

The Chair summarized the discussion by explaining that the Committee had established a process and a plan to proceed.

**In Camera –  
Agenda of the  
January 21, 2026  
Vancouver Senate**

N/A

**2023-2026  
Triennial Review –  
Timelines and  
Guidance for  
Committee Chairs**

The Clerk noted that the 2023-2026 Triennial Review website was live and that many committees had already begun discussions. He indicated that a feedback deadline had been set for the end of February and expressed hope that most committees would provide recommendations and suggestions by that time. He suggested that a brief update at the next Senate meeting could be helpful to remind members of ongoing work. He noted that following these discussions, the Nominating Committee would need to collaborate with the Agenda Committee concerning Senate rules and processes, particularly regarding what improvements could be brought forward in April. He expressed gratitude for the Committee's decision to extend its meeting time, allowing for discussions about the Agenda Committee. He requested that members review the website, consider the questions posed, and reflect on the past two years to improve Senate operations.

The Chair highlighted that a consent agenda had been previously discussed and would be considered.

B. Britton requested that a joint meeting of the Agenda and Nominating Committees be scheduled to discuss the triennial review and external review recommendations.

The Clerk responded that he would attempt to convene the joint meeting.



## RESOURCING OF SENATE OFFICE

**Motion:** *That the Senate Agenda Committee refer the matter of resourcing for the Senate & Curriculum Services office to the Senate Budget and Academic Buildings Committee for discussion.*

Moved: B. Britton  
Seconded: D. Fontana

The Clerk explained that he was required to discuss his office's budget with the Council of Senates Budget Committee, although no additional resources had been approved recently.

B. Britton responded that the motion aimed to formalize the Committee's request for additional resources to support planning, communications between committees, and improvements to digital platforms.

The Chair suggested requesting a joint meeting to provide context for the Budget Committee.

W. Norman asked why the Chair of the Council of Senates Budget Committee was not a member of the Agenda Committee.

The Clerk explained that the Budget Committee of the Council had been established after amendments to the *University Act* in 2005, creating separate budget sub-committees for UBC Vancouver and UBC Okanagan.

B. Britton proposed that the Triennial Review recommendations include adding the Chair of the Budget Committee to the Agenda Committee.

The Chair noted that several chairs were not ex officio members. They listed examples, including the Library Committee and Tributes Committee.

The Chair suggested involving other senior roles, such as the Provost and Vice-President, Academic.

The Chair asked the Committee Secretary, Bradley Menard, to prepare a summary the discussion.

**Motion: Approved**

**Next Meeting** Friday, February 6, 2026 from 12-1:30 pm

**Adjournment** The meeting adjourned at 1:11 pm