

GBC Presidents Council Meeting Minutes

Date: 2/23/2026

Location: MH102 Room and Zoom

Present:

Sarah Negrete	Dean Straight	Carrie Meisner	Sheymane Pitts
John Evans	Erendira Monroy	Gail Rappa	Eleanor O'Donnell
Karl Stevens	Arysta Sweat	Sharon Butterfield	
David Stoddard	Jeff Winrod	Lelsie Maple	
Staci Warnert	Mack Robinson	Bryan May	

Meeting called to order by Vice President Negrete.

President's Update

VP Negrete noted that the President provided a comprehensive update during last week's All College meeting. The information shared at that time will stand as the official update. In addition, the Board of Regents approved the tuition and fee increase during a recent special meeting. A subsequent special meeting was held on Friday; however, no significant new developments were reported.

Approval of Minutes

VP Negrete asked if there were any corrections or additions to the minutes from the last meeting. Hearing none she called for a motion to approve the minutes.

A Motion to approve the January 26, 2026 minutes was made Gail Rappa, seconded by Arysta Sweat, and passed unanimously.

Vice President Updates

Academic Affairs

Vice President Sarah Negrete reported that many of these updates were previously shared at last month's President's Council and at the recent All College meeting. Two new programs are scheduled to launch next week: AI in Business and a Skills Certificate in Technical Writing.

The Year 6 Accreditation Report is currently with Communications for final formatting and review. Once finalized, it will be submitted on Friday, marking the official submission of the Year 6 report.

An update was also provided on Credit for Prior Learning (CPL). A GBC team has been working throughout the year, in collaboration with other anchor institutions through a mini-grant initiative, to further develop and formalize the College's CPL processes. Efforts include establishing standardized procedures for designated courses, portfolio reviews (where appropriate by department), and competency demonstrations (e.g., allowing students to demonstrate existing skills, such as welding proficiency, in lieu of introductory coursework). The team will meet with NSHE partners in Las Vegas at the end of March to review next steps. Following that meeting, draft documents will be brought back to the institution for review and feedback, with the goal of implementing a more formalized CPL process.

Curricular Review Update

Carrie Meisner gave a brief update on the curriculum review process was delivered at the recent Faculty Senate meeting to ensure transparency. Deans have been provided with lists of high-WF (withdrawal/failure) courses and were asked to submit feedback by February 26. The committee has requested any additional information that may provide context for the data, including details on strategic plans or interventions currently in place to improve course outcomes.

The review process remains on schedule, with a target completion date of April 1. Materials are expected to be submitted to Amber and Sarah on or before that date, if not sooner.

Student Affairs

Vice President Matt Aschenbrener reported Spring enrollment is currently up approximately 3% in overall headcount and 6% in FTE. The increase in FTE is particularly positive, as it reflects students enrolling in more credits, which supports long-term institutional stability.

Thirty-five students were dropped for non-payment approximately 10 days ago; three of those students have since re-enrolled. This is viewed as a positive outcome and reflects effective communication and outreach efforts to assist students with registration and payment.

International Admissions and English Proficiency Proposals

Two related proposals were presented regarding international admissions procedures. After reviewing exemption practices across the NSHE system—including University of Nevada, Las Vegas and University of Nevada, Reno—it was recommended that GBC expand its list of countries exempt from the English placement exam requirement. Currently, exemptions are limited, primarily to certain former British colonies where English is the primary language. The proposal would add 11 countries to align more closely with system institutions. The summary list was shared with the group in advance.

Additionally, updates to accepted English proficiency exams were proposed. The TOEFL exam currently listed on the College website has not been available for over two years. TOEFL has introduced a revised version with updated scoring, and the proposal would align GBC's published requirements with the new scoring rubric.

Finally, it was recommended that the College formally accept the Duolingo English Test (DET) with a minimum score of 95, aligning with most NSHE institutions (with some variation). The DET is a widely recognized, proctored English proficiency exam used by thousands of colleges and universities and is distinct from the language-learning platform.

These proposed updates are intended to modernize and clarify admissions procedures for prospective international students. The recommendations have been shared with the President and discussed at Faculty Senate, and are now being brought forward for broader review and approval.

It was asked whether any concerns or opposition were raised at Faculty Senate regarding the proposed updates to international admissions procedures. It was reported that the proposals were well received, with no noted opposition. The updates were viewed as largely procedural in nature, focused on housekeeping items and aligning institutional practices with current policies, testing standards, and system practices.

It was clarified that the proposed changes—including expanded English proficiency exemptions, updated accepted examinations, and revised minimum score requirements—could be consolidated into a single action item for consideration, as presented by VP Aschenbrenner.

A motion was made to approve the English proficiency exemptions, accepted exams and minimum scores for international students was made by Dean Straight, seconded by James Kendall and passed unanimously.

Finance & Operations

VP John Evans noted that an update on Vice President of Finance matters had already been provided the previous week. The discussion then moved to the Equipment Advisory Board requests.

Clarification was sought regarding the status of the requests at Faculty Senate. It was reported that the requests had been presented and were due; however, formal action had not yet been taken at that time. Further clarification was requested as to whether the item was approved by Senate or presented as an information item, and whether any opposition had been expressed.

Oscar Sida, Faculty Senate Chair announced that there was not any opposition to the equipment requests and it passed the Senate.

The request spreadsheet was reviewed. There were no questions prior to the call for a motion.

A motion was made to approve the FY2026 equipment requests submitted by the advisory board by Brian May, seconded by Matt Aschenbrenner and passed unanimously.

Strategic Resource Committee Update:

It was reported that there are no new requests at this time. Jeff was invited to provide a brief update on the current status of existing requests and ongoing committee work.

All previously approved requests have been submitted for purchase orders and are currently in process. The primary outstanding issue is finalizing carpet selection; however, contractors have been selected for installation. The College is also working with two vendors to obtain OMNIA pricing for a full building carpet replacement.

Departments have been encouraged to assess additional equipment or resource needs and submit future requests as appropriate. With the fiscal year ending soon, timely submission of requests is important.

Committee Reports

Classified Council

Chair Erendira Andrade noted the Classified Council did not meeting this month so there was not report.

Student Government Association

Newly elected President Storm Raine introduced himself and expressed appreciation to faculty and staff for their continued support and contributions to the College. A special acknowledgment was

given to Jeff and Mac for the successful implementation of the Zoom Room technology, which has significantly improved functionality and reliability for meetings and instruction.

Upcoming events were highlighted, including the Lantern Painting event scheduled for tomorrow at 5:00 p.m. at the Solarium. All GBC staff are welcome to attend.

Storm reported the formation of additional committees, including representation on the Graduation Committee and the creation of a Mascot Committee. Several senators are already developing mascot concepts and exploring design platforms to move the initiative forward. Plans are underway for an upcoming SGA retreat in Elko on March 27th, which will include participation from online senators. Faculty and staff will be invited to attend a luncheon or dinner during the retreat. A keynote speaker is also being planned to provide senators an opportunity to engage with campus leadership.

SGA election results were announced, confirming that 90% of positions have been filled, with the final two senators being sworn in tomorrow. Leadership expressed pride in the strong participation and enthusiasm of newly elected members, who are eager to implement improvements across campus.

Among upcoming priorities is revitalizing the student game room to enhance it as a welcoming and functional student space. Proposed improvements include repairing and replacing equipment to ensure the space can be used confidently for student activities and events. Additionally, participation in the upcoming Eureka Town Hall and the upcoming Board of Regents meeting in Las Vegas was noted. SGA leadership expressed enthusiasm about representing the College in the community and strengthening GBC's visibility and relationships in the region.

Faculty Senate Report:

Faculty Senate reported on several information items that will likely move forward for action at an upcoming meeting.

The AI Certificate was noted, along with an update that CNA is working to finalize the Social Work program, with an emphasis on rural access.

Several new micro-credentials were introduced as information items and are expected to come forward for vote at the next meeting. These include:

- Child and Adolescent Development
- Secondary Trauma Stress Prevention
- Self-Regulation (Pre-K–12)
- Trauma-Informed Support (Pre-K–12)

A curriculum change was approved to replace ECON 104 with MGT 280 in the ASBA (Business Administration) program.

An update on curriculum review was provided by Carrie during the Senate meeting.

The General Education Committee has proposed significant revisions to the general education matrix to better align with minimum entry requirements. The review found that several BS programs include additional general education requirements beyond standard minimums. The proposal would remove these excess requirements from the matrix, while allowing individual degree programs to retain or revise them as appropriate. The intent is to reduce barriers, improve clarity, and enhance transferability—particularly for bachelor's programs. Simplifying the matrix is expected to provide students with a more direct pathway to graduation and strengthen program competitiveness.

Regarding leadership, a nominee has been identified for the Vice Chair position following the vacancy created by Dean Straight's promotion. A special election will be held, and the Senate anticipates being on track to fill the Chair position in May as scheduled.

VP Negrete noted that four education courses are part of a micro-credential pathway and are intended to lead to endorsement through the Nevada Department of Education. These courses are supported by SB165 funding for the Behavioral Health and Wellness Practitioner initiative. The progress of these courses aligns with GBC's mission to provide statewide educational opportunities, and the funding supports the College's ability to offer these programs to educators across Nevada.

Chair Sida noted that the College's committees are producing substantial work, with many initiatives moving forward in a coordinated and organized manner. The progress reflects strong administrative support and effective coordination, which helps sustain momentum across the system. Committee members' enthusiasm and motivation for addressing challenges and improving processes have contributed significantly to the overall energy and efficiency within the College.

VP Negrete noted the General Education proposal was reviewed by the Policy Committee and was sent to the Gen Ed committee for review and editing. The proposed changes are strongly student-focused and are intended to provide a clear benefit to students. The primary goal is to prevent students from completing an Associate of Arts degree and later discovering that additional general education requirements are needed upon entering a bachelor's program. This situation can create confusion and unnecessary barriers to degree completion. It is uncommon for institutions to embed additional general education requirements at the bachelor's level, as these are typically completed during lower-division associate degree coursework. Students are increasingly focused on their programs of study and the opportunities available within their majors. Reducing excess general education requirements allows them to concentrate more fully on coursework aligned with their academic and career goals.

From an institutional perspective, the proposal also provides an accreditation benefit. As the new Accreditation Liaison Officer, it was emphasized that maintaining bachelor-level general education requirements adds complexity to accreditation reporting. Accreditors review all general education requirements collectively, and ensuring alignment across multiple levels increases reporting burden. While the student benefit remains the top priority, the proposal would also streamline institutional reporting processes and reduce unnecessary complexity in accreditation compliance.

Oscar Sida commented the review of upper-division general education requirements is both timely and necessary. These requirements appear to be a legacy from the early development of the bachelor's programs, when courses were grouped to sustain smaller enrollments. Over time, this structure has limited program flexibility, prevented the addition of discipline-specific courses, and in some cases pushed total credits beyond 120. The proposed revisions would allow programs to reduce excess credits while strengthening areas of focus and maintaining academic quality.

Streamlining requirements will improve program clarity, enhance student confidence in degree pathways, and support the long-term health and vitality of the institution's academic offerings.

President's Committees

Enrollment and Retention Advisory Committee

Carrie Meisner reported the advisory committee was scheduled to meet regarding the Enrollment Management Plan; however, the meeting has been canceled due to scheduling conflicts. An update will be distributed outlining the action items and progress made based on prior group input.

Dual Credit Update

There are no major updates since the All College meeting last week.

A productive meeting was held with Communities In Schools and school counselors, where there was strong interest in expanding Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways at the high school level. Specifically, there is interest in articulated CTE courses that allow students to earn credit in high school that can be applied toward GBC CTE programs upon enrollment.

Follow-up communication has taken place. Additional outreach includes:

- A meeting with the County School District Superintendent earlier today.
- A scheduled meeting with the Nye County Superintendent in Pahrump on Wednesday.

Events Committee

There are minimal updates since the All College meeting. Key upcoming dates include:

- **March 18** – Nomination forms will be distributed for Program Awards and President's Awards.
- **April 30** – Student Award Ceremony.

The Student Award Ceremony will be held on **April 30** in the Theater and Solarium, with a Zoom option available for remote participation. With Spring Break approaching, the award nominations are due on **April 9**. This timeline allows sufficient time for the committee to review submissions and prepare awards and certificates in advance of the ceremony.

The Winnemucca Tech Center event will take place this Thursday.

Transportation has been arranged, with a bus departing at 2:00 p.m. following the Element 451 training. Those interested in riding the bus or driving separately are asked to notify the appropriate coordinators to assist with planning.

Compliance Updates

Arysta Brick reported on the compliance trainings.

Accessibility Compliance

- Faculty were asked to reach 85% compliance by March 24 ahead of the April 24 federal deadline.
- 50% of courses are at 85% or higher.
- 78% of courses are at 80% or higher.
- Most courses are on track; targeted follow-up is underway for those needing additional support.
- Approximately 2,000 documents have been remediated using Autopilot AI.

Title IX & FERPA Training

- Title IX completion: 72%
- FERPA completion: 76%
- Additional reminders are being sent.
- A report identifying outstanding completions will be distributed.

Leadership emphasized that training compliance is federally required and essential for institutional accountability.

New Business & Open discussion

No new business.

VP Negrete expressed appreciation for everyone's hard work and the collective effort across the institution moving in the same direction to improve organization, address outstanding issues, and strengthen overall operations. The progress is evident and that the shared commitment to moving in the same direction is making a meaningful difference.

Next Meeting Dates - March 23, 2026 – cancelled
April 23, 2026

The meeting adjourned with thanks to all participants