

WTAMU Faculty Advisory Council Meeting Minutes
March 27, 2026

Attended: Dr. Benton Allen, Dr. Emilie Baker, Dr. Brandon Bang, Dr. Ray Barbosa, Dr. Ryan Brooks, Mr. Landon Brown, Dr. Li Chen, Dr. Betty Coneway, Dr. Alee Friemel, Dr. Nicholas Gerlich, Dr. Bridget Guerrero, Dr. Audrey Meador, Dr. Brandli Stitzel, Dr. Yong Yang, Dr. Walter Wendler

Guests: Lora Haasl and Lisa Caid from the ITSC

The WTAMU Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) meeting started at 12:18 p.m. in OM 317.

1. Lora Haasl and Lisa Caid: Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1)

- The goal of WCAG is to make online content accessible to people with disabilities.
- Deadline: April 24, 2026
- The Ally icon indicates accessibility scores. Aim for the green icon.
- There is a link on the ITSC page for more specific requirements.
- ITSC provides training sessions, and TrainTraq also offers training sessions.
- Registration for ITSC training sessions is now open. The links are on the ITSC page.
 - The 1st training session will walk faculty through the process of increasing accessibility scores as quickly as possible.
 - The 2nd training session will focus on online courses, including using pages, tests, and quizzes on Canvas.
- In addition to the currently available sessions, training sessions will be scheduled for June and July as well.
- The University's goal is to achieve an institutional score of 98%.

FAC members asked additional questions about WCAG. Due to time restrictions, Dr. Bang suggested faculty members attend the training sessions to learn more about WCAG and address specific concerns.

2. Dr. Wendler remarks

- Encouraged FAC members to meet with their deans to engage them in conversations about the issues the FAC discusses.

- Faculty and students are encouraged to attend the Civil Discourse and Civics Education Symposium on March 31.

3. Opening remarks (Dr. Bang)

- FAC members approved the minutes from the last meeting.
- Update on CPE: it is officially complete. The process went well.
- Faculty Insight Portal: received some concerns about H1b visas. Dr. Bang will reach out to those faculty members and other University administrators to seek clarification.
 - Dr. Chen said her personal experiences show that the H-1 B visa not only allowed international faculty members like her to work lawfully, but also created a sense of belonging at WT.
 - Dr. Coneway said that some College Station staff members are familiar with H1b.
- The Graduate School: There is some confusion about untenured faculty members serving as thesis chairs. Dr. Bang will check on the updated policy on tenure-track faculty members serving on thesis committees.
- Health insurance: Blue Cross & Blue Shield is no longer reimbursing services provided by certain providers. Dr. Bang will check on this.

4. Merit subcommittee report and discussions (Dr. Brooks)

- Dr. Brooks distributed a new handout to take questions from FAC members.
- Dr. Guerrero said that she believed faculty would be in favor of merit-based increases, but the main problem is funding. She also asked whether it would be necessary to arbitrarily set the “percentage” of people receiving salary increases.
- Dr. Brooks mentioned three important things the subcommittee considered when writing the proposal: 1. Balance the concerns from faculty members and supervisors; 2. Try to make most people get something, and 3. Take into consideration the frequency of merit-based raises, cost of living, “bad year,” etc.
- Dr. Wendler shared insights from the leadership perspectives. He discussed some concerns about determining the range. Dr. Wendler said he was taking insights on this and would like to work carefully on it.
- Dr. Stitzel said that the subcommittee believed the merit-based increase policy could be evolving: individuals might have different viewpoints on this, but the proposal would be a good starting point for conversations.
- Dr. Wendler emphasized fairness in merit-based increases. The proposal is a good place to start the discussions.

5. New business (continued) (Dr. Bang)

- University committees
 - The next meeting will focus on selecting university committee members. He will reach out to Academic Affairs to find out the openings. The list of

openings will be sent to FAC members. Dr. Bang asked FAC members to seek nominations within their colleges.

- Magister Optimus Award nominations
 - One change made: “the nominee must be actively teaching ... and must not be a current administrator.” Waiting for approval from Dr. Wendler and Academic Affairs.
 - Nomination is now open. Send the nomination and/or support letters to FAC members. FAC will vote on the Magister Optimus Award during the next meeting and forward the name to Dr. Wendler and Academic Affairs.
 - No limit on the number of support letters.
 - Dr. Bang will email all faculty about the nomination process.
- FAC lunch with Dr. Wendler
 - To be scheduled later in the semester.

Adjournment

The meeting ended at around 1:35 pm.

Link to the recording of the meeting:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N_7GnYVELzA

Respectfully,
Li Chen, Secretary
3/31/2026