

2024-2025

ANNUAL REPORT

BYU Faculty Advisory Council



**Presented to the AVP Council and
Faculty of Brigham Young University
April 15, 2025**

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Letter from Co-Chairs

Dear President Reese and the Members of the AVP Council:

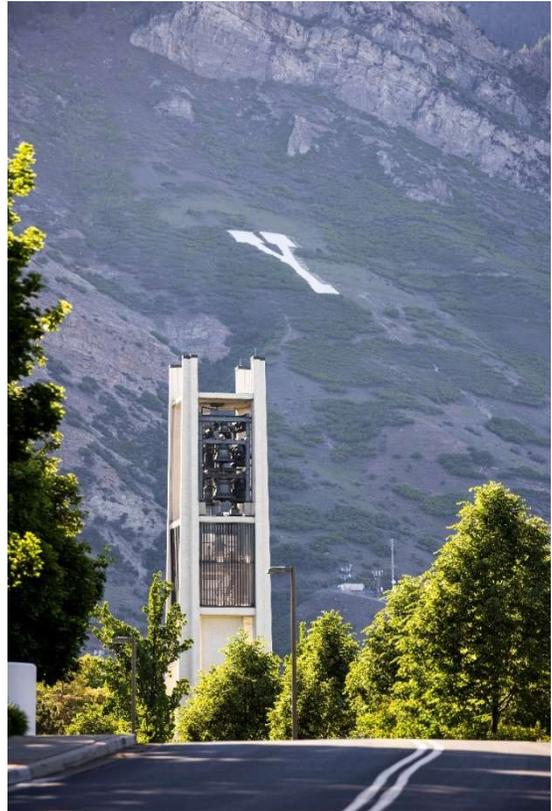
At the start of the academic year, the FAC approved revised bylaws developed in collaboration with the AVP Council. Since then, we have focused on implementing these changes while continuing to work closely and constructively with the AVP Council to improve FAC's effectiveness and efficiency.

As a result, FAC committees have addressed complex issues and produced detailed, technically robust proposals. We hope these contributions will support the work of the AVP Council and benefit the University as a whole.

Thank you for your collaboration and for considering the FAC's work. We look forward to continued partnership and shared progress.

Sincerely,

Melissa Lewis-Western
Jon Cox



Melissa Lewis-Western
Co-chair, 2024-2026



Jon Cox
Co-chair, 2023-25

About the Faculty Advisory Council (FAC)

PURPOSE AND GOALS OF THE FAC

The aim of the FAC is to serve as a conduit for collaboration and cooperative efforts between faculty and the university administration to improve and enrich the academic experience for faculty, staff, and students alike while remaining steadfast in our allegiance to BYU's mission.

ALIGNMENT WITH BYU'S MISSION

The mission of BYU is to “assist individuals in their quest for perfection and eternal life.” The individuals within the mission include the university's students, faculty, and staff. To obtain eternal life, we must enthusiastically follow Jesus Christ. Thus, to achieve the mission of BYU, the BYU experience must provide an environment that develops committed disciples of Jesus Christ. Much of the spiritual guidance, academic instruction, opportunities for character growth, and examples of a life committed to building the Kingdom of God will be provided to students from the hands, minds, and hearts of faculty. Faculty are integral in achieving the mission of BYU, which includes bringing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to all people.

The FAC possesses collective experience and expertise across the academic colleges and aims to bring together a group of consecrated faculty to counsel with BYU administration in an advisory role to help BYU achieve its mission.



2024-2025 FAC Committees



Academics

Chair: Matt Heaton

Members: Juan Arroyo, Kris Boyle, Parris Egbert, Brian Iverson, David Lignell



Belonging

Co-chairs: Royce Kimmons, Kori Wakamatsu

Members: Stephen Bay, Matt Bekker, Meg Frost, Allen Parcell, Sara Phenix



Benefits

Chair: Julie Crockett

Members: Angela Bradford, Mary Davis, Melissa Jones, Stephen Liddle, Steve Riep



Interacting w/Students

Chair: Greg Nelson

Members: Joey Franklin, Mike Goodman, Steve Hoffman, Shelly Reed

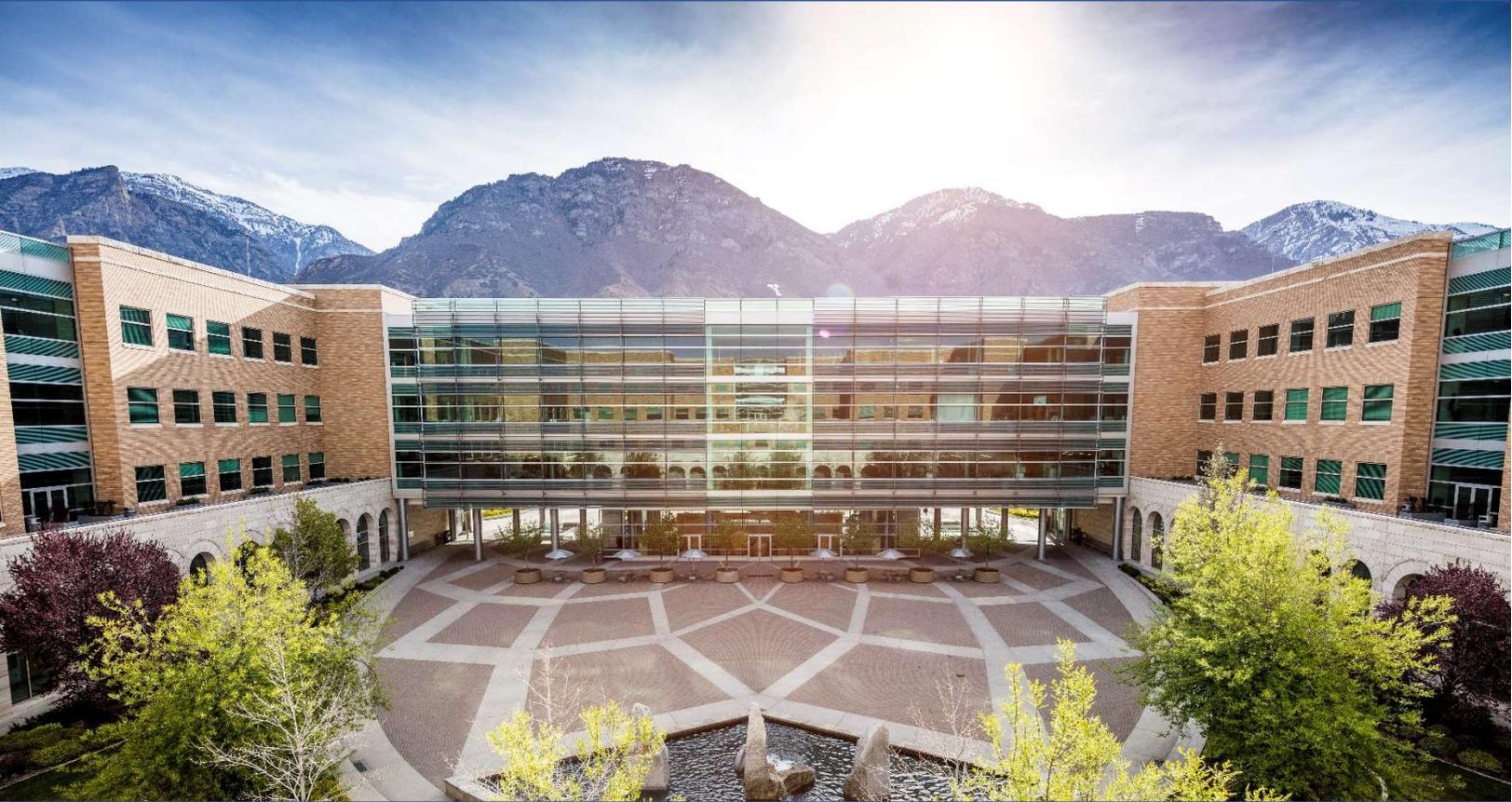


Morale

Co-chairs: Matt Grey (F'24), Gus Hart, Chelom Leavitt (W'25)

Members: Brad Agle, Sharon Harris, Teresa Leavitt, Steve Ricks, Chantel Sloan, Gordon Smith

Faculty Advisory Council



Committee Reports

Academics



Committee Members: Juan Arroyo, Kris Boyle, Parris Egbert, Matt Heaton (chair), Brian Iverson, David Lignell

Student Support: Alexia Wells

Executive Summary ([link to full report](#))

Utilizing five years of student ratings data from the College of Computational, Mathematical and Physical Sciences (CMS), the committee analyzed student comments on 300-499 level courses (just prior to graduation). The goal was to identify whether student comments could meaningfully identify how professors embody the four BYU Aims: Spiritually Strengthening, Character Building, Intellectually Enlarging, and Lifelong Learning and Service.

Results demonstrate that while students can assess the "Spiritually Strengthening" aim with moderate reliability, their ability to assess the other three aims is limited. In response to the results of this study, the committee offers two recommendations.

1. We suggest developing more targeted survey questions aligned with each specific BYU aim. For example, the student survey could include a question such as: *"In regard to the BYU aim of Character Building, to what extent did this course help you grow in resilience?"*
2. We recommend organizing existing survey questions under the appropriate BYU aims to strengthen their connection to the framework. For instance, the question *"How effective is this instructor in organizing course content to enhance learning?"* could be revised to explicitly reference the Intellectually Enlarging aim: *"In regard to the BYU aim of Intellectually Enlarging, how effective is this instructor in organizing course content to enhance learning?"*

Belonging



Committee Members: Stephen Bay, Matt Bekker, Meg Frost, Royce Kimmons (co-chair), Allen Parcell, Sara Phenix, Kori Wakamatsu (co-chair)

Executive Summary ([link to full report](#))

The committee focused on understanding, supporting, and advancing Christ-centered belonging at BYU, guided by the university’s Statement on Belonging and the Office of Belonging’s statement on covenant belonging. In the context of the 2024–2025 academic year—marked by significant refinements to FAC processes and goals—the committee directed efforts toward: (a) engaging with the Office of Belonging and university leadership to assess and enhance campus belonging efforts, and (b) applying our scholarly expertise to identify and address related challenges.

Representing diverse perspectives across BYU, the committee met weekly, consulted with campus leaders, collaborated with university administration, and produced original scholarly work. Through these grassroots efforts, the committee aimed to complement institutional initiatives and contribute meaningfully to a culture of Christlike belonging.

Suggestions

Based on our time and efforts together as a committee, we have been reaffirmed in the belief that seeking for a truer, deeper understanding of our neighbor is the hallmark of Christ-like behavior, and recognizing and appreciating diversity on campus will help BYU become the institution that President Kimball envisioned in his second century address. Toward this end, we suggest two broad areas for emphasis at BYU:

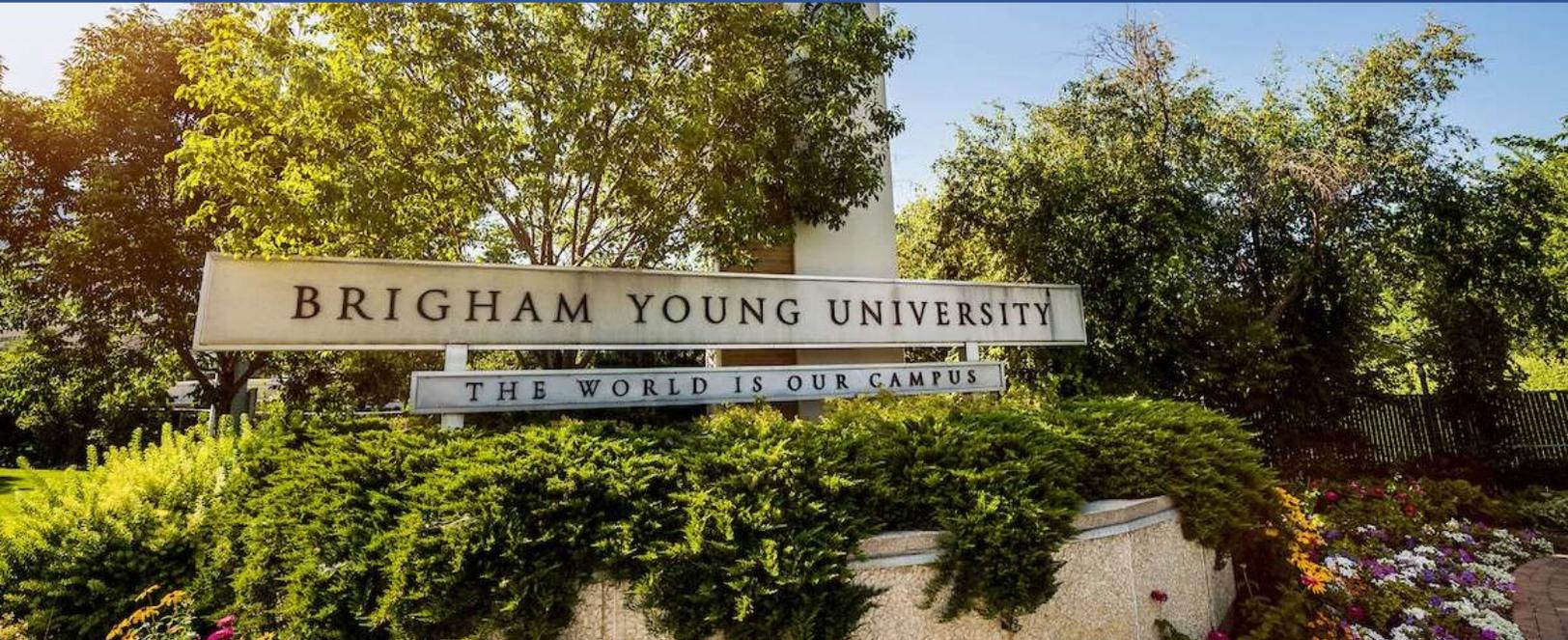
1. Helping faculty understand how to best encourage belonging, and

2. Building understanding and collaboration between the Office of Belonging and faculty.

Conclusion and Acknowledgement

We are committed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to the mission of BYU and have appreciated the opportunity to serve on the FAC Belonging Committee this year. The Gospel of Jesus Christ gives us patterns to follow for improving belonging in our institutions, and BYU has in its founding and framework documents (including statements on belonging) firm structures upon which we can build deep, impactful, Christ-centered belonging. As BYU leverages the rich storehouse of faculty discipleship and scholarly expertise available to it, we hope that the institution continues to move in directions that are ever more welcoming, inclusive, and exalting for all of God's children.

Benefits



Committee Members: Angela Bradford, Julie Crockett (chair), Mary Davis, Melissa Jones, Stephen Liddle, Steve Riep

Executive Summary ([link to full report](#))

The committee explored several topics related to employee benefits.

Wellness – New wellness resources for faculty and staff are available at wellnesswise.byu.edu, including Wellness Week, hobby groups, and the Wellness Advocate Program. An updated faculty and staff gym is unlikely in the near future due to revised building plans.

DMBA – BYU has a DMBA Board representative who can relay faculty concerns. Repeated proposals may be necessary to effect change, as DMBA decisions are primarily driven by market analysis rather than user feedback. While covered codes will not be published, a new cost transparency tool will allow users to estimate procedure costs. Dollar-based 401(k) contributions are not feasible due to matching constraints; however, beginning this year, whole percentage contributions will be rounded in the final month to ensure the full match for those at the contribution limit.

Leaves – Leave policies are not consistently applied or communicated across campus. Administrator training will be updated to improve the Professional Development Leave process. While no appeal process will be implemented at this time, adopting best practices from some colleges may help reduce denials. Parental leave is already thoroughly addressed in new faculty and administrator orientations.

External Resources for Family/Life Support – A proposal to provide access to Care.com for childcare, eldercare, pet care, emergency backup care, tutoring, and wellness specialists

has been submitted but may be deferred until next year. Childcare emerged as the most pressing concern, while alternative platforms (e.g., Angie's List) may better address other care needs.

Possible Topics to Consider Next Year

- External Resources for family/life support (see above)
- New faculty compensation – some colleges are quite low

Interacting with Students



Committee Members: Joey Franklin, Mike Goodman, Steve Hoffman, Greg Nelson (chair), Shelly Reed

Executive Summary ([link to full report](#))

We reviewed 103 rank and status documents to assess how units incorporate mentoring expectations. Below, we highlight 1) unique approaches to mentoring policy and 2) a summary of mentoring examples categorized by teaching, citizenship, and scholarship.

Unique Mentoring Policies

- **Define mentoring:** Provide a specific definition of mentoring.
- **Track and report measurable outcomes:** Include clear instructions on measuring, tracking and reporting mentoring.
- **Focus on spirituality:** Clarify responsibility to prepare students professionally and spiritually.
- **Create advancement-specific policies:** Detail mentoring expectations at different career stages.
- **Pair with aims of BYU education:** Connect teaching and mentoring as the primary means to achieve BYU's educational goals.
- **Recognize co-creators:** Recognize student-driven and faculty-led collaborative projects as mentoring.
- **Emphasize career readiness:** Connect mentoring to professional preparation.

Mentoring Methods across Areas

Many rank and status (R&S) documents include discipline-specific examples of mentoring aligned with teaching, research, and citizenship responsibilities.

Teaching Mentorship

- Supervising and training teaching assistants (TAs) and supplemental instructors (SIs).
- Leading study-abroad programs, field trips, and service-learning activities.
- Overseeing capstone projects, directed readings, and research courses.
- Chairing and serving on thesis and dissertation committees.
- Providing experiential learning opportunities beyond the curriculum (e.g., labs, simulations, internships).
- Coaching students for academic competitions and case studies.
- Advising students on coursework, academic progress, and career paths.

Research and Scholarship Mentorship

- Conducting collaborative research with students.
- Training students in research methodologies, data analysis, and specialized equipment.
- Co-authoring academic papers and conference presentations with students.
- Supporting student-led research initiatives and publications.
- Assisting students in securing research grants, awards, and fellowships.

Citizenship and Professional Development Mentorship

- Advising student organizations, academic associations, and professional societies.
- Guiding students through graduate school applications, internships, and job placements.
- Writing letters of recommendation.
- Promoting the success of underrepresented students and fostering an environment of belonging.
- Mentoring students in professional and community engagement (e.g., legislative advocacy, networking).

Faculty Morale



Committee Members: Brad Agle, Matt Grey (co-chair F'24), Sharon Harris, Gus Hart (co-chair), Chelom Leavitt (co-chair W'25), Teresa Leavitt, Steve Ricks, Chantel Sloan, Gordon Smith

Executive Summary

The Faculty Morale Committee worked on two issues this year: 1) faculty morale and 2) ensuring success and belonging of professional faculty

A. Faculty Morale

The Faculty Morale Committee compiled a report based on an informal survey of members of the FAC. This report was communicated directly to the AVP's Council at their request.

The Faculty Morale Committee also met with VPs Justin Collings and Mike Barnes to discuss the report. The Committee felt the discussion was very productive, with both VPs acknowledging the concerns. Justin and Mike requested a list of suggestions for improving trust between administration and faculty, which the committee provided to them.

B. Ensuring Success and Belonging of Professional Faculty

In response to a request from the AVP Council, the committee informally gathered perspectives from professional faculty to learn how professional faculty experience BYU. Further clarification during an in-person meeting focused efforts to provide suggestions for ensuring success and belonging of professional faculty, particularly given that the percentage of professional faculty is increasing. The Faculty Morale committee plans to continue exploring this issue and identifying ways that the University can provide meaningful support to professional faculty that would help them to be successful and thrive at BYU.

University Policy Reviews 2024-2025

The University requests that the Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) review and comment on University policies. These policies often concern faculty and therefore, feedback and input from the FAC is highly relevant. The FAC is grateful to be consulted and provided opportunity to review such policies. The FAC notes that Faculty Advisory Council reviews and suggestions are not the same as FAC approval of the University final release of the policy.

Overview of Policy Review Process

Most policies have multiple stakeholders. Common stakeholders are the FAC, Student Advisory Council (SAC), Staff Advisory Council, the Deans Council and the Office of Belonging.

Feedback from stakeholders is compiled into a “stakeholder comments” version of the policy so that the feedback is reviewed in context of the policy language. This places feedback from all stakeholders side by side and provides a more holistic view of how the policy has been understood, received, and reviewed across the university community.

When the stakeholder review period is complete, the stakeholder feedback version is shared with the chief compliance officer and the individuals from the responsible office who have been engaged in drafting the policy. The feedback is considered and discussed, one by one, by that group. Edits are often made to the policy as a result. Feedback can also prompt additional research and discussion, which may result in additional meetings to ensure the question has been appropriately examined and addressed.

Policies Reviewed by the FAC during 2024-2025

- Sexual Harassment Policy (May 2024)
- Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures (May 2024)
- Student Pregnancy Reasonable Modifications Policy (May 2024)
- Human Research Protection Policy (June 2024)
- Student Pregnancy Reasonable Modifications Policy (July 2025)
- Clery Act Policy (July 2025)
- Campus Fire Safety Act Policy (July 2025)
- Academic Credit, Grades and Records Policy (August 2024)
- Undergraduate Graduation Evaluation Policy (September 2024)
- Commencement and Convocation Walk-Through Policy (September 2024)
- Registration Policy (November 2024)
- Class Attendance Policy (November 2024)
- Withdraw Policy (November 2024)
- Leave of Absence Policy (November 2024)
- University Awards Policy (January 2025)
- Conflict of Interest Policy (March 2025)
- Financial Conflict of Interest in Research (March 2025)
- Risk Management and Safety Policy (March 2025)

Parting Thought

2 Timothy 1:7

For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Favorite Scripture of Jon Cox who has served on the FAC for the last 5 years!
Thank you, Jon.

May we use these gifts—power, love and a sound mind—to serve Jesus Christ and joyfully do all that we are called to do.