

Meeting Minutes Matter for Institutional Accreditation & Quality Assurance

Accreditation and Quality Assurance (AQuA)

Office of the Provost

2026



Why Do Meeting Minutes Matter?

More than ever, meeting meetings are needed to support our change of institutional accreditation from SACSCOC to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

- While the change of accreditors is required by state law, the FSU Board of Trustees approved HLC as the best match for our institutional profile and aspirations.
- HLC's priorities are focused on data- and evidence-based decision making, transparency, consistency, and accountability.
- Documentation of institutional processes, policies, assessment, decisions, and resulting enhancements are required as part of our application.
- The need for these documents is immediate! This tutorial is designed to prepare faculty and administrators for taking effective notes that promote organizational effectiveness and support the HLC application.

Meeting Minutes are Primary Source Evidence Docs

Meeting minutes are primary source evidence documents for the HLC application, showing...

- What decisions were made
- Who made them (e.g., qualified program faculty in the discipline, Enrollment Management Committee, Council of Academic Affairs Deans, Faculty Senate)
- On what basis (e.g., assessment results, academic program review findings, relevant data points)
- What resulting changes were planned and implemented to enhance curriculum, instruction, and student success
 - Note: Be sure to circle back on implementation, perhaps under old business part of the agenda – we need to track these wins!

EXAMPLES: Evidence of Compliance

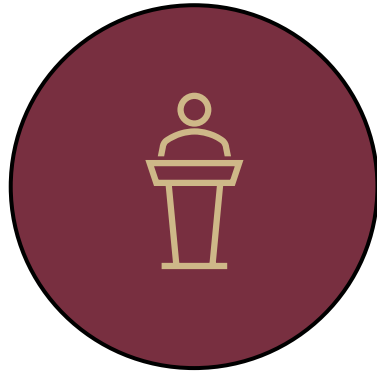


Meeting minutes articulate adherence to policy & processes:

Federal & State Laws
BOG Regulations
FSU Policies & Procedures
College/Department Bylaws
Faculty Handbook
University Bulletin

- *“Program faculty voted to add the online delivery method for the MA in Public Administration due to the high percentage of enrolled students who are working full time (~xx%) and their pattern of maximizing online courses. The program coordinator will initiate university approval paperwork through the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement.”*
- *“The Faculty Senate’s Liberal Studies Coordinating & Policy Committee (LSCPC) Chair shared the proposal to: (1) change the Faculty Senate Bylaws to rename the LSCPC to the CoreFSU Policy Committee in line with general education requirements outlined in the University Bulletin and (2) to add a voting committee member representing the Panama City (FL) Campus. Both measures were approved.”*

EXAMPLES: Evidence of Quality Assurance

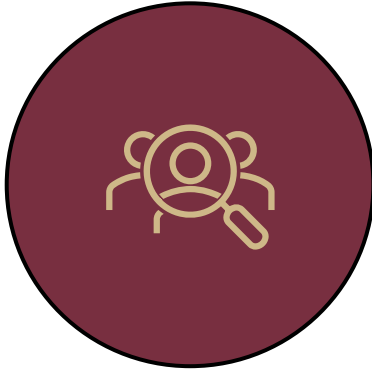


Meeting minutes document
curricular decisions & enhancements:

Curriculum Development
Curriculum Review
SLO Assessment
Resulting Enhancements

- *“Program faculty made the decision to close the Undergraduate Gerontology Certificate due to low enrollments over a 7-year period. There are no active students in the program.”*
- *“Program faculty proposed a change to the XYZ 4559 course curriculum based on revised competencies identified by its program accreditor in its 2025 update to the standards.”*
- *“Based on a review of capstone course final project presentations, program faculty proposed to revise the assignments in three pre-requisite courses to include more opportunities for the types of public speaking and presentations made in the industry.”*
 - ***Minutes + Syllabi** of revised courses with highlight of new assignments = evidence of implementing enhancement of the curriculum for HLC*

EXAMPLES: Evidence of Transparency



Meeting minutes enhance
transparency:

Historical Record
Accessible & Searchable
Reveals Priorities
Identifies Decision Makers
Clarifies Authority

- *"Based on Institutional Research data showing higher GPA performance among undergraduates taking 15+ hours across all semesters, the Enrollment Management Committee agreed to endorse the Take 15 initiative to encourage all undergraduates to enroll in 15 or more credits each semester."*
- *"CAAD approved a new policy recommendation requiring undergraduates to declare a second major before the end of the term in which they will earn xx cumulative credit hours. It will now be submitted to the Faculty Senate for its consideration and final approval."*
- *"It was noted that this issue was discussed a few years ago. The chair will check the minutes to see what the key issues were at that time and present those at our next meeting."*
- *"The committee thought that this course was previously added to the list of approved electives that meet major requirements – James R. will check the historical minutes to clarify."*

Types of Meetings That Require Minutes

- **University Boards**
Board of Trustees, Direct Support Organization (DSO) Boards, Lab School Boards
- **University and College Curriculum Committees**
Curriculum development and approval processes at all levels (i.e., degrees, certificates, majors, programs, delivery methods)
- **Program Assessment Committees**
Assessment planning, assessment results, discussion of results, & corresponding enhancements made to curriculum & instruction
- **Program Review Committees**
Academic program reviews, programmatic accreditation self-study processes
- **Strategic Planning Committees**
At all levels of the university
- **Open Search Committees as Determined by General Counsel & Human Resources**
High-level searches “in the sunshine” (you’ll be informed by chair if it is an open search)
- **Standing and Ad Hoc University Committees**
At all levels making decisions that impact students, faculty, & staff (e.g., CAAD, Enrollment Management, Faculty Senate and related committees)

Who Should Take Minutes?

- Sometimes taking minutes is a duty assigned by elected office or organizational bylaws, but often it is a volunteer or a staff member.
 - Careful selection is important because this person will shape the history and rationale for decisions.
 - It is acceptable to ask a staff member to take minutes provided there is no conflict of interest (e.g., individual is a student in the program this committee serves)
- Ideally, select an individual who is...
 - Not chairing or running the meeting (it's too much!)
 - A good listener, notetaker, and writer
 - Somewhat familiar with meeting content, acronyms, and terminology
 - Able to be objective and fair about the meeting content
 - Reliable, organized, and timely in completing assigned tasks
 - Consistently available from one meeting to the next

Seven Steps for Writing Meeting Minutes

- 1 • Locate or draft a template before the meeting
- 2 • Take notes during the meeting using the template
- 3 • Collect copies of any reports or presentations
- 4 • Review your notes & organize or detail them as needed
- 5 • Create a “review draft”
- 6 • Request review for accuracy / approval (if required by bylaws)
- 7 • Share final minutes & store according to procedures

Source: Indeed's How to Take Meeting Minutes

What Should be Included in Meeting Minutes?

Meeting Details:

- Name of the committee or meeting topic
- The meeting's date, time, location
- A list of attendees, absentees, and a notation of who is chair
- If quorum is required, document if met

What Should be Included in Meeting Minutes?

Agenda Items:

- Brief summaries of discussion points for each agenda item
- Details of activities agreed upon/completed
- Resulting votes/motions (passed/failed/postponed)
- Record of decisions made and what basis
- Action items with deadlines and who is assigned

What Should be Included in Meeting Minutes?

Closing Details:

Next meeting date/time/location

Name of person who took minutes

Tips for Writing Effective Minutes in General

- **Stay Objective:** Write factually and impartially, avoiding opinions or interpretations. Do not write anything you would think twice about if published online or in a newspaper.
- **Be Concise and Precise:** Focus on the main ideas of the discussion and outcomes, not every spoken word.
- **Attribute Actions, Not Opinions:** Use individual names sparingly: for presenters of an issue or agenda item, when relevant to expertise areas, when assigning an action item, or if a member specifically requests a dissenting view noted.
- **Avoid Jargon:** Use clear but formal language and avoid undefined abbreviations or acronyms.
- **Draft Promptly:** Finalize and distribute the minutes as soon as possible after the meeting while the information is still fresh.

Tips for Writing Effective Minutes for Accreditation

- **Emphasize data-driven decisions:** The “why” matters! Include reasons &/or brief data points (quantitative or qualitative) for each decision.
- **Emphasize continuous quality improvement:** Use the “old business” portion of the meeting to report back on the status of change implementation and enhancements.
- **Link to standards:** As appropriate, reference specific accreditation standards or institutional requirements within the minutes, especially if linked to ongoing reporting requirements.
- **Accessibility:** Store minutes in a location accessible to current and future committee members (e.g., shared drive, Teams, OneDrive, online as appropriate). Use a consistent file naming protocol (e.g., committee name & date) to ensure ease of locating them in the future.

Technology Tools

- **AI Benefits**

- AI can simplify notetaking and document analysis of meeting recordings but use with caution!
- For accuracy, review and edit results carefully before inserting into the minutes template

- **AI Cautions** (read carefully)

- Use only “FSU Approved AI Options” to ensure protected data is not used to train AI’s large language models
- **Log in to an approved AI option with your FSU credentials** because FSU’s contract and AI subscriptions provide special data protection and service features
- “Public” tools that do not meet FSU policies for information security present data security risks and often retain data shared with them
- Sharing information with unauthorized AI tools can lead to unintended violations of data privacy laws (e.g., FERPA or HIPAA) or other incidents that breach confidentiality or share sensitive/protected data
- See FSU website content on [AI Literacy](#))

- **FSU Approved AI Options**

- [Microsoft 365 Copilot](#): For use with Teams, Word, and Outlook, this is a good option since content is protected under the FSU contract
- [Google Gemini](#): For use with Docs, Sheets, and Slides, this is a good option since content is protected under the FSU contract
- [Zoom with AI Companion](#): Avoid or use caution if meeting discussion includes sensitive or confidential information

Resources for Taking Minutes

- [Minutes Template](#) (separate Word document - customize to your needs)
- Questions?
Email aqua@fsu.edu or contact Sara Hamon or Ruth Storm in Accreditation & Quality Assurance (AQuA)