

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Special Meeting, 9 December 2019, 4:00 p.m.

Union Capitol Rooms

ACTION MINUTES

**SENATORS PRESENT:** D. Banash, M. Bean, B. Bellott, J. Choi, S. Cordes, S. Czechowski, R. Dimitrov, R. Filipink, J. Franken, D. Hunter, I. Lauer, T. Lough, M. Maskarinec, D. Oursler, B. Perabo, C. Pynes, J. Robinett, R. Sawhney, M. Stinnett, F. Tasdan, E. Taylor, K. Zbeeb (via teleconference)

**Ex-officio:** Russ Morgan, Associate Provost; Heather McIlvaine-Newsad, Parliamentarian

**SENATORS ABSENT:** G. Delany- Barmann, R. Sawhney, F. Tasdan, K. Zbeeb

**GUESTS:** Julia Albarracin, Andy Baker, Steve Bennett, Tom Blackford, Ginny Boynton, Katrina Daytner, Jack Elfrink, Karen Harris, Keith Holz, Sue Martinelli-Fernandez, Mark Mossman, Lorette Oden, Renee Polubinsky

I. Announcements

A. Provost's Report

Associate Provost Morgan expressed Interim Provost Clow's regrets for missing the meeting. He observed that this has been a relatively <sup>2</sup>

asked senators to encourage their colleagues to attend.

Associate Provost Morgan updated senators on the three deans' searches. He is chairing the search for the Dean of the College of Business and Technology and reported that they are reviewing applications. He related that College of Arts and Sciences Dean

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will go out in a few days.

Senator Perabo asked if the diversity workshops referenced by Associate Provost Morgan were the same ones that Interim President Abraham had told senators would occur on a Thursday just before classes begin in the spring. Associate Provost Morgan responded he believed that was correct, and there will be other workshops throughout the semester. Senator Perabo asked if the workshops are connected to those offered by retired Educational Studies professor. Associate Provost Morgan was not sure. He thinks there are some other workshops but the specifics have not yet been worked out.

Senator Czechowski asked if Faculty Senate will be told anything more about the incident that was left in a computer lab two or three weeks ago; other than her students telling her about it. She said on, she has not heard anything official. Associate Provost Morgan pointed out that a press release about the incident was sent out. Senator Czechowski said she knows the incident was reported to the Judicial Board and there have been more meetings about it.

Senator Oursler related that when the incident was reported to him, he got the feeling that it was not appropriate to discuss it. An image was posted on Twitter a lot of people already knew about it. He stated that now that a person has been identified

Senate is not talking this openly. He asked if Faculty Senate is not an appropriate place to talk about these kinds of things. Chairperson Pynes responded that, based on the Senate Constitution, senators

(Steve Bennett, Chair)

1. Curricular Requests from the Department of Psychology

a. Request for Change of Major

i. Psychology

**NO OBJECTIONS**

B. Senate Nominating Committee

(Jeremy Robinett, Chair)

1. Faculty Nominations

University Technology Advisory Group (UTAG)

Jeannie Galioto, Thea/Dan replacing John Cooper Spr 2020 only FA&C

There were no further nominations, and the nominee was declared elected.

III. Old Business – None

IV. New Business

A. Consent to Action Items on the Board of Trustees Agenda for December 13, 2019

Chairperson Pynes told senators that if they read the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting on December 3, you will see ExCo's [orn] h` tmi Q P Jeinh b thdion Items ? M M

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Senator Filipink asked for more information about the BOT meeting minutes. Chairperson Pynes stated that the resolution on “Release of Closed Session Written Meeting Minutes” on page 40 states that the Board has determined that the need for confidentiality of the written minutes dated December 17, 2015 through March 30, 2017 no longer exists and that those minutes will be released. He said the Board has determined that the need for confidentiality of the written minutes still exists for a list of dates from June 8, 2017 through October 4, 2019 and that they will make a determination about those minutes after further review at their March 26-27, 2020 meeting. Chairperson Pynes related that the resolution on “Retention or Destruction of Closed Session Audio Recordings” on page 41 indicates that the Board has determined the need for confidentiality of the verbatim recordings for a list of dates from June 8, 2017 through October 4, 2019 still exists, and these recordings will be retained pending further review at the March 26-27 meeting. The Board wants to destroy the verbatim records of the closed session meetings dated June 12, 2017; July 14, 2017; September 28, 2017; and December 14, 2017.

**Motion:** To not consent to the destruction of the recordings (Filipink/Bellott)

Chairperson Pynes summarized that essentially the objection to Resolution 19.12/8 is to the destruction of the closed session recordings; they do not have to be deleted, although it is permissible for the BOT to do so. Senator Lauer asked if these same recordings were on the agenda at the last BOT meeting for destruction; Chairperson Pynes replied he does not remember. Senator Lauer stated that, if they were, given that the BOT did not approve their destruction then, it seems like there would need to be a new reason to destroy the recordings now. Chairperson Pynes reminded senators that Faculty Senate passed a resolution to ask the BOT not to destroy the closed session recordings in the past, so to ask them not to do so again is not something strange for Faculty Senate to do.

**MOTION TO NOT CONSENT APPROVED 19 YES – 1 NO – 1 ABSTENTION**

Senator Filipink asked what else was dropped from the preliminary BOT agenda besides the two new curricular programs. He observed that it seems three of the previous resolutions have disappeared. Chairperson Pynes responded that 19.12/4, “Purchases of \$500,000 and Over,” has been removed from the updated agenda; additionally, 19.12/5, “New Degree Program Master of Music Therapy,” and 19.12/6, another “New Degree Program,” were removed. Senator Czechowski asked if purchase of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system would be over \$500,000. Senator Bellott remarked that this was purchased in June. Chairperson Pynes explained that the Board only needs this agenda item if they have something that big to buy; if they do not, they remove it.

Senator Czechowski asked to discuss Resolution 19.12/1, “Appointment of Martin Abraham as President.” Chairperson Pynes read the resolution aloud to senators:

**Resolution to Designate the 12th President of Western Illinois University**

- WHEREAS** President Jack Thomas resigned as the 11th President of Western Illinois University effective June 30th, 2019; and
- WHEREAS** Western Illinois University needs to select its 12th President; and
- WHEREAS** Dr. Martin Abraham has served as acting/interim president of Western Illinois University with distinction since July of 2019 through the present date; and
- WHEREAS** the Board of Trustees is committed to ensuring sound leadership for Western Illinois
- WHEREAS** the Board of Trustees completed multiple open forums for public comment and a thorough evaluation of Dr. Martin Abraham’s performance since appointment as Acting President of Western Illinois University; and
- WHEREAS** the Board of Trustees reviewed the information obtained through the indicated performance evaluations and determined that the appointment of Dr. Martin

**THEREFORE** be it resolved that the Board of Trustees of Western Illinois University appoints Dr. Martin Abraham as the President of Western Illinois University for a three year term effective January 1, 2020; and

**THEREFORE** authorizes the Chairman of the Board and the Secretary of the Board to execute a Presidential Employment Agreement in the name of and on behalf of the Board of Trustees, which execution shall be reported to the Board no later than their regularly scheduled meeting in March 2020; and

**THEREFORE** approves an initial annual base salary of \$323,400, with provisions provided in the Presidential Employment Agreement for evaluation on an annual basis utilizing approved metrics, such evaluation to allow for authorization of bonus pay and annual salary increases.

Chairperson Pynes told senators that attached to this resolution is a report from the Board's campus poll and a chart with the questions and data from the surveys. He offered to read off some of the data for senators. Senator Bellott remarked that it appears to be very positive except for the Quad Cities. Chairperson Pynes observed that Table 1, "Percent Approval and Likert Scale: Interim President



1 at-large faculty representative (named by the chair of the Faculty Senate)  
1 Vice President, Associate VP or Designee (selected/appointed by VPs)  
1 Dean (elected/appointed by Deans)  
1 Department Chair (elected/appointed by Chairs)  
1 civil Service (CSEC) Representative  
1 Council of Administrative services (COAP) Representative  
1 Student Representative from WIU-Macomb  
1 Student Representative from WIU-QC  
1 Alumni Representative  
1 Foundation Representative  
1 Community Representative – Macomb (appointed by the Board)  
1 Community Representative – Quad Cities (appointed by the Board)  
University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) President  
Director of Equal Opportunity and Access (ex-officio); and

**THEREFORE**

be it further resolved that a budget be established not to exceed \$250,000 that may be expended for all costs associated with the search process, including any fees to be paid to an identified search firm hired to assist with the process; and

**THEREFORE**

be it further resolved that the search committee shall make recommendation regarding the selection of the 12th President of Western Illinois University to the full Board of Trustees no later than the regularly scheduled meeting in the first quarter of 2021.

Senator Robinett asked if anyone has discussed why the Quad Cities response rate was so abysmal. He remarked that when looking at the tables showing a breakdown of performance, there are quite a few questions where it indicates that “Number is too small to calculate percentage comparisons” for Quad Cities, academic support, and student categories. He added that Macomb numbers are overwhelming, and he is very comfortable with the numbers that are shown for faculty support.



search process for the provost position, with input from every part of the University; he came from a big national pool and met with everybody on both campuses, and there was great consensus in the search process for choosing him. Senator Banash pointed out that Dr. Abraham has tons of experience and was put into the acting role for President, but he does not come unprepared to that role. He noted that the very qualities for which Dr. Abraham was chosen to be Provost – leadership, knowledge of how the University runs, the ability to face up to WIU’s challenges, basically what the Executive Committee has on the Pro side of their arguments – are still very compelling. Senator Banash acknowledged that the ideal situation would be to have a national search, and it might be a great thing, but given recent history over the past four year, the crises WIU is in, and the number of interims that are in place, he is afraid that if Faculty Senate does not encourage the BOT to seriously consider appointing Martin Abraham, the Senate is looking at another moment of creating instability and crisis for the University, and he thinks that is a very dangerous to do.

Senator Dimitrov observed that Senator Banash seems to be saying that WIU has a history of creating crises for ourselves, and the proposal [to offer a contract to Interim President Abraham] will presumably avoid another crisis. He pointed out, however, that it is not Faculty Senate that would be

Chairperson Pynes pointed out that on page 7 of the BOT materials, the poll asking whether Interim President Abraham should be appointed to a three-year term shows that 244 faculty, more than half of the 423 total, responded, and 72 percent of those agreed or strongly agreed, 11 percent were neutral, and 17 percent disagreed or strongly disagreed. Chairperson Pynes stated that he does not expect everyone around the Senate

Chairperson Pynes remarked this vote is close to what he predicted based upon how faculty at large voted [in the BOT poll]. He will report to the Board that this body consented to this resolution, 19.12/1, and did not consent to the release of the closed session minutes, 19.12/8.

**Motion:** To consent to the rest of the BOT agenda (Franken/Bellott)

Chairperson Pynes told senators they need to make a decision as to how they want him to represent this body at the BOT meeting. Senator Bellott suggested that Chairperson Pynes consent to everything that was not specified as “not consent,” including the national search in case the previous resolution fails. Senator Lauer said he does not consent to the national search, and he thinks doing so is problematic. Senator Czechowski said she also would not consent to the national search. She thinks WIU will close before such a search would be completed.

Senator Filipink said if the BOT decide not to appoint Martin Abraham and instead have a national search, he does not have any problem with them doing that. He observed that they will do one or the other; if the BOT approves 19.12/1, they will not approve 19.12/2, and if they do not appoint, then there will have to be a search.

Senator Oursler observed that Faculty Senate consented to the resolution to appoint Martin Abraham president by a vote of 16-2-1, and the faculty that senators represent have provided plenty of data about how they feel about this as well. He noted that, as a body, senators vote to represent their constituents, and he thinks it is pretty clear that Faculty Senate consented to the appointment. He recognizes that the Board can carry out any search that they want to but thinks it seems contradictory to consent to both resolutions at the same time. Senator Oursler thinks that to do so make toothless the resolution that Faculty Senate just voted to support.

Chairperson Pynes pointed out that there is a motion and a second on the floor to consent to everything else on the BOT agenda. He told senators that if they want him to say that the Senate prefers the first resolution to the second but does not object to the second if the BOT does not appoint Martin Abraham (since they would have to have a search), he is willing to do so. He said that, on the other hand, senators may want to say that they do not want to have a search, which is where it becomes an issue. Senator Oursler agrees that Faculty Senate has an order regarding which of the resolutions is more important to the body, which is 19.12/1, but what Chairperson Pynes says makes sense.

Senator Dimitrov specified that Faculty Senate did not consent to the resolution; they consented to the item on the agenda of the Board of Trustees. Chairperson Pynes replied that Faculty Senate consented to item 19.12/1. Senator Bellott said he thinks the discussion is getting overcomplicated. He noted that if Faculty Senate approves all of the other items as is and the BOT approves Martin Abraham as President, then the Senate’s approval [of appointing a search firm] does not matter, but if the BOT does not appoint him, then the second resolution does matter. He does not see any “loss of teeth” because the Senate is saying that it wants Dr. Abraham to be appointed, and if the BOT says no, then the Senate approves a search. Senator Filipink agrees that it makes no sense for Faculty Senate to object to the search. Senator Bellott pointed out that if the Senate objects to the search, then the Senate is either saying not to do a national search and just close WIU, or to have a regional or internal search.

Senator Perabo agrees that Chairperson Pynes should tell the BOT what he just suggested – that senators consented by a vote of 16-2-1 to the first item, and the second one is back up. She added that, procedurally, this seems to be what the Senate wants. Senator Dimitrov reiterated that senators did not consent to the resolution; they consented to the action item. Chairperson Pynes explained that when the Senate consents to the action item, it also consents to the action attached to it. He added that this is why the BOT wants the Senate’s consent to the action items and not to the reports.

Senator Perabo made a **friendly amendment** that Faculty Senate consents to the rest of the agenda items but only consents to 19.12/2, which is contrary to the Senate’s desires, if the first item, 19.12/1, fails. Senators Franken and Bellott accepted this as a friendly amendment.

Senator Lauer thinks Faculty Senate loses its voice if it consents to this. He does not think WIU should hire a search firm for \$250,000. He pointed out that it has not been discussed to keep Dr. Abraham as Interim President for a period of time on a probationary basis, which would be given up with approval of the second resolution, so he thinks there are possible reasons to object to 19.12/2. Senator Bellott said he would approve of the search firm and of keeping Dr. Abraham as Interim President. Chairperson Pynes stated that if the University has to have a search for president, it also has to have a search firm in order to get high quality candidat

directly submit, and the search firm will whittle the list down to a workable number. He noted that it is up to the search committee to