

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
Regular Meeting, 31 March 2015, 4:00 p.m.
Capitol Rooms - University Union

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT: S. Bennett, J. Brown, A. Burke, M. Carncross, J. Choi, D. DeVolder, A. Hyde, G. Jorgensen, C. Keist, J. Myers, T. Roberts, S. Romano, T. Sadler, M. Siddiqi, A. Silberer, M. Singh, S. Szyjka, T. Westerhold, ~~W. L. Brice, G. Cabedo Jimmons, R. Chaves, S. Cordes~~

Ex-officio: Ken Hawkinson, Provost; Tej Kaul, Parliamentarian

GUESTS: Mark Bernards, Pete Jorgensen, Jude Kiah, Tammy Killian, Angela Lynn, Nathan Miczo, Esmeralda Moreno, Russ Morgan, Kathy Neumann, Joe Rives, Diane Sandage, Susan Stewart, Bill Thompson, Bhavneet Walia, Ron Williams, Jeannie Woods, Charles Wright

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. 10 March 2015

MINUTES APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Approvals from the President and Provost

1. Approvals from the President

- a) Guidelines for lactation/intentional spaces

2. Approvals from the Provost

- a) Request for New Course

(1) ET 320, Professional Preparation in Engineering Technology, 3 s.h.

- b) Request for Change of Major

(1) Engineering Technology

B. Provost's Report

Chairperson Singh congratulated Provost Hawkinson on his recent appointment to President of Kutztown University in Pennsylvania.

Provost Hawkinson informed senators that the state currently owes Western approximately \$24 million. A bill recently passed the legislature calling for a 2.25 percent rescission for the current fiscal year. Western's administration expects Governor Rauner to sign the bill. WIU has already given back one percent this year (\$525,000); the 2.25 percent rescission amounts to an additional \$700,000, for a total of 1.2 million dollars returned to the state this year. Provost Hawkinson stated that the five percent held back from overall operating budgets this spring along with other savings will cover the rescission without additional cuts to programs or Academic Affairs. Provost Hawkinson also does not anticipate any problems meeting payroll for this fiscal year.

faculty that they want a course to be offered; Quad Cities faculty, who are hearing this message from their students, are wondering when they will learn about summer funding and who they are waiting to hear from. Provost Hawkinson responded that another way to determine demonstrated interest is past enrollment records and whether a course has reached its maximum enrollment in a previous summer. He stated that without some assurance that enrollment will be able to max out or reach a reasonably high level, funding will probably not be invested in the class. He summarized that ways to demonstrate interest include a waiting list with many students on it, past practice showing that maximum enrollment was reached in a previous summer, or a currently offered summer class that maxes out, at which time a second section can be offered.

C. Student Government Association (SGA) Report
(Esmeralda Moreno, SGA student representative)

Ms. Moreno reported that after much discussion and having previously failed at SGA, a bill to increase student fees for the incoming fall 2015 class did pass last week after SGA officers met with Mr. Bierman and President Thomas to come to an agreement on a different allocation of funds – the athletics line was slightly decreased while the technology line was slightly increased.

SGA appointed two student representatives to the Committee on Talent Grants and Tuition Waivers. A student was appointed to the search committee for the Director of Beu Health Center.

SGA passed a bill to have the Student Code of Conduct sent to students via Zimbra and STARS each semester before they register for classes.

Tonight SGA will hear presentations from candidates for the positions of President and Vice President for 2015-16.

D. Other Announcements

1. Universal Book Program
(Jude Kiah, Director, University Bookstore)

Mr. Kiah told senators that he is trying to create a program, with the help of WIU students, to have books in students' hands on the first day of class while also saving them money. Mr. Kiah meets with the SGA Executive Committee this evening to provide them with an overview of the program. It is anticipated that once the program begins, the lowest amount that a student would save is 50 percent, and students in such disciplines as Nursing and Business with more expensive textbooks could see savings up to 80 to 90 percent on the cost they would normally spend. Mr. Kiah related that data shows the average cost a WIU student spends across the spectrum, including new and used books, is \$108 per class; when the Universal Book Program is implemented, students will pay substantially less than that amount.

Mr. Kiah stated that the University can find a way to handle the logistics of the new program, but there are hurdles to overcome, one of which is the culture change. He explained that faculty can select textbooks with the same frequency as they currently utilize; even if faculty change textbooks ten percent more frequently than normal, WIU can still participate in the program because a ten percent “guardrail” is built in based upon normal WIU faculty textbook trends over the past three years. Mr. Kiah stated that it was important to be able to assure faculty that they would not have to change their textbook buying trends in order to safeguard their academic freedom.

Mr. Kiah noted that, demographically, Western's students are poorer and typically do not see textbooks as an inelastic part of their available spending dollars. He stated that when he taught UNIV 100, 300 students did not buy textbooks for the class, and the number of failures tripled as a result. Mr. Kiah believes the Universal Book Program will get WIU

Mr. Kiah related that two or three years ago he looked at the book buying habits of every faculty member on WIU's campus, and the only ones that had to regularly update textbooks sooner than three years were Computer Sciences faculty due to the dynamic nature of their curriculum.

Senator Roberts asked if the University will loan students the money to pay for their textbooks until their financial aid arrives. Mr. Kiah responded affirmatively, adding that he and Mr. Bierman have begun to design some failsafe features into the Universal Book Program so that the University will be held harmless. Mr. Kiah stressed that the Book Program needs to sustain itself, and Year 1 will be the riskiest; he is confident that after the first year the Program will do fine financially. He explained that in terms of bad debt, if a student should leave the University on Day 10, WIU will make every effort to get the textbooks back; if the student has not yet paid the book fee, that is a risk to the

Motion: To move the statement “Faculty will communicate how and when assessment-based materials will be returned to their students,” out of the numbered list in the Course Syllabus Policy and under The Faculty Member as Instructor section of the Faculty Responsibilities Policy (DeVolder/Westerhold)

MOTION APPROVED 18 YES – 0 NO – 0 AB

Parliamentarian Kaul suggested that the revised syllabus policy, minus the previously removed statement, should be voted on as a whole.

Motion: To approve the revised syllabus policy (Siddiqi)

MOTION DIED FOR LACK OF A SECOND

Senator Roberts remarked that he raised the point at the last Senate meeting whether the disability statement needs to be explicitly stated verbatim on syllabi, similar to the WID statement. Chairperson Singh understood that the statement was to appear verbatim on syllabi. Senator Roberts suggested that it should then be preceded by a statement similar to that preceding the WID requirement, such as “This statement is required for all courses.”

Motion: To move the disability statement to immediately following existing item #11 and approve the revised course syllabus policy as submitted (Siddiqi/Choi)

recommended by the Leadership Team represents the very best of regional non-comprehensive universities in the United States. He added that when Western achieves its benchmarking goals, it will have reached its vision within Higher Values in Higher Education to be the national leader in quality, opportunity, and affordability of education.

Senator Romano asked to what Western had originally wished to aspire when comparing itself with the “aspiration institutions.” She recalled that she asked this question at the last meeting, and Vice President Rives responded in depth via email about such things as enrollment and retention, but Senator Romano stated that she was more interested in the intrinsic values that these institutions seem to possess. Vice President Rives responded that these three institutions have a passion for student success. He stated that Western shares that passion in that WIU’s graduation rate is higher than predicted, but Western is not known for this fact, whereas James Madison and Truman State are known for their student success as well as for other factors. Vice President Rives stressed that Western should be the institution that people look to for opportunity and affordability and which has the highest rate of success. He hopes that departments and colleges will take the updated benchmark institution information and have those types of conversations because he thinks the updated list puts WIU in the company in which it rightfully belongs. He concluded that WIU should no longer be in the old set of benchmark institutions because Western is better than them.

Motion: To endorse the updated non-salary benchmark institutions as a group as submitted by the President’s Leadership Team (DeVolder/Myers)

MOTION APPROVED 18 YES – 0 NO – 0 AB

- B. Proposed Bylaws Amendment allowing Ex-Officio Members to Serve Concurrently on Senate Councils/Committees
1. First Reading

interpretation, but no follow up was made. Senator DeVolder expressed that he has a generally bad feeling about ex-officio members serving on another Senate committee or council simultaneously. He pointed out that while ex-officio members do not vote according to Senate bylaws, they can still potentially sway opinion during discussions and may have an agenda that they are putting forward on the body on which they serve and can influence the vote if they so choose. Senator DeVolder believes it is probably best to leave the Bylaws as they are. He added that Senate council and committee service make up only part of the potential for service at the University.

Senator Jorgensen asked how ex-officio members are chosen: whether they are former senators wishing to serve on a specific council or committee or faculty members with a specific interest in a particular council/committee. Senator DeVolder responded that ex-officio members are individuals who, by virtue of their positions or office, sit on a council to serve as a resource. He added that regular faculty members, because of their particular skill sets, may need to be resource persons for a certain council, and that is currently set as the limit of their service on a Senate council or committee.

Senator Myers believes the bylaws should not be changed. She does not like to see faculty get into strategic positions on more than one council or committee, and believes that ex-officio positions can be strategic. Senator Myers expressed her desire to see more faculty across the University get involved on Senate councils or committees rather than have faculty serve on more than one. She observed that although the Senate Nominating Committee on which she serves had its worse response rate this year with only 116 responses, she would like to see service more spread out with more opinions in the mix.

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overall population of WIU, it is a small percentage who are willing to do things, and a

considered by Senate. The FOIA request was submitted on the Monday of spring break (March 16), and the Faculty Senate office was given five days to comply. Chairperson Singh, along with Parliamentarian Kaul and Associate Provost Kathy Neumann, consulted with the University's counsel who advised complying with the FOIA request in full, although any information which had already been destroyed could not, of course, be shared. Chairperson Singh commended the Senate Office Manager, stating that since she keeps immaculate records she was able to pull the requested information together within that time frame. He stated that because the vote tallies were shared with the individual making the request, it was thought appropriate to also share that information with the full Senate in their packets.

Chairperson Singh said the question now before the Senate is whether to regularly post the vote tallies from all Senate elections on the Faculty Senate website so that no future FOIA requests for this information will be necessary. He also asked whether tallies of votes made on the Senate floor – such as for officers – should be made part of the public domain. He suggested one other course of action would be to change the bylaws to make them more specific since currently they only state that “The faculty shall be informed of the results and the tabulation of the vote,” and the word “tabulation” is open to interpretation.

Senator Siddiqi noted that when the decision was made in the past not to disclose election tallies, it violated the Senate Bylaws. He believes there is no ambiguity in the current statement in the Bylaws. He noted that vote tallies are made public for elections from city council up to the President. He agrees that it is more civil and collegial to say simply, “Out of the candidates running for office, this one was elected,” but given the language in the Senate Bylaws the requirement seems to be that when election results are announced, the vote tallies should also be presented to the faculty body.

latter. Senator Roberts observed, then, that changing the language of the Bylaws would have no impact on future FOIA requests. Provost Hawkinson agreed that any individual can FOIA any information. He stated that the University receives a large number of FOIA requests, sometimes asking for thousands of pages of information and requiring countless hours of work time, and at times seemingly only “fishing expeditions.” He explained that FOIA is sometimes used as a way of expressing discontent rather than providing knowledge, and many things that are requested via FOIA would have been provided openly upon request. He observed that being allowed only five days over spring break to provide information puts great hardship on the University as opposed to operating in a collegial way, and most requests can be handled by going through a collegial discussion. Senator Bennett said he can understand the FOIA request for vote tallies but does not understand why it was necessary to read emails. He asked if any reason was provided or if this is commonplace with FOIA requests. Provost Hawkinson replied that the request must be tied to keywords related to the information being sought. Associate Provost Neumann pointed out that when WIU employees log into their email accounts, they see a user agreement which addresses expectations of privacy. She confirmed that FOIA requests must be linked to keywords, and stated that email scanning as a result of FOIA requests happens very frequently.

Provost Hawkinson suggested that the addition of the words “as requested” or “when asked for” to the Bylaws would address concerns related to releasing vote tallies. He believes that most people are content with the way the election results have been announced and understand that Faculty Senate is trying not to embarrass anyone. He related that he once lost an election to a Senate seat and would not have wanted to know what the vote tally was or be embarrassed by having the vote tally announced to the entire University. He suggested that simply adding two to three words might be the way to solve the issue, and anyone who wants to know the count could then just ask for it. Senator Siddiqi stated that he likes this suggestion, but noted that it would require that all data be retained in the Senate office in case there is a critical request for that information. Associate Provost Neumann stated that the University attorney said that this is why some entities choose to destroy data after an event is concluded so that they will not have to provide it in the event of a FOIA request. Parliamentarian Kaul noted the question is whether to retain information on vote tallies and number of votes cast going forward; FOIA says you cannot supply information that you do not have, and prior to fall 2010 the only information that was retained was the listing of candidates and winners of elections. He also observed that the dictionary definition of “tabulation” is an organized way of presenting data, such as in a tabulated form, so “tabulation” does not necessary mean that a count must be presented.

Chairperson Singh believes this topic is important enough that all Senate should weigh in on it. He suggested that, rather than rush to any determination, the discussion be continued at the next Senate meeting.

Motion: To table further discussion of Release of Election Tallies until the next Senate meeting (Siddiqi/Silberer)