

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE  
Regular Meeting, 11 September 2018, 4:00 p.m.  
Capitol Rooms -University Union

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT: M. Allison, B. Bellott, V. Boynton, S. Cordes, S. Czechowski, G. DeBaymann, R. Dimitrov, J. Franken, A. Hyde (via teleconference), S. Macchi, M. Maskarinec, H. McIlrath, (F)1 (Mcl)20(l)-3(.)13( F vici, Lia Petrocovici, Gordon Pettit, Bill Polley, rger, Erin Taylor, Jack Thomas, Bill Thompson, Letitia

, an important day to think about and remember that

Consideration of Minutes

A. August 28, 2018

x

The College of Fine Arts and Communication will hold its music scholarship recital at 7:30 Friday night, September 14 in the COFAC Recital Hall featuring students who received scholarships in

combine majors with other areas. Senator Dimitrov recalled that at that faculty assembly the examples included Mathematics with Computer Sciences and Mathematics with Physics. Interim Provost Neumann responded there are many possible collaborations everyone can think about and which would be good to discuss, but she hesitates to throw out specific examples.

Senator Allison thinks innovation and collaboration is great. When she first came to WIU, Senator Allison was assigned to design a new Cultural Studies minor which, despite her efforts to promote it, failed quickly and was taken off the books, so she understand the difficulties with collaboration. She asserted that the issue is not that individuals do not want to collaborate, but areas are set up in such a way that it is difficult to collaborate easily. Senator Allison noted, for example, that team teaching has been a difficult obstacle to overcome, and she thinks this is part of the reason the Cultural Studies minor, which was completely interdisciplinary, failed. Senator Allison stated that, to build on the analogy that Chairperson Pynes read about the junior high dance her department wanted to dance but was put on the sidelines. She thinks that if the administration forces collaboration that is not organic or natural, it will fail even quicker than the one she worked on, which was organic.

Senator Maskarinec observed he often hears the word "organic" bandied about frequently. He stated that if individuals do not like collaboration from the top down, they should make it from the bottom up and start working together. He agrees with the Interim Provost that collaborations are not happening in a lot of areas where they could, and faculty need to work with their colleagues to lead develop interdisciplinary programs now. He thinks these opportunities are currently out there, and someone just needs to make them happen.

Chairperson Pynes observed that the current administration seems to have viewed that the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) low productivity reporting requirement of 40 majors and nine graduates over a three year rolling average should be a policy to run the University. He said this means that any new program is going to have to take resources away from primary majors and programs. Chairperson Pynes believes that faculty are risk averse. The Academic Program Elimination Review (APER) Committee recommended two years ago that its major be reorganized but the administration eliminated it instead. He said that faculty fear their programs being on the low productivity report, noting that Anthropology and Religious Studies were recently created programs, but Religious Studies was eliminated and Anthropology is on the low productivity report. He added that Anthropology has been lauded as a model online major, and the faculty working on that are doing a fantastic job, but it is still on the list. Senator Maskarinec pointed out that there are successes, too, with recently approved new majors such as Engineering and Nursing. He recalled that questions were raised about whether these two majors could be successful when they were first proposed, but they have had very strong success. Chairperson Pynes pointed out that these programs are not interdisciplinary and do not break down silos, which the Interim Provost has repeatedly indicated is a primary goal for realigning. Senator Maskarinec reiterated that individuals should not be so risk averse that they say that the university should not do something.

Senator Rahman pointed out that Eastern Illinois University (EIU) has done a number of things to successfully increase enrollment this past fall, including working within shared governance. She stated that EIU also created nine task forces in areas such as university technology, enrollment management, and shared governance, including three task forces looking at academic issues. Eastern also created seven new majors, got its local businesses to establish a scholarship for students within a 60 mile radius, and hired a marketing firm, The Thornberg Group. Senator Rahman hopes that WIU is going to do all of these types of things as well, and asked Interim Provost Neumann if that is in the works. Interim Provost Neumann responded that WIU has lots of task forces, including the Provost's Task Force and Provost Advisory Council, enrollment management task forces, and many others. She told senators that if they want to be a part of any task force or group to simply ask her and she will make sure that they can be involved.

Joe Rives, Vice President for Quad Cities and Planning, stated that the President and Interim Provost have agreed to hire a consulting firm to look at the feasibility of a new campus location,





rather than chairs and still leave their departments intact. She explained that department heads might have a different job description, while the work of a chair could be done at a higher level so that the existing departmental units could be retained and not lose their identity.

B. Student Government Association Report  
(Colton Markey, SGA Director of Academic Affairs)

SGA held its first meeting last Tuesday, September 4. SGA is sponsoring a Superhero Blue Light 5K Run/Walk to raise awareness for sexual assault, domestic violence, and campus safety. Registration will be at 8 a.m. on October 20 with a ceremony at 8:30 a.m. at which four new emergency blue lights will be presented. The race to all the blue light campus begins at 9 a.m. The race is a campus and community exploration event for UNIV 100 students, so participation is free for them; others can participate in the race for \$25, which includes a commemorative t-shirt. Mr. Markey has registration forms and offered to give them to faculty who teach Y or UNIV 100 classes. Senator Czechowski asked if SGA is having any other discussions about increasing safety in addition to the addition of four new blue lights. Mr. Markey responded that a former SGA senator, Elizabeth Swan, is part of a new group dedicated to this initiative. [Mr. Markey clarified that Ms. Swan is no longer part of the group, which is called It's On Us and is run through the Women's Center. He will be reaching out to them about some of their initiatives.]

SGA is creating a newsletter, which will be made available the last Friday of every month. Individuals should provide Mr. Markey with their email addresses to get on the mailing list.

C. Other Announcements

1. Presidential Initiatives for Academic Year 2018-2019  
(President Jack Thomas)

President Thomas stated that academic realignment is one initiative that concerns the entire university, and he wants to have depth conversations on adding that this will be a year of change and results for WIU. He expressed his thanks to the Senate Executive Committee for meeting with him and members of the President's Leadership Team twice in the past week in order to increase understanding of faculty ideas and concerns, which was beneficial to both President Thomas and his Team and will continue on a routine basis this semester.

President Thomas realizes that WIU needs to reverse enrollment declines and enhance retention and recruitment rates. Interim Admissions Director Jason Woods, Vice President for Student Services Ron Williams, and others are working deliberately to develop a plan that will be presented to the Leadership Team and Senate Executive Committee next week. Faculty Senate the following week. President Thomas told senators the University deficit spent \$4 million last year, and it is predicted that deficit spending will increase this year, which is not sustainable. He stated that the administration has made, and will continue to make, difficult unpopular decisions but stressed that things must be done strategically. President Thomas pledged to respect opportunities for input and shared governance. He wants the University community to understand why difficult decisions are made and, while individuals might disagree with them, to understand that shared governance is being respected. These actions become detrimental to the University and to the students that everyone serves. President Thomas acknowledged that there have been shared sacrifices since the state started reducing public university budgets 16 years ago, but the University cannot afford to ignore the hand that it has been dealt.

President Thomas told senators that making WIU a strategic and viable institution for the immediate and long-term future will be accomplished by:

- x enacting the Academic Program Elimination Review (APER) Committee;
- x engaging in academic realignment to make WIU the institutional choice for students who are attracted by cutting-edge and competitive academic programs;
- x growing enrollment, retention, and recruitment;

- x eliminating deficit spending, which will entail enhanced efficiencies and decreasing appropriated funds expenditures from both operating and personal services
- x identifying new and diversified revenue streams for the University; and
- x emphasizing communication collaboration, transparency, civility, and mutual respect in shared governance and administrative decision making.

President Thomas explained that one reason APER was enacted, as required by the University Professionals of Illinois (UPI) contract agreement, was because the University has a structural and unsustainable budget deficit. Academic Affairs accounts for 30 percent of the personnel component of the overall appropriated budget. Student-faculty ratios have declined over the past several years to a rate of 14 in some areas which are not defined by discipline specific accreditation requirements, which President Thomas said is "not balanced." He said APER Committee will be convened because of the economic reality following the statewide budget impasse, revenue losses associated with enrollment declines, and the need to improve retention and graduation rates. President Thomas related that some have questioned whether implementing APER decreases the perceived value of tenure, but his response is that it absolutely does not, asserting that WIU has in the past and continues to place a premium on tenure, which is why tenured faculty were removed from the original layoff list in Spring 2016. He assured senators that if there are disciplines that are eliminated during the review, the administration will strive to minimize layoffs of tenured faculty. President Thomas also related that some have asked if there is a preconceived path that the APER Committee report will not

encourages faculty to meet with their colleagues across the University and share ideas and input regarding Academic Affairs because those ideas cannot be incorporated if they are unknown.

President Thomas asserted that academic realignment is not an attempt to change WIU's status as a regional master's degree granting comprehensive university. He has heard concerns that

many times, universities could float those funds for the state using reserve money. In 2002, the state funded about 60 percent of WIU's appropriated budget and tuition covered the remaining 40 percent. In 2008, funding switched from being majority funded from the state to majority funded by tuition – about \$58 million each. In the last full appropriation before the budget impasse in 2015, WIU received \$51 million from the state, about \$7 million less than the appropriation of 2008 and \$10 million less than the 2002 appropriation, accounting for only 40

replied that he wishes the state worked like that, but it does not. He explained in his testimony to legislators about the dire situation at the University, and legislators said they were sympathetic, but that's about all that occurred. Chairperson Pynes remarked that Senator Dimitrov's view is not uncommon; former Trustee Mike Huston thought that the University should not have any reserves because the state would cut WIU's funding to force use of that money

spending affecting Athletics. She stressed that the work those faculty do in ENG 100, 180, and 280 to retain Western's students is valuable, and no other department lost seven faculty in these recent cuts. She asked how the administration decides that Athletics does staffs but English does. President Thomas responded that the administration has been reviewing Athletics as well and brought in a consultant some time ago to look at those programs. He pointed out that in many instances students come to WIU because of their programs and pay their own way. He stated that the Interim Director of Athletics right now is looking at all of their programs, as stated at the BOT meeting stone will be left unturned because the administration is considering cost savings in all areas, including Athletics.

Senator Dimitrov asked what level of reserves the University has to establish and may need to be laid off to reach this level. President Thomas responded that if the University could

to







B. Proposed Ad Hoc Textbook Affordability Committee

1. Charge, Timeline, and Membership

Charge:

The committee will

- 1) determine best practices for textbook affordability amongst colleges;
- 2) identify sources for free textbooks;
- 3) explore textbook funding sources;
- 4) present recommendations to Faculty Senate at the first spring meeting (January 22, 2019).

Membership:

- 4 – one faculty member (nominator) from each academic college
- 1 – one faculty member representing University Libraries

Chairperson Pynes stated that the Senate Nominating Committee will bring nominations back to Faculty Senate once the membership is approved.

Motion: To approve the ad hoc Textbook Affordability Committee charge, membership, and timeline (Boynton/Cordes)

Chairperson Pynes stated that United States Senator Dick Durbin instituted this initiative when he was on the WIU campus last semester. The Senate Nominating Committee has already secured a representative from University Libraries, Linda Zellmer, and she stated that the Senate Nominating Committee will work from their ad hoc committee list.

MOTION APPROVED 19 YES – 0 NO – 0 ABSTENTIONS

Motion: To adjourn (Franken)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:18 p.m.

Susan Czechowski