

**WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE**

**Regular Meeting, 8 October 2024, 4:00 p.m.**

**Via Zoom and in Union Capitol Rooms**

**ACTION MINUTES**

**SENATORS PRESENT IN PERSON:** J. Albarracin, D. Allwardt, E. Asare, B. Bellott, C. Chadwell, H. Elbe, D. Gravitt, D. Hunter, D. McArthur, J. McKenzie, A. Melkumian, B. Petracovici, J. Robinett, S. Turkelli, L. Wipperling, E. Woell

**SENATORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM:** E. Hamner, B. McDonald, R. Sharma, K. Wiseley

**SENATORS ABSENT:** B. Brewer, D. Brown, J. Walker

**EX-OFFICIO:** Krista Bowers Sharpe, Parliamentarian; Interim A. September 24, 2024

---

Corrections:

- In the Provost's Report, "address" should be corrected to "addressed" and "be" should be added to the last sentence of the second paragraph so that it reads "...will be a F/Arti.a6PArTi.a6Pd2T56P



have months to pull out anything they need from their WIU email account. Chair Robinett explained that there are insurance and staffing issues related to this new policy; both deal with the number of existing accounts. Chair Robinett related that, ironically, the day that he spoke with Mr. Merritt there had been a phishing attack on the university which Mr. Merritt had spent hours trying to address. He added that the CIO Group will be visiting with the Senate Executive Committee next week, so if anyone has specific questions they want addressed, they can let Chair Robinett know. Chair Robinett has verified for Parliamentarian Bowers Sharpe that as long as individuals have an ecom username, their WIU Libraries access will continue.

Chair Robinett met with Holly Nikels, Interim Associate Provost for Budget, Personnel, and Research, about WIU's buildings and how they can currently be used. He complimented Ted Renner,

u

s

e

(f5)10.9 (r)iy, we ((n)10.8219)EDr(961 0, (R)47(R)16 Th 92%



**Motion:** To nominate Everett Hamner (Gravitt)

Senator Hamner responded that he will respectfully decline the nomination. He said he has given this some thought, but the Vice Chair is a very involved role. He pointed out that accepting this role means that every week there is a meeting, whether Faculty Senate or the Executive Committee, and the Vice Chair is obligated to serve on an additional committee as the ExCo representative. He stated that the Vice Chair is privy to a lot of conversations and is included on a lot of details that it is important there is broad oversight on, so he would prefer to see more diversity on the Executive Committee and not have three men serving on it. He expressed willingness to share his thoughts further with anyone who wants to chat about this.

Senator Albarracin asked if the Vice Chair duties would include attending all Senate council meetings; Chair Robinett clarified that it would not. He explained the Senate councils were given charges this year, and many of them are coming back with good procedural questions. He would like the Vice Chair to be able to bring this feedback to ExCo so that clarification can be provided as needed.

Senator Hamner remarked his understanding last year was that ExCo was required to have a member on the Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance (CPPP) and the Budget Transparency Committee. He asked if this was just preferential. Chair Robinett replied it is true that some councils and committees require ExCo representation, but he is already serving on the BTC and Senator Brewer is serving as ExCo rep on the CPPP. He added that Dr. Hancks was aware he might be transitioning into another role so did not volunteer for other council or committee service.

There were no further nominations, so this will appear on the October 22 agenda under Old Business.

Chair Robinett said he appreciates how much work senators are already doing and that this would represent another service commitment but asked them to give it some consideration. He stated that if senators have questions before the next Senate meeting, they are welcome to ask him or to attend the next ExCo meeting to see what those are like and get a better understanding of what the role would entail. Senator Wipperling asked where ExCo meetings are held; Chair Robinett replied they are held on Zoom and he will supply that link.

Senator Hamner remarked that last year ExCo had a conversation with the administration about the amount of time involved in some of these roles. He thinks it would be smart for the university to have a system that really affirmed the need for these roles by providing some kind of course release for ExCo members as well as expanding the amount of time provided for the Senate Chair. Senator Hamner added he previously did not und0 Td[ ]-33 (p9 ( t)-4.6 (he)-6 (t)6.2 ( 1)6.3  
uD{o}3.9(pr)6.9

because on an earlier flyer the date was November 5, but the university is closed that day for the elections. Mr. Erwin said one reason his office is focusing on communication is something Jane Goodall said: “Only if we understand will we care; only if we care will we help.” He believes it is important to talk about how to help each other to grow and develop and how to help the institution to reach its full potential.

Mr. Erwin announced that WIU has won the 2024 Higher Education Excellence in Diversity Award from \_\_\_\_\_ magazine. He said this recognition is given to only about 120 institutions across the country, and WIU was chosen for its work to recruit, support, help, retain, and graduate students.

Mr. Erwin stressed the importance of communicating what individuals do in their various offices

Ms. Cerullo informed senators that the Counseling Center ([www.wiu.edu/ucc](http://www.wiu.edu/ucc)), which has far fewer staff than they had previously, is located on the first floor of Memorial Hall and open during the university's traditional business hours. She said most students seek individual counseling services, but the Center also offers crisis services; reduced crisis services are offered from two to four hours per day, depending upon staffing, but they are supplemented with additional support. Ms. Cerullo said the Counseling Center also offers group services, which she thinks is important because it allows students to get peer-to-peer support and connection and is facilitated by a mental health professional. The Center also offers relaxation and skill sessions. Ms. Cerullo noted that assessment services can no longer be offered because the Counseling Center no longer has access to a psychologist.

Ms. Cerullo told senators the Counseling Center was restructured this past summer. The university now has a Division of Health and Wellness which incorporates the Counseling Center, Beu Health Center, Campus Recreation, and Student and Development and Success. She said these four are offering Rocky's Wellness Challenge, which Ms. Cerullo thinks is important because it looks beyond just mental health concerns to overall mental wellness. She explained that as students attend events sponsored by the four entities, they accrue points, and there are incentives for certain numbers of points. She noted the Counseling Center first did this with the Office of Student Engagement last year, so this is an expansion of that program. She said one of the larger outreach events hosted by the Counseling Center was Fresh Check Day in September, which was attended by 91 students. Ms. Cerullo related that one student attendee remarked it was really nice to have this event in the middle of the day, which was good feedback to receive.

Ms. Cerullo said the Counseling Center is bringing in a speaker on November 12, Kaleb Joseph, who will talk about "State of Mind: Empowering Conversations for a Healthier Tomorrow." She hopes they can attract similar attendance to last year's event with Caitlin Ohashi, which 600 students attended. Ms. Cerullo told senators Mr. Joseph is an African American male, which was an intentional choice because of the importance of diversity and because there is stigma associated with males seeking out support for mental health.

Ms. Cerullo related the Counseling Center sponsors the Gray Matters Collective, a student mental health organization that students can get points for by either participating in actively or attending their events. Other events sponsored by the Center include Kinder Mondays,



commitment, so this will be an alternative which will provide some skills and support for referrals. She said 14 individuals were trained in May to be Mental Health First Aid instructors, including Chair Robinett, and the Center is committed to offering one training each month. She stated that if any department wants to offer this for their employees, they can contact her; there is an opportunity on October 24/25 to do the training over two mornings, with a full-day training being offered on November 20.

Ms. Cerullo said the Center is contracted this year to offer Trauma Informed Higher Ed as part of the grant; she will go over this with the Student Success team on March 31. She said it will be offered to faculty and staff on April 1, and she hopes that many people will invest some time in this important free training.

Ms. Cerullo told senators that last year a faculty member from each college served on the Mental Health Curriculum Committee. She related they first looked at the catalog and searched for keywords to determine whether courses were incorporating mental health awareness content; they found that 20 courses incorporated some sort of well-being component, 12 had mental health, 11 had the keyword “wellness,” eight used “emotional” and eight “stress,” three used “personal growth,” and one used the word “self-care.” She acknowledged the members realize that brief course descriptions will not encompass all that individual faculty are doing, but they wanted to start broadly before digging deeper. She related the committee distributed a survey last spring offering opportunities for faculty to self-disclose whether they already include awareness and curricula in their courses or would be willing to incorporate it; 57 faculty members responded from a range of disciplines and programs. She said the committee discussed how to support faculty and make it as easy as possible for them to do this without taking away from their specific curriculum. Ms. Cerullo said that with the many changes that have occurred since this work last year, the committee decided to put their efforts on hold for this year until some changes have been solidified and sorted themselves out. She added that the committee did not look at graduate courses.

Ms. Cerullo summarized that faculty can support student mental health by getting trained in Mental Health First Aid, which has a new program that will be rolled out in spring, and/or SOS for Higher Ed; adding a mental health syllabus statement to their courses, which can be obtained from the Counseling Center; and incorporating mental health initiatives into classroom content, such as by encouraging students to take Mindwise or other wellness initiatives. She added the optional syllabus statement has already been provided to new faculty; she thinks it speaks to how the university’s resources align with available services and with the expectations from all stakeholders – parents/guardians, students, and Counseling Center staff. Ms. Cerullo thinks there needs to be continued conversations about the resources available at the Counseling Center so that they remain in alignment with university and state goals.

Senator Albarracin asked how faculty should approach a student if they suspect the student may have a mental health problem. She remarked that if a faculty member invites a student to their office and suggests the student might be depressed, the student would probably deny it. Ms. Cerullo responded that to show care and concern for a student is absolutely appropriate. She warned that it is important the faculty member feels safe to bring the student to their office first. She also suggested submitting a Leatherneck Care referral because it sometimes happens that faculty work in silos with students who may be experiencing concerns in other areas, such as housing or an organization, in addition to academic coursework. She explained that if faculty submit a Leatherneck Care referral, it can open the door to getting the student the help they need. Ms. Cerullo suggested the faculty member could also call or walk the



Ms. Price noted that although staff in her office may email or call the professor to ask more detailed questions about the situation, they will not follow up with professors to let them know they have reached the student, spoken to them, or anything about their conversation because this is a privacy concern, and students need to know they can trust the staff person.

Senator Gravitt remarked that although the form asks for the student's ID number, ( )TJ0 Tc 0 Tw 20b(at

this step. She offered to talk to Interim Vice President Schuch about letting faculty know their referral has been received, but she stressed that every one of them is being attended to. Senator Albarracin said she is not really asking for a courtesy confirmation that the referral was received, but she sometimes wonders if the office was able to successfully reach out to the student. Ms. Price responded the office is unable to share any information about what happens when they reach the student or the outcome of their conversations unless the student decides to bring the faculty member back into the conversation; if it is okay with the student for her office to reach out to the faculty member, they are fine with that.

Senator Hunter asked what the turn-around time is for care referrals – within days or within weeks. Ms. Price replied the response from her office is immediate, unless the care referral is turned in outside of regular office hours. She added that if a care referral received outside of regular office hours is urgent, she will work with her team via text and email over the weekend to let them know that something needs addressed right now, and they do. She said usually the care referral is made by a student about concerns regarding a student's well-being.

Senator Hunter asked how soon the subcouncil would be incorporated if approved. Dr. Alveshere responded that CIT's last meeting of October was today, but they would be able to begin choosing members from among their membership at their November meeting. She hopes to have members from outside of CIT as soon as Faculty Senate can provide them.

**Motion:** To approve the CIT policies and procedures revisions (Gravitt/Chadwell)

**MOTION APPROVED 16 YES (12 in-person and 4 Zoom) – 0 NO – 0 ABSTENIONS**

B. For the Good of the Body - None

**Motion:** To adjourn (Gravitt)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary