

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE  
Special Meeting, 7 June 2016, 4:00 p.m.  
Capitol Rooms - University Union

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT: S. Bennett, V. Boynton, A. Burke, G. Cabedimmons, D. DeVolder, K. Dodson, R. Hironimus-Wendt, K. Kapale, C. Keist, B. Locke, J. Myers, K. Pawelko, C. Pynes, T. Roberts, B. Siever, A. Silberer, T. Solomonson  
Ex-officio: Kathy Neumann, Interim Provost; Janna Deitz, Parliamentarian

SENATORS ABSENT: J. Brown, D. Halverson, S. Holt

- (6) ENGR 452, Geotechnical Engineering, 3 s.h.
- (7) LEJA 202, Introduction to Corrections, 3 s.h.
- b. Request for New Minor
  - (1) Corrections
- c. Request for Change of Minor
  - (1) Journalism
- d. Request for New Major
  - (1) Mechanical Engineering
- e. Requests for Changes to Majors
  - (1) Bachelor of Arts in Art – Graphic Design Option
  - (2) Bachelor of Arts in Art – Studio Option
  - (3) Bachelor of Arts in Art –Teacher Education Option
  - (4) Bachelor of Fine Arts – Art Option
  - (5) Bachelor of Fine Arts – Graphic Design Option
  - (6) Engineering
  - (7) Foreign Languages and Cultures
  - (8) Public Health
- f. Request for Change of Option
  - (1) Environmental Biology
- g. Request for Inclusion in General Education
  - (1) MICR 200, Introductory Microbiology, 4 s.h.

Chairperson Pynes noted that every curricular request approved by Faculty Senate and submitted to the Interim Provost was approved by her except the change to the Philosophy major to incorporate Religious Studies as an option. He pointed out that although the Senate Constitution requires provosts to respond to items sent to them for consideration within 30 days, it has been three months since the request was approved and sent to the Interim Provost.

## B. Provost's Report

Interim Provost Neumann announced that 325 graduate students received some kind of honors designation. Eight doctoral degrees were awarded at the May ceremony, as well as 671 master degrees and 1,427 undergraduate degrees. Interim Provost Neumann expressed congratulations to the School of Law Enforcement and Justice Administration, who had the largest number of undergraduates with 379 receiving degrees, the School of Computer Sciences, who awarded the most graduate degrees at 73. She informed senators that four majors awarded only one undergraduate degree each, and one graduate area awarded only four master's degrees.

Interim Provost Neumann announced that Summer Orientation and Registration (SOAR) is underway and sessions are full with a little under 200 attendees for each.

Interim Provost Neumann told senators there seems to be a lot of miscommunication regarding the resolution before the Board of Trustees to eliminate four academic majors (Philosophy, Religious Studies, Women's Studies, and African American Studies). She stressed that if the proposal approved, no further students will be accepted into these majors, which will be phased out

existing students will be provided with plans of study for completing their degrees. She added that elimination of the majors does not mean that the minors, where applicable, will also be eliminated;

The Western Illinois University Faculty Senate opposes Governor Rauner's appointment of Mr. John Bambenek from Champaign to serve as sole Faculty Representative on the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBE).

would not make him eligible for his own faculty senate because the bylaws at his university are separate.

Senator Hironimus Wendt suggested that the last sentence of the first paragraph...this is unqualified and ineligible to represent faculty across the state on the IBHE” – be changed to “is unqualified and ineligible to represent faculty at Western Illinois University” to make it clear that Mr. Bambenek is not eligible to represent WIU’s faculty. This statement was accepted as a friendly amendment by Senators Boynton and Pawelko.

UPI President Bill Thompson pointed out that the IBHE website currently lists Mr. Bambenek as a board member. He asked if Mr. Bambenek was a sepp appointment. Chairperson Pynes



higher education is not sustainable. Chairperson Pynes said Dr. Applegate seems to understand that providing educational opportunities and access is part of WIU's mission.

Senator Hironimus Wendt stated that while this may not be an appropriate place for a referendum on Dr. Applegate, he is hearing concerns that there may be significant changes which come out of the proposed Higher Values in Higher Education document, and he is not willing to consent to it until he reads it more carefully. Senator Myers asked if it could be added to the motion that Faculty Senate does not reject the document but wishes to have more time to read it and provide additional input as to where the University may be headed. Senators Boynton and Kapale accepted this statement as a friendly amendment with the proviso that it be specified that faculty be allowed to provide input during the academic year.

MOTION WITH FRIENDLY AMENDMENT APPROVED 17 YES – 0 NO – 0 AB

Resolution No. 16.6/5, Academic Program Review Recommendations, p. 45 of the BOT packet

Whereas the study of philosophy makes ~~ma~~ majors more proficient in their own discipline through the develop~~ment~~ of valuable critical thinking skills, communication skills, and reflection on values and ethics;

Whereas



Dr. Morgan pointed out that a faculty committee spent a lot of time looking into whether the four programs should be eliminated and recommended ways of keeping the complete major in most cases, but the BOT agenda item on p. 45 recommends something altogether different. She pointed out that in the case of African American Studies the APER Committee recommended that the administration find ways of maintaining the complete major option, the minor, and the current AAS Program (major) faculty.” (APER report, page 4) Morgan stated that the wide gap between what the APER Committee recommended and the recommendation made to the BOT begs the question of what the point was of instituting the APER Committee. Chairperson Pynes asked how Interim Provost Neumann determined the four programs for elimination. Interim Provost Neumann responded that these programs continue to have a low number of majors enrolled and continue to confer an extremely low number of degrees every year. She believes WIU is at the point where low enrolled programs need to be assessed in order to be good stewards of the University’s resources. She stressed that the elimination of these majors does not mean that minors will be eliminated or that their courses will not continue to be part of General Education but just that the majors will be phased out if approved by the BOT.

Studies under the new guidelines. She asked whether Illinois students are expected to now have no access to some of these majors or be expected to go to one of only two states. Chairperson Pynes stated that the IBHE guidelines are reporting standards; they indicate that universities with programs that fall below these standards must report them. He pointed out that WIU's Physics program does not meet the new standards but the university has decided to justify it.

Senator Boynton pointed out that Higher Values in Higher Education talks about diversity, and two of the programs that are being considered for elimination help increase diversity, so to eliminate them goes counter to WIU's stated values.

Dr. Filipink agreed with Chairperson Pynes that the IBHE guidelines are reporting standards and are not "hard and fast"; they do nothing other than establish a report to the IBHE. He asked Interim Provost Neumann why she did not approve the change to the Philosophy major to eliminate the Religious Studies major and incorporate it as an option of that program. Interim Provost Neumann responded that the request approved by the Faculty Senate was being held pending the APER report since both programs were under review. She added that the request is now being held pending the BOT approval. She apologized for not getting back to the Faculty Senate sooner with the status of the request. Dr. Filipink observed that if the request was being held pending the APER report and the APER Committee recommended adopting the change, reporting that to the Senate would probably have been in the interest.

Dr. Thompson related that when elimination of programs was discussed with Dr. Applegate talked about his experience with a previous institution where these ratios were imposed and it was found that the Spanish program did not have appropriate numbers; Ceikr 2( F)cahavis(e)-2( )seng o ideon(f)es2n fzaa2(3(f)-4(p))1(r)4(9)6(ae)-2(d)(e)2eie-32(u)2go)0(m)17(2)-21(t)t5(3i)-530(w)52(e)t+3(b immnuc(h23(nu)2go)13(e (nu)2do)13 seey(i)-3(f)-2( )11(t)-3(h)2(yo)13 wrilb immnuc(h)13(nu)2goe,oh(e (i)-3(t)-3( )11fer91( t)-3 w tfeuyor91e ( )11nu if92



Dr. Allison agreed with Dr. LaPrad that part of the problem with eliminating the majors is with optics, and agreed with Chairperson Pynes that if faculty must be retained to teach the minors there does not seem to be any savings associated with the elimination. She pointed out that certain majors will never graduate a lot of students, and enrollment has gone down in most, particularly within the Humanities. She asked why it should matter that the smaller programs saw reductions in enrollment when the proportion is the same as that of larger majors. Dr. Allison added that if WIU wants to see students who are impassioned and want to see their identities represented on campus, it is to the University's benefit to offer these types of majors. She warned that if they are not

Senator Pawelko noted that Geography, which was also reviewed by the APER Committee, is growing its GIS program, which is essential to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Tourism Administration. She explained this field of study is essential for RPTA Natural Resource Management students to be able to compete for jobs for which WIU students have been very successful. RPTA students must have a strong "core" area (Sociology, Anthropology, Biology, etc.) as well as GIS because employers want graduates to be able to use technology in the field for mapping, trails, natural resource aerial evaluation, etc. She stressed that WIU students would not be able to compete for viable internships without GIS classes; these internships are stepping stones for premiere jobs, such as with the Army Corps of Engineers, the national park and forest services, and the Bureau of Land Management. Senator Pawelko has, over the past few years, RPTA has had a very successful track record placing its students in areas where they get positions, and that is very difficult today's job market. She said examples of this type of collateral damage has not featured in the discussions of eliminating majors, and she does not see how this can be done without harming other majors in very significant ways.

Senator Pawelko is concerned that WIU is viewing course offerings in a very constrained manner and not seeing the interdisciplinary nature of courses. RPTA emphasizes for its students to take Business courses such as Finance and Marketing if they want to be successful, and Senator Pawelko believes their students are successful because they have a broad educational basis that they can tap into. She thinks this "corner mentality" is concerning for the future of WIU. She also asked what kind of erosion of faculty will occur if only minors are offered in the Departments of Philosophy and Religious Studies, Women's Studies, and African American Studies. She suspects that junior faculty will see the writing on the wall and leave WIU. She realizes there is currently a freeze on faculty hiring, but she wonders about the future for opportunity when the University needs to attract new faculty in the future to areas which offer a minor and not a major. She wonders how attractive those departments will be to future new faculty.

Senator Locke suspects there will be collateral damage from these eliminations in regards to retention campuswide. He stated that this action would not only affect student identity in these specific departments but believes it will also affect the identity of students across the campus. Senator Locke related everyone felt the wave of insecurity and anxiety between December 2015 and February 2016 in regard to students wondering whether WIU would need to close its doors. He recalled that the SGA representative told senators she thinks she has now reassured students are reassured that WIU will stay open. He suspects, however, that public knowledge of the elimination of four programs that speak to ethics, identity, and diversity would cause another wave of anxiety among faculty and students who will begin to wonder which of their programs is next. He thinks this may send a message to prospective students and parents as well, and he thinks it would be appropriate to see more research in this regard.

Chairperson Pynes told senators he represents Faculty Senate on the search committee for a new Director of Admissions. He stated that when the discussion turns to admitting students to WIU, majors is a zero sum equation because only primary majors are counted, and if a department wants to increase its majors they have to take them from somewhere else or have an admissions process that admits from a broad spectrum of students that will take lots of different kinds of courses. He believes that if WIU continues to eliminate programs that do not meet the IBHE reporting standard, then the Law Enforcement and Justice Administration program will continue to flourish, but it will also suffer because the core of the University will continue to erode.

Senator Hironimus-Wendt observed that WIU is in a really difficult place as an institution which was not brought about by any single person. He believes everyone can bear some responsibility for being reactive and antagonistic rather than sufficiently proactive. He said WIU is about to decide what the impact will be of elimination of programs, and even though he suspects the Faculty Senate will vote to not consent, the BOT will make that decision. Senator Hironimus-Wendt stated that if the BOT votes to eliminate the four majors, he will cast no blame on the President or Interim Provost because decisions have to be made. He pointed out, however, that other decisions would be needed going forward if these majors are eliminated, and if the Women's Studies and African American Studies minors are to be incorporated into the Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences



Health major should not be flourishing, and the department is working on curriculum review and