

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
Regular Meeting, 30 August 2022, 4:00 p.m.
Union Capitol Rooms/Zoom

A C T I O N M I N U T E S

SENATORS PRESENT: J. Albarracin, S. Bailey, D. Banash, D. Barr, B. Bellott, M. Bernards, L. Brice, D. Brown, G. Cabedo-Timmons, A. Carr, C. Chadwell, L. Ebert Wallace, D. Hunter, J. Land, T. Lough, S. Macchi, B. Petrocovici, B. Polley, E. Shupe, B. Thompson, Y. Tang, J. Wroblewski
Ex-officio: Manoochehr Zoghi, Provost; Craig Whetten, Parliamentarian

SENATORS ABSENT: D. Atherton

GUESTS: Marjorie Allison, Debra Allwardt, Steve Bennett, Barry Birnbaum, Tom Blackford, Craig Conrad, Tom Cody, Sean Cordes, Julie Cox, Katrina Daytner, Patricia Eathington, Redina Finch, Greg Kain, Rob Kelly, Doug LaFountain, Sarah Lawson, George Mangalaraj, Sue Martinelli-Fernandez, Rose McConnell, Patrick McGinty, Christopher Merrett, Mary Mhango, Russ Morgan, Mark Mossman, Kat Myers, Lorette Odom, Katherine Perone, Kaycee Peterman, Renee Polubinsky, Linda Prosize, Sumner Roberts, Tim Roberts, Jim Schmidt, Eric Sheffield, Bobbi Smith, Brian Stone, Sebastian Szyjka, Beth Wilson, Joseph Zaylik

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. May 3, 2022

APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Provost's Report – None

Chair Thompson asked if anyone has any questions for the Provost. Senator Carr encouraged the Provost and President to visit each department/school sometime this year to get to know the faculty, something that was done annually prior to the pandemic. Provost Zoghi responded he has this on his list and plans to attend some upcoming faculty meetings.

1. Remote Work Policy (<http://wiu.edu/policies/remote.php>)

Chair Thompson asked if it is correct that the Remote Work Policy does not apply to faculty; Associate Provost Russ Morgan confirmed this is correct. Chair Thompson asked if faculty are supposed to work out remote work arrangements with their supervisors. Associate Provost Morgan confirmed that this is based on the faculty contract and should be worked out with the department chair/school director or faculty member's supervisor. He compared this to the situation when determining faculty office hours; in the past, it was felt that the standard for office hours should be face-to-face, but Covid and the increase in entirety online schedules have brought greater flexibility to this standard. Chair Thompson reminded Associate Provost Morgan that the faculty contract contains no language regarding the location of office hours. Associate Provost Morgan noted that if faculty prefer a mix of office hours with remote and face-to-face, this can be worked out with the supervisor.

2. Covid Policies (<http://wiu.edu/policies/> -- top of All University Policies manual) – Informational Item

B. Student Government Association (SGA) Report
(Joseph Zaylik, SGA Vice President for External Affairs)

Mr. Zaylik announced that the first SGA meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 7 from 3-4:30 p.m. in the Union Capitol Rooms and will continue meeting weekly at that time. SGA has started filling the Director positions for Technology, Public Relations, and Academic Affairs and the Attorney General position so that they can start moving forward. SGA is also working with the colleges to fill the senator positions.

Chair Thompson asked how students feel about returning to campus and the level of Covid restrictions. Mr. Zaylik responded he feels a much more optimistic aura on campus this year. Mr. Zaylik is involved with the Greek organizations and said it seems like the incoming class is happy with the way things are going so far. He has been seeing a lot more students walking to classes and thinks things are overall going well.

D. Other Announcements

1. Greg Kain, Chief Information Officer, University Technology

Mr. Kain introduced himself to senators, noting that WIU is the third Illinois institution he has worked in addition to his history of industry employment. He encourages faculty to reach out to

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IIRA is comprised of six units or departments: the MAPPING unit, which works with communities on strategic visioning; the Sustainable Development unit, which focuses on cooperatives as a sustainable development strategy; the Rural Transit Planning unit; the Business Development unit, which manages two small business development centers; the Peace Corps Fellows Program, which oversees 11 masters on the WIU campus who spend their capstone experience working 40 hours per week in a rural Illinois community; and the Masters in Community Economic Development, which has about 20 students. IIRA takes client communities through the strategic visioning process, asking them where they want to be and how they can get there; determines a consensus-based set of goals; and brings various areas together to engage in business or land use planning and to conduct feasibility studies. Once communities have gone through the planning process, the Peace Corps Fellows are placed in those communities to implement the plans, which Dean Merrett thinks is the reason they have been so successful.

Dean Merrett listed some of the community initiatives for which IIRA has served as a catalyst for success:

- A \$7 million fitness center in Rushville that emerged following their MAPPING process with IIRA;
- The community of Detrick, on the south side of Illinois, has raised over \$3 million for their recreation/childcare complex, and the MAPPING process helped them secure a \$2 million loan from the state of Illinois;
- IIRA helped to start a grocery store cooperative in Winchester, Illinois, which had not had one for 15 years, an initiative which was mentioned in a *New York Times* article;
- Mattoon, Illinois secured a \$250,000 Google Impact Challenge award and was featured in a *Fortune Magazine* article last month after working with two IIRA Peace Corps Fellows and developing an initiative to lure remote workers to live in Mattoon while working at a distance.

Dean Merrett observed there have been a lot of recent changes to the higher education landscape in Illinois, including development of the Illinois Innovation Network (IIN), which prompted creation of his new job title and duties. He explained that IIN is a half-million dollar investment in public higher education which will encourage economic development through innovation and research by creating 15 innovation hubs in Illinois public universities, including WIU. Dean Merrett explained that public universities who participate in this initiative are expected to engage with the IIN Council and transform itself to be able to take advantage of opportunities that the Innovation Network will provide. This is primarily focused on externally funded collaborative research projects and outreach to business and community partners. Dean Merrett explained there is an IIN executive committee, general counsel, and governance structure already in place, and he has served as the WIU representative on the IIN Council since 2020, which he was asked by the President to coordinate IIN Hub activities. Five IIN committees focus on research, entrepreneurship, education, corporate engagement, and public policy; Dean Merrett serves on three of these committees, and has the help in this effort of his IIRA colleague Sean Park, WIU Dean of Libraries Hector Maymi-Sugranes, WIU Governmental Liaison Jeanette Malafa, and Jennifer von Kaenal, new WIU Director of Corporate Relations.

Dean Merrett observed that WIU is the only public university which was named a single hub overseeing two campuses; for example, Southern Illinois University's campuses at Edwardsville and Carbondale were both named as hubs. He said the unifying theme for the hubs is local economic development and innovation; the Quad Cities campus will focus on manufacturing innovation and economic development, with a particular focus on the Quad Cities Manufacturing Lab and the School of Engineering, while the Macomb campus will focus on community innovation and economic development, with the investment hopefully going into information technology, electronic classrooms, and immersive and augmented learning environments. Dean Merrett told senators a \$7.5 million grant has been secured to leverage an additional \$9 million in funding for a total of \$16.5 million toward these efforts. He said the majority of the funding will go toward securing a new structure for the Quad Cities campus to enable the Quad Cities Manufacturing Lab to be moved from the Rock Island Arsenal to

WIUQC to foster more collaboration, innovation, and research on WIU's own campus. He explained this is also necessary in order to avoid the restrictions associated with the Arsenal

funding must be disbursed on the tenth day or after; if the roster were to be kept open until the tenth day, students would not receive their aid until the 15th day of classes, which Ms. Smith thought was too long for a student to wait when they might be relying on that money to eat or feed their families. Senator Albarracin asked if the data about which students are not attending classes can be used for retention and student success as well; Ms. Smith responded that it will. She explained that instead of the retention survey that is usually sent out, the Office of Retention Initiatives this year will use the information gathered by Financial Aid. She added that the offices of Financial Aid and Retention Initiatives are both under the Vice President for Enrollment Management, and the two offices collaborate very regularly. Provost Zoghi remarked that he would like to meet with Ms. Smith separately to talk about how these efforts coordinate with his vision of the student life cycle.

Ms. Smith told senators she hopes these changes are positive ones, but at this point students do not understand why they cannot have the money immediately and have been posting negatively about the change on social media. Ms. Smith said Financial Aid tries to explain to students that the money is not theirs, it belongs to the government, and WIU's Financial Aid office must be a good steward of those dollars. She noted that if Financial Aid disburses aid to the wrong group of students because the students are not eligible, it is not the students that have to pay the money back to the government but the university; WIU is liable for any funds awarded in error. She related that the University of Missouri several years ago were found through an audit that they were not verifying that students began attendance and had to pay back about \$8 million to the Department of Education. Ms. Smith told senators that her office is trying to be more fiscally responsible with the university's funds and on behalf of students who do not necessarily know that taking 9 s.h. rather than 12 s.h. of classes affects their federal PELL grant awards.

Ms. Smith reiterated that the Verification of Academic Activity Roster and students' ability to charge their textbooks and supplies at the Union Bookstore closes tomorrow (August 31). This must be ended on the eighth day in order to get charges on students' accounts before releasing financial aid. Financial Aid does not want students to get a refund of aid and then a charge come through for textbooks after they thought they had a zero balance. Senator Petrocovi asked how this will affect students whose textbooks have been backordered. Ms. Smith responded the Union Bookstore closes tomorrow.

CIT invited and interacted with guests from University Technology and the Office for Distance Education and Support and discussed instructional technology topics, including the online proctoring tool, plagiarism checker for assignments, possible faculty peer mentoring for WesternOnline and student knowledge of WesternOnline features. CIT hopes next year to survey students' expectations and knowledge with regard to online instructional tools and technologies and evaluate CIT's policies and procedures in light of the preponderance of the use of online instructional technologies across various course modalities.

Chair Thompson observed that WIU has changed the way it funds instructional technology by instituting a paper usage fee for students. He would be interested to see how much money that generated. He thinks printing costs were a lot of the University Technology budget and wonders how much of the improvements made by uTech recently were a result of freeing up funds due to this change. He suspects the change to fee-based printing is affecting the university's technology resources in a positive way.

NO OBJECTIONS

G. Council for Intercollegiate Athletics (CIA)
(TBD, Chair, 2022-2023)

1. Annual Report (Brian Stone, Chair, 2021-2022)

(Kaycee Peterman, Chair, 2022-2023)

1. Annual Report (Doug LaFountain, Chair, 2021-2022) 1. (i)-4.6

The Senate Executive Committee recommends that the senator elected to represent Faculty Senate also represent that senator's department/school on the search committee. As discussed at the ExCo meeting, this would allow for Military Science to be included as one of the six departments/schools represented on the search committee. There were no objections to this proposal, and Senator Shupe volunteered to represent Faculty Senate and the Department of Kinesiology on the search committee.

B. Election of Senators to the Budget Transparency Committee

(two senators, one each from the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Education and Human Services, plus an Executive Committee member, to serve two-year terms)

Chair Thompson told senators that the Budget Transparency Committee allows for Faculty Senate to talk about the financial condition of the university that provides students with their educations and many employees with their jobs and to ask questions about that. He observed that universities nationwide will experience financial stress in 2026; demographics show that there will be an enrollment drop for several following years as well, and the Budget Transparency Committee can discuss possible ways to anticipate things that might occur because of this situation. He would like to see the BTC this year ask questions that might help WIU navigate what is anticipated to be a very difficult time; some estimates show there may be as many as eight years of declining enrollments after 2025, which could reshape WIU. Chair Thompson stressed these factors need to be considered now so that Faculty Senate can work with the President's and Provost's offices to talk about how to save people's jobs, what kind of a university we want to have, and how expensive that will be.

Dean Martinelli-Fernandez observed that she has over 20 years of practical accounting experience and has worked with accounting systems in many institutions of higher education, and the state of Illinois's system is quite unique and very different from the private sector. She thinks service on BTC would be helpful to provide input into advanced planning rather than having to make decisions during a crisis. She offered the resources of the College of Arts and Sciences to help the individuals serving on BTC with their efforts.

Senator Barr volunteered to represent the College of Education and Human Services on the BTC. Chair Thompson had volunteered at the Executive Committee meeting to be the ExCo representative.

Senator Shupe announced there will be a mobile food pantry on campus at the former HyVee building on University Drive on Friday, September 9. The food pantry is open to all members of the campus and Macomb community. Sign up begins at 9:00 a.m., and drive-through distribution is from 10:00-11:00 a.m. In response to a question from Chair Thompson, Senator Shupe noted that the food pantry is always looking for volunteers.

Chair Thompson announced that there will be a faculty social from 2:30-4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 7 in the Union Sandburg Lounge. There will be four of five socials during fall semester, sponsored by UPI, Faculty Senate, and the Provost's office. Each will feature two faculty members speaking briefly about their research and taking questions. Snacks and a cash bar will be available.

Motion: To adjourn (Brice)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Julia Albarracin, Senate Secretary

Annette Hamm, Interim