

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
Regular Meeting of the **FACULTY SENATE**
<http://www.wiu.edu/FacultySenate>
Tuesday, 26 January 2021
4:00 p.m., Via Zoom
ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT: D. Banash, M. Bean, B. Bellott, M. Bernards, L. Brice, A. Carr, J. Choi, C. Cordes, R. Dimitrov, R. Filipink, I. Lauer, T. Lough, S. Macchi, M. Maskarinec, D. Oursler, C. Pynes, J. Robinett, R. Sawhney, E. Shupe, E. Taylor, J. Wroblewski, K. Zbeeb

SENATORS ABSENT: D. Hunter, M. Stinnett

EX-OFFICIO: Martin Abraham, Provost; Heather McIlvaine-Newsad, Parliamentarian

GUESTS: Steve Bennett, Tom Blackford, Justin Brown, Craig Conrad, Gloria Delany-Barmann, Katrina Daytner, Dennis DeVolder, Francis Godwyll, Sue Martinelli Fernandez, Sherry Lindquist, Angela Lynn, Kristi Mindrup, Russ Morgan, Mark Mossman, Kat Myers, Miguel Narvaez, Lorette Oden, Elizabeth Orwig, Renee Polubinsky, Jim Schmidt, Eric Sheffield, Bill Thompson, Robert Hironimus-Wendt, Karen Zellmann

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. September 1, 2020

APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Provost's Report

Provost Abraham reminded senators that WIU is preparing for the Higher Learning Commission accreditation visit. Associate Provost Mark Mossman recently distributed a request for documents to be reviewed. Provost Abraham stated that although the documentation is lengthy and dry, it is important, and he would encourage everyone to look at it and particularly to check over the areas that might pertain to them.

B. Student Government Association Report
(Elizabeth Orwig, SGA Director of Academic Affairs)

Ms. Orwig reported the first SGA general assembly will be held tonight. She related that during a cabinet meeting she attended on January 22, there was discussion regarding updating the SGA constitution, specifically regarding positions on the cabinet. She said SGA also discussed starting a faculty-student round table to meet virtually over the lunch hour and provide an opportunity for representatives from student groups to engage in discussions with faculty. Chairperson Pynes asked if Ms. Orwig would elaborate on the faculty-student round table, such as how members will be selected and if anything is needed from faculty. Ms. Orwig responded the round table would consist of faculty representatives from different programs and academic majors who will come together via zoom to engage students in conversation. She said students could ask questions about academics in general or about the specific majors.

C. Other Announcements

Chairperson Pynes reported that nine Senate seats are expiring at the end of this academic year. He will send out an email on Thursday, January 28 with more details about the open positions.

III. Reports of Committees and Councils

A. Council on Admissions, Graduation and Academic Standards (CAGAS) (Megan Owens, Chair)

1. Request for Revision of GPA requirement

- a. Recommend removal of 2.75 GPA requirement for the Medical Sciences Option in Biological Sciences

Professor Sean Meagher, Biological Sciences, explained the request represents a change to the graduation requirement for the Medical Sciences option. Biological Sciences proposes to reduce the minimum 2.75 GPA requirement to a 2.00 GPA, which will bring this GPA requirement in line with the other options in this major. Dr. Meagher related that students who cannot attain the 2.75 GPA requirement currently must shift to another option, which they may not like as well, and they may have difficulty finding sufficient courses to graduate. He stated that the 2.75 requirement was originally conceived because it is difficult for students to get into medical school, however, a 2.75 GPA will not get a student into medical school and may prevent students from pursuing other non-medical fields, such as medical transcription. He believes that reducing the requirement to 2.00 will allow students to stay in the field in which they are interested and still work in health professions, even if they are not going to be an MD. Dr. Meagher says advisors have told him the requirement was intended to alert students to perform better in order to get into medical school, but it is not really a high enough bar and does not achieve its intention.

Registrar Angela Lynn said the proposal was approved unanimously by CAGAS after full discussion but without any significant concerns. Senator Cordes said he has no objections to the proposal but asked if there is any concern about the bar not being high enough for students wanting to be accepted to medical school. Chairperson Meagher said he is unsure; he added that an option truly aimed toward pre-med students would need a GPA of about a 3.8 and may attract only a dozen students. He explained that MDs are now surrounded by a galaxy of health-related individuals, and the department hopes to help students who might be interested in these careers. Senator Cordes thinks this a great strategy. College of Arts and Sciences Dean Sue Martinelli-Fernandez explained the Medical Sciences option was originally conceived to serve a different population and create uniformity for the top three medical fields (dentistry, medical, and optometry/ ophthalmology) because students would sometimes move in and out of those three programs.

Senator Filipink asked how many students are taking the Medical Sciences option that do not meet the current standards of the GPA requirement. Biological Sciences Chair Ranessa Cooper responded

that, from data based on the previous semester, there would be around three to five students per semester on average. Senator Filipink stated that he is always reluctant to remove an existing academic standard based on the justification that some students cannot achieve that standard. Chairperson Cooper reiterated that if students fall below 2.75, they must switch to another option, which represents an extra workload on advisors, leading them to bring it to the attention of the department. Senator Filipink suggested that the final language of the rationale should be strengthened and state explicitly that students understand they will need a higher GPA if they wish to get into med school. Chairperson Pynes asked if Senator Filipink has a formal objection to the proposal; Senator Filipink responded that he does not.

Senator Dimitrov observed that students who enroll in this option are likely bright, with high GPAs, but at some time determine that they cannot make this GPA requirement. He asked if the original premise for the 2.75 requirement is no longer valid and whether the goal of the Medical Sciences option is no longer to prepare students for medical school but instead for the broader medical profession. Dr. Meagher responded that the object of the option has not changed, and the courses within the option are still relevant for students wanting to go to medical school, but the 2.75 requirement does not really get them there. Senator Dimitrov asked if it was wrong to have a 2.75 GPA requirement in the first place. Dr. Meagher assumes the higher GPA was put in place to instill in students the idea that they must do better, but he is not sure it has achieved this because the top students are not 4.0 students because of this requirement but due to other factors.

College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean Jim Schmidt remembers when the Medical Sciences option was created, and at that time Biological Sciences had quite a few pre-professional programs (Pre-Med, Pre-Dentistry, Pre-Optometry, Pre-Vet, Pre-Physical Therapy). He said the option was intended to offer a set of fairly consistent courses to allow students who wanted to go into these fields the training they would need. He said at the time it was thought that only students wanting to go into these professions would enroll in the Medical Sciences option, but that has not turned out to be the case. Associate Dean Schmidt noted that students wanting to go into medical school need a high MCAT score, a high GPA, and other things, just as students wanting to go to graduate school need a high GPA, whereas others in a major may just want that focused degree to appear on their transcripts. He thinks these other students are being disadvantaged by this GPA requirement since students pursuing any other option in Biology only need a 2.00. He related that advisors hope that students will still be interested in the Medical Sciences option because they are interested in this field and the specific courses, even if they perhaps are not cut out for medical school. He does not think it is a bad idea to make the option more accessible to students and noted that they will find out at some point that they do need very high credentials to get into med school, so no one is really being misled.

Senator Dimitrov stated that he understands the arguments and supports the proposal but just wondered why this GPA was put in

place originally because it probably caused some students a lot of frustration when they were unable to graduate in the time they had intended.

CAGAS REPORT APPROVED

B. Council on Curricular Programs and Instruction (CCPI)
(Steve Bennett, Chair)

1. Curricular Request from the School of Education

a. Request for Change of Major

i. Educational Studies

Eric Sheffield, Director of the School of Education, related the careful consideration and scrutiny the Educational Studies major underwent before it was passed last year. He stated that despite this scrutiny, the Registrar's office determined the program was one credit hour off in terms of being a non-comprehensive degree as opposed to being a comprehensive degree. Because the degree has a minor and an internship, Director Sheffield explained that one credit hour needs to be adjusted to make the Educational Studies degree non-comprehensive.

Educational Studies professor Gary Daytner related the school was given two choices to address this: to either drop the minor and create a comprehensive major, which the school is not interested in doing, or to move SPED 210, a 2 s.h. course, from Directed Electives to the core. Dr. Daytner added the School of Education had originally wanted SPED 210 in the core, but the decision was made not to do so because the course was in a different department prior to creation of the school.

Senator Lauer asked if the open electives are still 13 s.h. or if another hour of open electives is to be required. Dr. Daytner responded that when SPED 210 was moved to the core, the major hours dropped from 48 to 47, but in order for the overall hours to be 120, it was necessary to add one more hour of open electives (to 14).

CHANGE IN MAJOR APPROVED

2. Curricular Requests from the School of Music

a. Requests for Changes of Options

- i. Music Therapy
- ii. Bachelor of Music, Music Education

- iii Bachelor of Music, Music Business
- iv. Bachelor of Music, Applied Music

b. Request for Change of Major

i. Music

School of Music Director Jeff Brown explained the proposed changes are to make degree requirements easier to understand for students, faculty, and academic advisors. He explained that as curricular changes have been made over the years, they were inserted in a way to make them less confusing on the curricular forms, but it has made them confusing overall, such as things being listed in multiple sections. He stated the Applied Music option, which has so many variables because of the different requirements for each instrument, is a good example of this confusion. The School of Music was able to reorganize the requirements to develop a clear presentation, a process that was begun last year in consultation with Linda Prosis in the Provost's office. Director Brown added that the revisions involve a change to the core courses and, while they may look confusing on the curricular form, will make the requirements clearer for students.

Chairperson Pynes suggested that the Senate consider the changes to options and major at the same time.

Motion: To consider the changes to options and majors simultaneously (Filipink)

NO OBJECTIONS

CHANGES IN OPTIONS AND CHANGE IN MAJOR APPROVED

C. Council on International Education (CIE)
(Miguel Narvaez, Chair)

1. Request for Global Issues Designation

a. ARTH 393, Gender and Embodiment in the Visual Arts, 3 s.h.

Senator Brice pointed out some typos to be corrected on the form before it is sent forward to the Provost's office and asked about the combining of the Belgian and French Congos together in the narrative. Department of Art and Design professor Sherry Lindquist explained that this wording comes from the scholarship in the textbook, which is written by a Harvard professor; it is not a matter of the department lumping the two Congos together but rather of Picasso doing so. Senator Brice remarked this would seem like a good topic to discuss in

the class. Dr. Lindquist added that the class will look at African works of art that Picasso was able to access through world exhibitions in Paris.

Senator Brice asked how a proposed discussion of the debate surrounding Christopher Columbus and his statues around the world (part B.2. of the form) is germane to the gender theory discussed in part 1 of the form. Dr. Lindquist replied that this will involve a discussion of how indigenous peoples were treated by Columbus, which involves the legacy of how indigenous peoples have been stereotyped in art, a legacy which continues to the present day. She thinks students are very interested in why these statues, which represent the European body, are so controversial at this moment; the class will look at 15th and 16th century representations of indigenous bodies, including the books that Columbus carried with him on his voyages and which colored his ideas about indigenous peoples and affected his policies. This will lead into a discussion of the legacy of visual stereotyping of bodies in art. Senator Brice asked if the course would also consider statues relevant to Vasco da Gama and Ferdinand Magellan. Dr. Lindquist replied that it may or may not because the articles she is having students read focus on Columbus and the class cannot cover everything. She added that the class is comparative rather than delving into a single moment in depth, so students will think about and use various lenses regarding gender and sexuality to approach representations of bodies at different places and moments in world history.

Senator McIlvaine-Newsad commented that she appreciates this course from a gender perspective because anthropological studies of First Nations and Native peoples show a large percentage of them were matriarchal societies, but the western patriarchy depicted indigenous peoples in a different manner than the way they actually functioned. She thinks this is an important topic to explore and is excited to see this kind of course being offered to WIU students.

GLOBAL ISSUES DESIGNATION APPROVED WITH CORRECTIONS TO FORM

IV. Old Business – None

V. New Business – None

Motion: To adjourn (Brice)

The Faculty Senate meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Christie Hughes, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary

Lee Brice, Senate Secretary

NEXT MEETING – 16 February 2021

VIA ZOOM