

**WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**  
**FACULTY SENATE**  
**Regular Meeting, 15 September 2015, 4:00 p.m.**  
**Capitol Rooms - University Union**

**ACTION MINUTES**

**SENATORS PRESENT:** M. Bean, S. Bennett, V. Boynton, J. Brown, A. Burke, G. Cabedo-Timmons, M. Carncross, D. DeVolder, K. Dodson, D. Halverson, R. Hironimus-Wendt, K. Kapale, C. Keist, N. Lino, J. McNabb, J. Myers, C. Pynes, T. Roberts, B. Siever, A. Silberer, S. Szyjka, T. Westerhold  
Ex-officio: Kathy Neumann, Interim Provost; Janna Deitz, Parliamentarian

**SENATORS ABSENT:** T. Sadler

**GUESTS:** Hoyet Hemphill, W. Buzz Hoon, Angela Lynn, Sue Martinelli-Fernandez, Bree McEwan, Esmeralda Moreno, Russ Morgan, Nancy Parsons, Roger Runquist, Bill Thompson, Lora Wolff

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. 1 September 2015

**Corrections:**

- On page 3, agenda item II.D.1., third paragraph, “contact” should be changed to “content,” so that the sentence reads, “She added that faculty are experts in their content areas ...”
- On page 12, Senator Dodson was nominated for the Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance by Senator Silberer.
- In the Executive Committee minutes from 8 September 2015, under item 2 it is reported that faculty teach a 3:1 load. That should be corrected to a 3:3 load.

**MINUTES APPROVED AS CORRECTED**

II. Announcements

A. Provost’s Report

**Motion:** To reorder the agenda in the absence of Interim Provost Neumann to consider the Provost’s Report at the end of the Announcements section (Roberts/Kapale)

**NO OBJECTIONS**

B. Student Government Association (SGA) Report  
(Esmeralda Moreno, SGA student representative)

- SGA cabinet appointments have been made and all seats filled on the SGA Council on Student Activities Funds.
- A vacancy for a senator at-large has been filled.
- President Thomas visited SGA at its last meeting and asked for five students currently serving on SGA to sit on the President’s Student Round Table.
- SGA heard first reading of a constitutional amendment to add a designated seat for a student veteran.

C. Other Announcements

- President Thomas will address the Faculty Senate at its September 29 meeting.
- J. Kameron Carter, a professor at Duke University, will deliver the Mary Olive Woods lecture at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, September 17 in the Union Grand Ballroom. Dr. Carter will speak on “Bonhoeffer’s (and Our) Postracial Blues.” He will be available to speak with students, faculty and staff from 9:30-11:30 a.m. that morning in Morgan Hall 453.

**Motion:** To move the Provost's Report to immediately following Reports of Committees and Councils (McNabb/Roberts)

**NO OBJECTIONS**

III. Reports of Committees and Councils

A. Council on Curricular Programs and Instruction (CCPI)

(Lora Wolff, Chair)

1. Curricular Requests from the Department of Engineering Technology

a) Requests for New Courses

- (1) GCOM 122, Introduction to Emerging Design Technologies, 3 s.h.

**NO OBJECTIONS**

- (2) GCOM 422, Applied Emerging Design Technologies, 3 s.h.

Senator Boynton observed that GCOM 122 is not open to students who have taken IDT/ARTS/BC 122. She asked if the same language should be included on the request for GCOM 422 since it also will be cross-listed with those departments. Engineering Technology professor Roger Runquist confirmed that this language should be added to GCOM 422.

**NO OBJECTIONS WITH ADDITION OF LANGUAGE TO CATALOG DESCRIPTION**

b) Request for New Interdisciplinary Minor

- (1) Emerging Design Technologies

**NO OBJECTIONS**

B. Council for Instructional Technology (CIT)

(Bree McEwan, Chair)

1. Recommendations to Improve the Response Rate for Online Course Evaluations

The Senate Executive Committee, at the request of the College of Arts and Sciences Faculty Council, asked CIT to explore the evaluation of online classes in spring 2014. Dr. McEwan explained that low response rates for evaluations from online courses can make it difficult to evaluate how well instructors are doing teaching online courses as well as how students respond to these types of classes. Dr. McEwan stated that CIT had many discussions about this topic and brought in Rick Carter, Executive Director of the School of Distance Learning, International Studies, and Outreach, as well as representatives from University Professionals of Illinois (UPI). The CIT report cautions that, "It is very important to note that administration of student course evaluations is governed by the agreement negotiated between the University Professionals of Illinois Local 4100 and the University administration. Any modifications to the process need to be in compliance with this agreement, and changes need to be negotiated before implementation."

CIT determined six recommendations to improve the response rate for evaluations of online courses. Dr. McEwan explained that the first three recommendations could be implemented immediately and are consistent with the current UPI agreement, while the

second three recommendations are suggestions to possibly be considered during future negotiations between UPI and WIU's administration.

CIT recommends:

- Providing students, within Western Online, with a written statement about the anonymity and importance of the evaluations.
- Sending/placing within Western Online a static reminder to students to complete the course evaluations. CIT believes this is the single most important action that can be taken to improve the response rate in a voluntary survey without incentives.
- Working with the School of Distance Learning, International Studies, and Outreach and with the Center for the Application of Instructional Technology (CAIT) to make the format in which the results are reported much more usable.
- During future negotiations between UPI and WIU administration, considering changing the current practice of providing anonymity of student responses, without actually violating anonymity. This would enable, for example, only students who have not completed the evaluation to receive reminders to do so.
- During future negotiations between UPI and WIU administration, considering adopting commercially available platforms for administering online course evaluations, such as SmartEvals.com or Qualtrics, which interface with online learning platforms, including Desire2Learn. According to the CIT report, these platforms "use the latest information technology to ensure security, anonymity, and confidentiality, and at the same time have enough flexibility in order to deliver higher response rates than our current system through targeted reminders ... They also provide user-friendly reports and illustrate the results with relevant graphs."
- As mandated by the current UPI agreement, in the process of determining each department's criteria, faculty should consider important differences in the nature of online versus face-to-face courses. The CIT report points out that "there is a lot of research on online course evaluation instruments emphasizing the need for an evaluation form specific to the online learning environment, and the consensus is that it is practically impossible to fully separate the technological aspect from the instructor's pedagogical performance." CIT believes this should be an important part of the deliberations when revising departmental criteria documents and during the next contract deliberations.

Senator Hironimus-Wendt asked if the report is an actionable item or if senators are expected to act on the first three recommendations and not on the last three. Chairperson Pynes responded that senators can either accept or reject the report. He stated that one issue has been that there is no single online course evaluation policy in which the recommendations can be housed; student evaluations are included within individual departmental criteria documents. He added, however, that Interim Provost Neumann indicated that the first three recommendations could be implemented fairly easily with Western Online.

## **NO OBJECTIONS TO THE REPORT**

- C. Senate Nominating Committee  
(Virginia Boynton, Chair)

## **SENATE COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES:**

Writing Instruction in the Disciplines (WID) Committee

|                          |           |                      |             |      |
|--------------------------|-----------|----------------------|-------------|------|
| Adrianna Marshall, Music | replacing | Courtney Blankenship | 2015-18     | FA&C |
| Cecil Tarrant, Mgmt/Mktg | replacing | Samit Chakravorti    | Spring 2016 | B&T  |

**UNIVERSITY COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES:**

Bachelor of General Studies (BGS) Advisory Board

|                          |           |                  |         |     |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------------|---------|-----|
| Julie Lawless, Geography | replacing | Mohammad Siddiqi | 2015-16 | A&S |
|--------------------------|-----------|------------------|---------|-----|

Center for Innovation in Teaching and Research (CITR) Advisory Committee

|                          |           |             |         |     |
|--------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------|-----|
| Denise Gravitt, Eng Tech | replacing | Anna Valeva | 2015-16 | B&T |
|--------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------|-----|

There were no further nominations and the slate of candidates was declared elected.

**Motion:** To reorder the agenda so that the Provost's Report comes at the best opportunity after the Interim Provost arrives at the meeting (DeVolder/Bean)

IV. Old Business

A. Second Reading and Vote on Bylaws Amendments

1. Election Tabulation Results

Article III of the Senate Bylaws, Section 1., Election of Members, states "The faculty shall be informed of the results and the tabulation of the vote." The proposed amendment would change this to "Results shall be tabulated and shall be made available to faculty by request."

Senator Hironimus-Wendt said he plans to vote against the amendment. He stated that Faculty Senate has a policy that says faculty will be informed of the results of elections and the tabulation of those results, and in theory the Senate has not been living up to that and has been less than transparent. He believes the proposed amendment gives the impression of making the process less transparent because rather than making election results available to everyone they would only be provided if an individual requests them. Senator Hironimus-Wendt pointed out that Eastern Illinois University immediately posts the tabulation of election results online, and he does not see why WIU should not do the same. Senator Hironimus-Wendt stated that Faculty Senate has not previously released vote counts from concern for the feelings of faculty who lose by a landslide, which resulted in a Freedom of Information Act request for the data during the spring semester; however, the senator does not think that the best response to the FOIA request is to make faculty always have to ask for the tabulation before providing it. He believes election results should be made publicly available on the Faculty Senate website or in the minutes rather than only available upon request. Chairperson Pynes verified that EIU posts election tallies on their Senate webpage, and some of the candidates lose by a large margin.

Senator Westerhold stated that she does not see the proposed amendment as representing a lack of transparency. She believes it is closer in line to past practice, and she does not think the intention has ever been to be less than transparent. She also considered the time involved for the Senate Recording Secretary to tabulate the results as well as to update the website with vote tallies and keep it current. Senator Westerhold believes that as long as the final outcomes are made public in some form so that individuals know the results of the election, it should be sufficient to provide the vote tallies only if someone specifically requests them.

Senator DeVolder related that he offered, after some discussion last year, to create the current proposal, which he sees as an intermediate solution between protecting

individual feelings, as had been done in the past, and announcing the details of every election in a public forum such as a website. He does not have a strong feeling for or against the amendment as long as the Senate is either “in or out” on whatever is decided. Senator DeVolder said he would prefer to see the amendment passed because some candidates would not like to see the results of their elections publicly announced; if, however, the Senate decides not to change the Bylaws, then Senator DeVolder thinks Faculty Senate should be “all in” and prominently announce the results on a website or another public place rather than in the minutes of the Senate where individuals would have to look for them, since having to look or ask for the results constitutes the objection to the proposal. Chairperson Pynes stated that if the amendment fails, a discussion will need to be held to determine in what method the faculty shall be informed of the tabulation.

Senator Roberts asked if the term “faculty” in the proposed amendment refers to the faculty collectively or to an individual faculty member. He thinks there is a lack of clarity in the revised language since there is a difference between announcing the tabulation to the faculty as a body upon request and providing the tabulation to individual faculty members upon request.

Senator Boynton asked if the Senate Recording Secretary already posts the results of every election on the Senate website; Ms. Hamm responded that she does. Senator Boynton remarked that what is being considered, then, could be just adding the vote counts and/or percentage to the results that are already regularly posted. The Senate Recording Secretary has kept track of the results of Senate elections since 2000, and has a record of the vote tallies for most contested elections since 2010. Ms. Hamm said that if the Senate decides to publicize the tabulations on the Senate website, she could simply link that document.

Senator Boynton interprets the current Bylaws as referring to all faculty collectively and the proposed amendment as referring to individual faculty members. Senator Hironimus-Wendt agrees with the interpretation that the original Bylaws refer to all faculty being informed of election results, but he thinks that the amendment specifying that only individuals who ask will be informed of the tabulation is a pretty big change to the spirit and intent of the Bylaws. He does not see why Faculty Senate should make the vote tallies more difficult to obtain and does not think the Senate will be hurt by leaving the Bylaws as they stand.

#### **AMENDMENT FAILED 9 YES – 12 NO – 1 AB**

## II. Announcements

### A. Provost’s Report (Reordered)

Interim Provost Neumann reported that WIU has now received the last \$6.5 million remaining from last year’s budget.

The recently-created Academic Task Force held its first meeting last week. Interim Provost Neumann reported there were some common threads that came out of discussions held during the Academic Task Force meeting, the chairs’ retreat, and the deans’ retreat.

Interim Provost Neumann had been asked by the Executive Committee to check into why clocks on the Macomb campus are not functioning correctly. She read an email from Facilities Management Director Scott Coker:

“We have been having problems with our campus clocks since we started putting electric chillers in the buildings. This started in Currens, Horrabin, and Stipes about five years ago. There is a legacy high frequency generator in Horrabin that controls the clocks, and the new electric chillers interfere with the signal. To attempt to fix this

issue, we have worked with the chiller manufacturers to filter out the interference. These countermeasures have been unsuccessful, and we have put out an RFP to install a new clock system that will likely use wireless technology. To minimize expenditures immediately, our plan is to put the central system in place and install a limited number of clocks around campus. We will then do a gradual replacement of the clocks as necessary.”

#### IV. Old Business

##### A. Second Reading and Vote on Bylaws Amendments (Continued)

##### 2. Ex-Officio Members of Senate Councils and Committees

The proposal adds to Article VII, Section A.3. of the Bylaws the statement that, “Faculty members serving ex-officio on one Senate council or committee may serve concurrently on one other Senate council or committee only when another eligible faculty representative cannot be identified.” This provides a written exception to the previous statement in the Bylaws that “Faculty members shall not serve concurrently on more than one standing committee or council of the Senate.”

Senator Hironimus-Wendt asked if this amendment is basically saying that ex-officio faculty can only serve on another Senate council or committee if someone else cannot be found to serve on that other council; Chairperson Pynes confirmed this is correct. Senator Hironimus-Wendt remarked this puts the burden on the Senate Nominating Committee to first determine whether or not someone else can fill a vacancy. He also pointed out that when a faculty member is appointed ex-officio to a Senate council or committee, that person would be expected to step down if he/she were already serving on another Senate council or committee or, at the least, explain that there is a conflict with that appointment. Senator McNabb suggested it might be useful to add a statement to the Senate Nominating Committee survey asking faculty to identify if they are already serving ex-officio on Senate councils or committees. Senator Boynton added that the Senate Recording Secretary is also very good about keeping track of who is serving ex-officio on Senate councils or committees.

Senator Hironimus-Wendt asked if the proposal only affects faculty in the Department of English. The discussion was originally raised by English faculty who serve ex-officio on the WID Committee, but Chairperson Pynes clarified that the amendment would apply to any faculty member who is appointed to serve ex-officio on a Senate council or committee. Associate Provost Parsons asked if ex-officio refers to non-voting faculty. Senator Boynton responded that the term refers to members who are serving “by position”; whether ex-officio members have voting rights depends on how the ex-officio position is defined for a specific council or committee.

**AMENDMENT PASSED 19 YES – 1 NO – 2 AB**

#### V. New Business – None

Chairperson Pynes reminded senators that it is their job to be representatives to the faculty and to listen to their issues. He said that a faculty member may say something in passing to a senator with the expectation that Faculty Senate take up the issue but without making that explicit. He asked senators not to hesitate to come to the Executive Committee or the Senate with issues and to listen and try to help faculty.

**Motion:** To adjourn (McNabb)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:38 p.m.

Jeff Brown, Senate Secretary  
Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary