

# ‘FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, 1 November 2022

Via Zoom, 3:30 p.m.

## ACTION MINUTES

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bill Thompson, Chair; Julia Albarracin, Secretary

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Lee Brice, Vice Chair

**ALSO PRESENT:** Manoochehr Zoghi, Provost; Craig Whetten, Parliamentarian; Annette Hamm, Interim Faculty Senate Office Manager

1) The Executive Committee has observed that two committees created by the administration – the Policy Review Committee and the Financial Stability Committee – include no faculty representation although both are of interest to faculty. Chair Thompson has asked the President to add faculty to the Financial Stability Committee, but it is unknown if this has been accomplished. The Faculty Senate Nominating Committee has a method to nominate faculty for committee service, but the administration can choose to appoint faculty members to committees without going through that process.

It was noted that Faculty Senate and its councils (particularly CAGAS) created or had a voice in approving many of the policies on the Provost’s website, but the Policy Review Committee may not be aware of this. Ms. Hamm, at the request of former Senate Chair Ilon Lauer, created an Excel spreadsheet of the policies on the Provost’s website (excluding Board of Trustee policies) last summer, indicating which ones had Faculty Senate input or were created by the Senate or CAGAS. She will share this spreadsheet with ExCo members and at a future time plans to list the Senate councils on the Faculty Senate website.

Provost Zoghi anticipates the policies page on the Provost’s website will be revamped at some point to make it easier to navigate. Senator Albarracin suggested an ad hoc committee might be useful to organize the policies into a searchable, indexed database. Chair Thompson suggested that university policies could be reviewed on a rotating ten-year schedule rather than trying to update all of them at once.

Senator Albarracin and Chair Thompson will work together to draft a resolution for the next Executive Committee meeting asking that faculty representatives be added to the Policy Review Committee and the Financial Stability Committee. Once approved by ExCo, it will be brought to the Senate floor for a broader discussion and vote.

2) Chair Thompson thinks Provost Zoghi should consider making a presentation to Faculty Senate on the possible move toward more faculty advisors because many faculty have strong feelings about faculty and professional advising, and faculty need to know what has triggered the administration’s concerns. Chair Thompson remarked that he has heard the College of Fine Arts and Communication used as an example of the benefits of faculty advising because COFAC has no professional advisors, but this is incorrect because they do; Jennifer Grimm, for example, is an advisor in Communication. Provost Zoghi noted that there are multiple elements, besides advising alone, when considering COFAC’s record of retention because that college is so connected with K-12 students through music activities, classes, and camps, and their WIU classes are often smaller and offer closer interactions and engagement with faculty. Provost Zoghi indicated that a group of advisors, faculty, and administration are working collaboratively to identify the potential barriers and how to improve communication flow. He stressed there is no plan to replace any of the advisors, as he believes that they have a critical role in student success and retention.

Senator Albarracin asked if there is a concrete plan to move from a professional advising model to a faculty advising model. Provost Zoghi replied that both plans have advantages and disadvantages. He noted that retention has not improved in the past several years at WIU despite restructuring first-year and major advising. He stated that, instead of revamping advising and then trying to make it work, he would like for both sides of advising to come together and try to determine what the actual problems are. The Provost asked the national clearinghouse if they could share any data on other advising models, but their response was that whether one model is used or another there will be the same challenges and opportunities; the key is to determine how to transition between first-year and major advising. Provost Zoghi would like to show that if the potential problems

in each college can be identified and addressed, then a flow plan can be developed. The President and Provost recently had a good discussion about this with the Chairs' Council. He thinks the communication flow just needs to work better, but diligent efforts are being made, and the Provost is confident that these problems can be addressed. Provost Zoghi has asked deans to take a more proactive role in their colleges' work with advisors. He agreed to discuss this topic more with the full Faculty Senate in the spring semester.

Senator Albarracin asked what the advantages are of having faculty advisors versus professional advisors. She remarked that faculty advising works better when faculty have the appropriate training and experience, but WIU does not have a culture of faculty advising. Provost Zoghi commented that the faculty play an important role by providing additional insights and mentorship regarding students' career opportunities. Senator Albarracin thinks professional advisors are often more objective about which classes to recommend students take but believes many of WIU's advisors have been overloaded in recent years. Provost Zoghi anticipates that once the University acquires a new ERP, it will significantly facilitate the advising and communications flow for the advisors, students, and faculty.

3) The Executive Committee decided that a broader discussion is needed for WIU's first-year experience and invited Associate Provost Mark Mossman to speak to Faculty Senate on this topic. He will speak during the Provost's Report on December 6.

4) An Early College Credit Report provided by the Registrar at the request of Chair Thompson will be included as an informational item for the November 15 Senate meeting. Interim Vice President for Student Services John Smith will also speak during Announcements on reproductive freedom support at WIU.

5) The Executive Committee finalized the remainder of the Senate agenda for November 15, and the meeting adjourned at 5:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm, Interim Faculty Senate Office Manager  
and Recording Secretary