

## FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 27 February 2024  
4:00 p.m. – Via Zoom

### ACTION MINUTES

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Julia Albarracin, Chair; Everett Hamner, Vice Chair; Denise Gravitt, Secretary

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mark Mossman, Interim Provost; Jeremy Robinett, Parliamentarian; Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Office Manager

**GUESTS:** Rebel Mickelson, Theatre and Dance; Greg Kain, CIO, University Technology

#### 1. *Representative needed for new ERP Steering Committee*

University Technology CIO Greg Kain stated that the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) project, which will affect faculty and students, will be implemented over a two-year period. Over this time period, a steering committee will meet to informally discuss what has been implemented, what is next in line for implementation, and various factors affecting the project. Mr. Kain said the steering committee will serve as a communication method rather than a group that would be making critical decisions. He expressed a desire to have proper representation from faculty and make sure that this representative reports back to Faculty Senate.

Ms. Hamm asked what the status is of the current ERP steering committee, on which Marty Maskarinec has served as faculty representative for many years. She wonders if this steering committee will replace that one or be an additional committee. Mr. Kain responded the ERP contractor, Ellucian, last week recommended disbanding the existing steering committee and creating a new one with a slightly different structure.

Chair Albarracin remarked she thought the schedule for how the ERP will be implemented was already planned. Mr. Kain responded the steering committee will be working through the discovery process and producing a project timeline that should be completed in about a month. He said it is already known that financial processes of the university will be converted first, student areas will be addressed second, and financial aid third. It is hoped that a couple of elements within the financial area, including accounts payable, can go live on July 1. Mr. Kain said these types of things will be discussed with the steering committee as they are decided.

Senator Hamner asked if there might be someone on the Council for Instructional Technology (CIT) who would want to serve on the ERP steering committee. CIT Chair Rebel Mickelson responded that the council meets next Tuesday afternoon, and she can bring this up to see if anyone is interested in volunteering.

Chair Albarracin stated that if no one on CIT volunteers, she would be happy to do so. She explained that the ERP will be important for the next TRIO grant she will be working on since information will be needed that includes a student's race, first-generation college status, and financial aid status. She said this information will be needed in less than a year and asked when the new ERP system might be able to provide it. Mr. Kain responded that this information is available now. Chair Albarracin acknowledged that it is possible to obtain a list of students for various programs, but she cannot tell which are first generation. Interim Provost Mossman added that to be able to determine this would involve cross-walking data sets, which is very complicated. He stated that there is a certain urgency involved with the grant Chair Albarracin is working with, which is intended to demonstrate the success rates in the performance of certain student populations, and the ERP would be able to pull this information much easier and more efficiently. Chair Albarracin added that while the university can keep track of its own numbers for now, it is necessary to provide those numbers in advance for the big TRIO grant she plans to apply for. She said this would be complicated to do by hand for the entire campus. Mr. Kain stated that when the concluding phase of the ERP project is reached, reporting information like this will be fairly easy and involve only a half-hour or hour job, but it would be very difficult at this time because the university is also implementing a new financial aid system to address changes required by the Department of Education. He said this means that WIU's information will be housed in a completely different system for a short period of time, which will make it very difficult to pull information from MVS and match it to the information in the new financial aid system. He added this is doable and possible but will take some effort. He suggested that Institutional Research and Planning may have some information that they have

already gathered that might help.

Parliamentarian Robinett remarked that one of the biggest challenges when he worked on a Veterans Upward Bound grant with former IRP Director Angela Bonifas was that her office was very understaffed, and some of the information was housed in Financial Aid, which is also understaffed. He related that various kinds of information that was needed was coded differently in the two areas, so it was complicated to pull reports together, even though that was a much smaller project than what Chair Albarracin describes. He believes new IRP Interim Director Christopher Pynes will do everything he can to gather the information Chair Albarracin needs as quickly as possible, but Parliamentarian Robinett does not think that a lot of it will be pre-existing.

Interim Provost Mossman remarked this why a steering committee is needed with representatives who will communicate with their colleagues about this complicated ERP project. He expressed his total confidence in the group Chair Albarracin has assembled to work on the grant, which includes data specialists, and he thinks representation on the steering committee will be very important to this effort. Parliamentarian Robinett remarked the steering committee will need to prioritize the data needs of the university in a limited amount of time. Mr. Kain agreed that will be part of the steering committee's role. He said University Technology is trying to implement a "change freeze" because they are limited as to the number of requests they can handle during this period. He stressed that the steering committee needs to have the right representation and authority to determine which requests to work on.

Ms. Hamm asked if the steering committee could include two faculty representatives rather than just one. Mr. Kain responded there are currently 20 members without any faculty reps. Senator Hamner remarked that if the committee is that big already, having two faculty rather than one should not make any difference. He added that it seems important to have the committee be as accurate as possible. Chair Albarracin added that since it is an important issue for all faculty, it would be good to include a representative from CIT and from the Executive Committee. Mr. Kain agreed to this. The first meeting of the ERP Steering Committee is scheduled for April 1.

## 2. *Adding AI to CIT duties*

Chair Albarracin recalled that the ad hoc AI Committee recommended in their report to Faculty Senate that the Senate create a new standing council or committee to address artificial intelligence or that it be incorporated into an existing Senate council or committee. She asked if it this could be something that could be added to the duties of the Council for Instructional Technology. Ms. Mickelson responded this might be possible. She thinks CIT needs to revise its bylaws and policies and procedures, which have not been updated for a number of years. She told ExCo that Michael Lorenzen, who chaired the Senate's ad hoc AI committee, is coming to talk to CIT about ChatGPT at their next meeting. Senator Hamner, who served on the ad hoc committee and wrote their report, said he would love to attend the meeting, as well, to hear CIT's feedback. Senator Gravitt remarked that at a recent accreditation meeting she learned that some university presidents are signing off on the United Nations Internet Governance Principles, which includes AI and other internet usage. Senator Hamner stated there is a need for AI to be understood among WIU's faculty, and he thinks CIT would be a good place for this to happen.

## 3. *Revisit request to extend timeline for evaluation of President Huang*

Chair Albarracin related that President Huang told her it would be difficult for him to provide his self-evaluation document for the faculty evaluation survey immediately after spring break due to other pressing obligations. She asked Ms. Hamm to prepare a chart with possible processing times and dates the survey could be presented to ExCo and the Senate if President Huang cannot provide his self-evaluation document until the end of March, as he had requested. Normally, the faculty evaluation survey goes out in February, and Council on Provost and Presidential Performance (CPPP) Chair Dave Hunter had asked the President to provide his self-evaluation just after winter break, in January. According to their bylaws, the CPPP report is due to be presented to Faculty Senate at the first meeting in April, which this year would be April 9. Ms. Hamm anticipates that if the President does not provide his self-evaluation until March 29, there will need to be one extra Executive Committee and Faculty Senate meeting just to discuss this report.

The Executive Committee asked Ms. Hamm to revise the timeline document she prepared to add one more

choice – for the President to submit his self-evaluation on March 22. Chair Albarracin will then present President Huang with the three options (March 18, 22, or 29) for him to submit the document and let him choose which one he prefers.

#### 4. *Service incentives for faculty who attend DEI training*

Chair Albarracin asked if it would be possible to offer incentives for faculty who attend training in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Interim Provost Mossman thinks this is a good idea that could be explored between the contract administrator and University Professionals of Illinois (UPI). He thinks if this does not already count toward some kind of service, it certainly should. Interim Provost Mossman, Assessment Coordinator Lori Baker-Sperry, and Retention Initiatives Executive Director Justin Schuch will be presenting on DEI initiatives to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) in April.

Interim Provost Mossman would like to see incentive programs developed for many things, such as to act as a motivation for faculty to write grants. He has been giving thought to using the Provost's office indirect funds to incentivize faculty to write grants because they are very powerful and really help the institution. Senator Gravitt related that the first two institutions she taught at offered summer professional development workshops which faculty were paid to attend. She said some of the workshops were intended to help junior faculty learn how to teach, such as workshops on critical thinking or Bloom's taxonomy. She thinks WIU is missing a robust workshop program. She recalled that the Center for the Innovation of Teaching and Research (CITR) workshops could formerly be counted as scholarly/professional development.

Parliamentarian Robinett has become acutely aware of how decimated the civil service staff is at WIU. He noted that there are 10 out of 19 staff positions in the Registrar's office, which is crippling what can be done on the campus. He stated that the Financial Aid office is trying to program two different computer systems to provide services to students on a very small staff. He has observed that grounds crews barely have sufficient employees to keep multiple buildings clean. Parliamentarian Robinett stated that he is sensitive to the needs of faculty but thinks it is also important to take a moment to understand the needs of other front-line employees of the university. Senator Hamner expressed his thanks to Parliamentarian Robinett for bringing ExCo's attention to this because he agrees that everyone needs to be more aware of how civil service are affected, and he has also heard their concerns. Interim Provost Mossman recognizes that civil service employees were decimated by the layoffs of 2014-16, which devastated morale, and he has prioritized hiring civil service staff. He sees career development, though, as a simultaneous way to revitalize faculty and to get them reengaged. He does not see one as taking away from the other because they are different pots of money and believes it is important to do things simultaneously.

Chair Albarracin explained the idea is that incentives for faculty to attend DEI workshops will also benefit their students. She said the main goal is to train as many faculty as possible. Chair Albarracin obtained funding from the Illinois Department of Human Services to bring in a professional for DEI training, and she helped the City of Macomb apply for the same funding so that the Macomb Police Department can also obtain this training. She wants these efforts to be taken advantage of more broadly than just the same 20 faculty that regularly attend workshops because that will not benefit many students. She would like incentives for this activity to be available to both faculty and staff members. Interim Provost Mossman suggested that Chair Albarracin meet with him and Human Resources Executive Director Cassandra Standberry to discuss this further. Chair Albarracin stressed WIU needs to bridge the divide between faculty and staff because it is making the university dysfunctional; rivalries and jealousies, primarily over resources, need to be overcome because it is not good for WIU.

Interim Provost Mossman believes there needs to be anti-racism pedagogy as well as cultural shifts at the institution, and the way to achieve this is for people to participate in the culture and practice of the university. He noted that students, when polled for the HLC documentation every year, say they value their classes, and WIU's faculty are historically doing much better than their peers at other universities in this area. Chair Albarracin said that she is trying to bring Ibram X. Kendi, author of How to Become an Anti-Racist, to WIU, which would be an amazing experience for the whole university. She thinks it is not enough to bring in someone who can say what racism is but what is needed is someone who can trigger change in people.

Parliamentarian Robinett said he applauds Chair Albarracin for finding money outside of the university to

support this effort because this is an important topic for the campus. Senator Hamner said if Chair Albarracin is able to get this nationally known speaker to come to the Macomb campus, he will try to bring a 15-passenger bus from the QC to show support for his visit.

5. *Update on Senate elections*

Ms. Hamm reported that the deadline for College of Fine Arts and Communications faculty to cast their ballot for the contested election for a fall Senate seat is tomorrow. Jett Walker, Music, and Pamela Peters, Broadcasting and Journalism, submitted petitions for the position.

No petitions were submitted by the extended deadline for the remaining vacancy for the College of Business and Technology. The Executive Committee extended the deadline for one more week, after which no more efforts will be made this spring, and efforts to find a CBT faculty member to fill the seat will begin again in the fall.

6. *Future Senate guests: March 5 – Amy Carr and Katy Valentin; March 26 – Billy Clow and Ted Renner; April 9 – President Huang*

7. The Executive Committee finalized the agenda for the Faculty Senate meeting of March 5, and the ExCo meeting adjourned at 5:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Office Manager  
and Recording Secretary