

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 3 March 2026
4:00 p.m. – Via Zoom

ACTION MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeremy Robinett, Chair; Alice Melkumian, Secretary

MEMBERS ABSENT: Lisa Wipperling, Vice Chair

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Mossman, Provost; William Gblerkpor, Parliamentarian; Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Office Manager

1. *Updates on Rebuild and searches*

Chair Robinett noted that the votes for the schools are completed. Provost Mossman said that Kyle Mayborn has been named Interim Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, Sciences, and Education for one year. He said that a national search will be held for the permanent dean in Fall 2026. Provost Mossman stated that the Provost's Office will review the job description for the associate dean positions on Friday, March 6 and will discuss the advising model that the Advising Committee has been working on. He related there has also been significant work thinking through the first-year programs, including the First-Year Experience and First Four Weeks programs; that work continues.

Provost Mossman related that administrators have had a couple of excellent meetings with federal legislators and are working with Senators Duckworth and Durkin to pursue funding for various things at the federal level. He noted that the elevator for Garwood Hall is broken, which means the university is not ADA-compliant. He related that requests have been made multiple times with strong levels of advocacy by Vice President Roselieb and others to get funds from the state, and now Provost Mossman is exploring whether federal dollars might be available because the state dollars are not forthcoming. He added that the elevator has been an issue for more than a year and must be figured out because even when it works, it works very poorly, and there needs to be accessible spaces for students in that building.

Chair Robinett said that, on the topic of advocacy, he and Senate Vice Chair Wipperling plan to attend the President's budget testimony in Springfield before the House; one other senator may also join. He said this has been communicated to Zach Messersmith, WIU's governmental liaison. He asked Provost Mossman to let him know if there are particular legislators related to the academic side that it would be beneficial for them to try to contact. Chair Robinett also plans to remind senators and faculty pretty regularly between now and April 16 about Legislative Day in Springfield and ask them not to lobby in the classroom but to informally encourage students to attend. Provost Mossman expressed his thanks for the support. He thinks it is important to encourage local legislators to support the equitable funding bill, which would significantly improve WIU's ability to operate as an institution.

Chair Robinett told Provost Mossman that faculty have asked questions about the year that Dr. Mayborn has agreed to serve as Interim Dean. Chair Robinett said he has tried to be clear that this decision was made mindfully as a response to things that faculty had brought up about wanting to make sure the right person is chosen for the position and is someone who understands the complexity of that college, and that this was not something that could be done between now and the end of spring semester. He asked Provost Mossman to highlight some of that decision making during his report to Faculty Senate on March 10, and the Provost said that he would be happy to.

2. *Updates on surveys – evaluations, amendments, and WID*

Chair Robinett announced that the Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance (CPPP) survey has closed. He said the response rate was good, with 31 percent responding to the Provost survey and 34 percent to the President's. He has communicated with Senator Gillotti so that the committee can begin to analyze the data and prepare the evaluation summaries.

Chair Robinett said the Senate Constitution amendments were distributed to faculty yesterday, and so far 102 have responded for a 37 percent response rate. He said it appears all of the amendments are currently passing; the largest objection as reflected in numbers regards the creation of the faculty electorate. He said that while this is not to minimize the concerns in any way, this was always going to be an amendment that some faculty might take exception to given that faculty who step into administrative roles currently do not tend to be allowed to vote. He pointed out, however, that it is very clear in that amendment that this would only be allowable following a vote of the Faculty Senate; this subset of the electorate would only be allowed to vote in specific circumstances, not on all Faculty Senate business. He added that this survey will close on March 13, and reminders will be sent out next week.

Chair Robinett stated that the Senate Nominating Committee (SNC) and University Committee on Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (UCOSOGIE) surveys will close this Friday, March 6. He said they do not have the same level of response rate as the other surveys; the SNC survey has had 51 responses and the UCOSOGIE survey has had 52. He noted that, even so, this rate is better than the rate of response to the SNC survey last year. He stressed that faculty are participating, as evidenced by the high rate of survey responses compared to recent previous years, and he thinks that is worth noting because faculty are contributing their thoughts and time to shared governance.

Chair Robinett told the Executive Committee that the Writing Instruction in the Disciplines (WID) Council would like to send out a survey as well. He said that while it does not require approval of the Executive Committee, it was included in the ExCo drive folder. He explained that the WID Council is gathering information to prepare for a workshop to be held in April. No one had any objections to their survey. Chair Robinett said he could send the survey out via Qualtrics if the WID Chair approves.

3. *Updates on faculty governance and Bylaws*

Chair Robinett told ExCo he has spent a lot of time looking at Faculty Senate Bylaws; additionally, the Faculty Governance Committee and Ms. Hamm have looked at the Bylaws. He pointed out that the Rebuild has stressed the importance of not only viewing things structurally but also reviewing processes and documentation in order to consider ways that the university may need to modernize and streamline the things that they do. He has found inconsistencies in the ways the Bylaws are formatted; they seem to have been amalgamated throughout time. Chair Robinett has used *Sturgis* as a reference to restructure the Bylaws and include some new information. He wants senators to be aware as the Bylaws come forward that they may look different than they are currently; the content and materials will all be there, but he thinks that if Senate councils and committees are being asked to update their policies and procedures, Faculty Senate should also be willing to undertake that task. Chair Robinett will meet with Ms. Hamm next week to go through the draft and clean up the Bylaws even further before sending them to the ad hoc committee, who agreed to meet one more time to review the Bylaws before bringing them forward for Faculty Senate consideration.

Chair Robinett explained that one of the most striking differences in the revision versus the current Bylaws is that the amount of detail included for each Senate Bylaw has been inconsistent. He noted that *Sturgis* does not stipulate that bylaws should be workflows; some work tasks that are outlined in the Bylaws really have more of a place in the policies and procedures documents of councils and committees. He said for this reason the revised Bylaws may look significantly shorter. He added that since information will be removed from the Bylaws and added to the policies and procedures documents, senators will need to review those more closely in the future to make sure there is consistency.

Chair Robinett pointed out that there are four Senate councils that deal specifically with curricular issues. He thinks those curricular issues need to be spelled out so that there is consistency in the ways that curriculum is proposed, reviewed, and navigated. He said for this reason the ways that curricular processes should be navigated will be included in the Bylaws moving forward. He noted that in this way Faculty Senate will fulfill its role in the curricular process.

He expressed appreciation to Ms. Hamm because she has been working with Chair Robinett and the ad hoc committee to go through the Constitution and Bylaws line by line.

3. *CGE review and possible SGA topic for Senate*

Chair Robinett met with CGE to go through their charge very thoroughly. He is happy that Parliamentarian Gblerkpor serves on CGE to facilitate conversation between ExCo and that council. Chair Robinett sent CGE Chair Josh Averbek four examples of General Education reviews from other institutions that he thinks provide a very useful roadmap moving forward. He said these groups considered things like their statewide assessment measures, how the Higher Learning Commission has worked at their institutions, workforce development, and what it means to be an educated citizen. He observed that WIU's timeline is not out of sync with that of other institutions who have successfully navigated this process. He said several of them referred to a General Education Review *and Reform* in order to indicate that those schools managed to implement new practices. He remarked that several of the institutions talked in their documentation about the competition for resources and the ways that played into General Education decisions. He said CGE asked solid questions when he spoke with them, and he looks forward to working with them moving forward.

Chair Robinett had a great meeting with one of the SGA officers today; she was an active participant in the Council on General Education (CGE) conversation last week. Chair Robinett related that the SGA representative spoke to him about a request that SGA may decide to bring forward to Faculty Senate. He said she asked for additional information about how early faculty can share their syllabi. He said SGA may ask that faculty, when possible, share their syllabi with students earlier, even if it is in draft form. Chair Robinett shared with the SGA representative the challenges of contract dates and that sometimes faculty do not know exactly what courses they are teaching until the semester starts, and sometimes even afterwards. He said the SGA rep was very understanding about these realities, but she brought up that sharing syllabi earlier is very helpful for students who are working so that they can make important decisions about how to navigate their classes and for students to understand what books will be "required" versus "recommended" and what other resources they may need for classes so that they can make more informed financial decisions.

Senator Melkumian agrees that having an informed student is a great advantage to everybody. She pointed out, though, that faculty sometimes do not know what they are teaching until the first week of the semester, and an even bigger problem is that sometimes classes are cancelled. She would be willing to send her syllabi to students even in the middle of July, but if a class were to be cancelled it would be confusing for students rather than helpful as they scramble to find a replacement class. For this reason, she is not sure whether she would support this request.

Provost Mossman thinks the first step is to get stabilized enrollment, which is being worked on as part of the Rebuild. He said the Efficiency Committee is addressing the problem of constant last-minute changes to the schedules. Provost Mossman recalls that when there were many more students at WIU, faculty in his department were required to provide a course description, book list, and summarized syllabus, including a description of required papers, to be posted on the bulletin board outside of the chair's office. He recalled this was definitely looked at by students, but at that time there was more stability with the scheduling. Provost Mossman thinks the schedule looks better this semester than it did a year ago, so he hopes that a year from now the university will be at the point where they could easily do this kind of work, which he totally agrees would be excellent for students.

Chair Robinett stressed that this is something SGA is still talking about; they are not formally bringing forward this request. He also clarified that SGA was considering the week prior to classes, not a month or earlier.

Senator Melkumiann noted that when looking at how her Fall 2026 schedule looks now, she would be teaching five classes, and another four classes in Spring 2027. She pointed out that is almost five ACEs overload and much more than she has ever taught before. She thinks that, considering the complete uncertainty of some of these classes, chances are some will be cancelled, perhaps even into the first week of the semester. She thinks there is just too much uncertainty at this point to grant this request.

Provost Mossman agreed that this is the way things have been for the past number of years, and Quad Cities classes have been even worse, but one of the goals of the Rebuild is to address this. He understands that a lot of students do enroll late, but the university is also not scheduling the way it should be. He thinks these kinds of scheduling mishaps can be avoided with the Rebuild and greater coordination between school directors and across the entire university. He foresees both colleges coordinating very clearly when building the schedule rather than individual departments building their own schedules. He stressed that faculty members need to

know what they are going to teach, and this is a real problem that needs to be solved.

Senator Melkumian thinks one week before classes is perfectly reasonable when faculty schedules are not necessarily set in stone but at least when they know there will be no cancellations or drastic changes, and if this was the case she could totally support the request. She used to send her students an email two weeks and one week prior to her classes and include a description of the class and syllabus, but she has not been able to do that lately. Chair Robinett stressed that SGA is not asking for this as a requirement; it would just be a respectful request. He wants this on senators' radar because SGA may bring it forward as a possible discussion item for March 10, which has a lighter agenda.

4. *Finalize agenda for Senate meeting of March 10*

Chair Robinett observed that Amy Carr will present to Faculty Senate on March 10 and April 14 about the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council meetings. He said the Council for Intercollegiate Athletics scheduling report is not ready to go forward to Faculty Senate yet so will be moved to the March 31 agenda.

Chair Robinett warned that while the March 10 meeting will be lighter than some Senate meetings, the March 31 meeting will include a visit from President Mindrup and Vice President Roselieb, the CPPP report, the CIT syllabus recommendation, the Budget Transparency Committee report, and first reading of the Bylaws.

Chair Robinett noted that if the constitutional amendments pass, election notices can be sent out shortly after spring break.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Office Manager/Recording Secretary