

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Tuesday, 25 April 2026
4:00 p.m. – Stipes Hall 101**

ACTION MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jen McKenzie, Chair; Hollie Mason, Vice Chair; Deb Allwardt, Secretary

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

1. *Motion to allow for remote attendance*

The Executive Committee approved putting a Motion to Allow for Remote Attendance as the first item on the Faculty Senate agenda for September 1. Senator Allwardt made the motion, Senator Mason seconded, and it was unanimously approved; this means that when the item comes before the Senate for consideration, a motion on the floor will not be necessary. The motion to allow for remote attendance will allow for senators to attend via Zoom once a quorum has been reached with in-person attendance.

2. *Motion to allow for continuation of ad hoc Committee on Federal Transitions*

This committee was originally created in 2024 to help the university respond to changes occurring at the federal level. Provost Mossman confirmed that the ad hoc committee is still needed, and he would like for Faculty Senate to consider approving its continuation in the interests of transparency and to deal with sometimes complicated issues. He recalled that the committee was originally created to address issues related to international visas and immigration officials on campus, and it has broadened to include reporting to agencies about students getting federal aid. He would like to see the committee's involvement expanded beyond non-citizen issues to also include issues related to financial aid. The Executive Committee read through the previous language to make sure the motion is able to cover these types of issues and was satisfied that it can. Rather than specify a date for the committee to report on its efforts to Faculty Senate, the motion will specify that the committee "report its findings to Faculty Senate when available or upon request." The Executive Committee placed this item under New Business for the September 1 Senate meeting.

3. *Annual reports from Senate councils and committees*

The Executive Committee has been provided with annual reports from Senate councils and committees. These will be included in the Senate Drive for the meeting of September 1 and will be considered during Reports of Committees and Councils. Last year's committee and council chairs have been asked to attend to answer any questions that senators may have about their reports.

4. *Senate priorities*

Chair McKenzie asked the Executive Committee to think about what priorities Faculty Senate should concentrate on this year since it will not be approving curriculum in light of the moratorium on curricular requests, except when needed for accreditation. She would like to see the Senate prioritize accessibility in online courses and all elective spaces, such as everything faculty put on WesternOnline. Chair McKenzie noted that faculty have heard that this needs to happen and that there are people at the university working on this, but she does not think most faculty know what to do, how to do it, or how important this is. Senator Allwardt agrees that this is something that needs to be kept on the table and that the timeline needs to be reiterated throughout the year. She suggested it might be helpful for Faculty Senate to hear a presentation from someone like Dawn Sweet from University Technology about the hardest things faculty are facing in making their materials accessible and what issues are being flagged. Chair McKenzie pointed out that Dawn Sweet is an instructional designer rather than an accessibility expert, and Provost Mossman suggested that Ian Szechowycz might be a good person to address this topic. Senator Allwardt would like to know what faculty can do to be helpful to University Technology as they address this.

Provost Mossman agrees that accessibility would be a good issue for Faculty Senate to prioritize in the coming year. He is not sure if universities are being given one year or two years to make their materials accessible. He thinks this topic also fits with space allocation, which the university will be addressing this year. He believes the Macomb campus is highly inaccessible for individuals with any kind of orthopedic disability. He is determined that the university obtain opportunities that US senators will make available in the spring to address ADA compliance. He thinks that WIU needs to work on accessibility across the board.

The Executive Committee considered asking Faculty Senate to create an ad hoc committee to research accessibility issues at WIU and bring back a report at the December Senate meeting. Provost Mossman suggested the committee could look into what kinds of resources are available to students with accessibility needs and how WIU addresses accessibility compared to peer institutions. He noted that a Senate ad hoc committee could also bring forth budget recommendations, which could carry a lot of weight if there are accessibility issues that need to be funded. Chair McKenzie will work up a possible charge for an ad hoc committee for the Executive Committee to consider at its next meeting. She pointed out that there is a difference between physical ADA compliance issues and issues of academic accommodation and online access. She thinks an ad hoc committee could address four separate issues: accommodation; online access; physical ADA excellence; budget needs; and comparison with peer institutions. Provost Mossman suggested the ad hoc committee would need to include and work closely with representatives from the Vice President for Student Services area. He added that the deans and Associate Provost Lori Baker-Sperry would be other good resources. Chair McKenzie asked the Executive Committee to send other ideas to her regarding a possible ad hoc committee.

Chair McKenzie asked how faculty are receiving student accommodation needs currently. She thinks faculty need to understand their responsibilities because the Disability Resource Center is no longer sending these out. Provost Mossman thinks there can be problems with students with disabilities being unable to communicate their needs to faculty. Senator Allwardt expressed concerns about the lack of supervision over this process. Chair McKenzie remarked that although the university is ADA compliant in providing “reasonable accommodation,” she thinks WIU needs to work on becoming better. Provost Mossman recognizes that WIU has neurodiversity-friendly programs, but they are not to scale across the university.

5. *ExCo reps for Senate committees*

Senator Allwardt volunteered to represent the Executive Committee on the Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance, and Chair McKenzie volunteered to be the ExCo rep on the Budget Transparency Committee. Elections for senators to fill the remaining seats on these committees will be held during Announcements on September 1.

6. *Charges to Senate councils and committees to update their policies and procedures documents*

Last year, Senate councils and committee were charged to update their memberships in light of the transition to a two-college system. Most Senate councils and committees include their memberships in their policies and procedures documents, and some updated these at that time as well, but a call will go out to all Senate councils and committees to complete this assignment this year and present their revisions to the Senate for consideration by no later than the first spring meeting. Revisions to policies and procedures, unlike bylaws revisions, require only a simple majority vote by Faculty Senate and do not need higher approval. In her email to Senate council and committee chairs, Chair McKenzie will encourage them to complete the charge early in the year so that they can design their work for this year based upon the updated documents.

7. *Senate election notices*

The Executive Committee approved Ms. Hamm distributing via email the election notices for vacant Senate seats. There are eight seats that remained unfilled after the elections in the spring. Petitions are due to be returned by September 9.

8. *Guests for Faculty Senate meetings this fall*

President Mindrup will attend the Senate meeting on September 15. She did not provide dates that she would visit with the Executive Committee, but ExCo members confirmed they would like to meet with her separately as well, so Ms. Hamm will reach out to the President's office again to get those fall and spring ExCo meeting dates.

ExCo members suggested as guests: Vice President Ketra Roselieb to talk about the budget; Vice President Schuch and Assistant Vice President Toomey to talk about recruitment; Associate Provost Lori Baker-Sperry and Faculty Associate Damon McArthur to talk about First Four; Professor Julia Albarracin and Advising Executive Director Miguel Huerta to talk about the RPED grant; Professor Lisa Parzevall to talk about embedded tutors; representatives from various disability resources; and Executive Director for Strategy and Institutional Effectiveness Amy Patrick Mossman to speak about the strategic planning process.

9. *Finalize agenda for Senate meeting of September 1*

Special guests for the September 1 meeting will include Christie Reynolds from the Counseling Center; Jackie Price, Director of the Student Development and Success Center; and Amy Carr, WIU Representative to the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council. They will speak during Announcements.

There will be two curricular requests for Faculty Senate to consider. These were approved by CCPI at its last spring meeting, but it occurred after the last Senate meeting so the requests could not come forward until the fall.

Former Senate Chair Jeremy Robinett will present a transitional report from last year's Senate to this year's senators during the Chair's Report on September 1.

The Executive Committee would like to hear about the positive things that various areas of the university are doing and for these to be highlighted in a regular agenda item at Faculty Senate meetings. Highlighting Good News will be the first item under the Chair's Report on Senate agendas this year.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Office Manager and Recording Secretary