

**WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY  
SENATE Regular Meeting, 25 January 2022, 4:00 p.m.  
Union Capitol Rooms/Zoom**

**ACTION MINUTES**

**SENATORS PRESENT:** D. Atherton, D. Banash, L. Brice, G. Cabedo-Timmons, A. Carr, J. Choi, L. Ebert Wallace, R. Filipink, J. Land, I. Lauer, T. Lough, S. Macchi, D. Oursler, B. Polley, J. Robinett, R. Sawhney, E. Shupe, S. Szyjka, Y. Tang, E. Taylor, B. Thompson, J. Wroblewski

**Ex-officio:** Russ Morgan, Associate Provost; Betsy Perabo, Parliamentarian

**SENATORS ABSENT:** S. Bailey

**GUESTS:** Tom Blackford, Craig Conrad, Cody Cornell, Dennis DeVolder, Francis Godwyll, Buzz Hoon, Sarah Lawson, Sue Martinelli-Fernandez, Hector Maymi-Sugranes, Kristi Mindrup, Lorette Oden, Renee Polubinsky, Jim Schmidt

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. November 30, 2021

**APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED**

II. Announcements

A. Provost's Report

Associate Provost Russ Morgan announced that the ceremony to recognize recipients of the Provost's Award for Excellence will be held tomorrow (January 26). Due to covid protocols, attendance will be limited to the award recipients and their supervisors. Associate Provost Morgan said the Provost's office hopes that the Distinguished Faculty Lecturer presentation, to be held in March, will be able to be held in-person, but a decision will need to be made closer to the date based on the Covid data at that time.

An email has been sent to faculty announcing that the Provost's Travel Awards application process will open tomorrow for the spring semester. Associate Provost Morgan announced that, in line with a recommendation from the Senate Executive Committee last semester, the awards will initially only be opened for Unit A faculty needing tenure; after one week, the applications will be opened to all faculty. Associate Provost Morgan stated that there were remaining travel award dollars left over from fall semester, so that money has been added to the available spring semester funds.

Dr. Guiyou Huang, the 12<sup>th</sup> President of Western Illinois University, will be inaugurated on Thursday, March 31. Associate Provost Morgan stated that alternative plans are being made for a face-to-face inauguration, if possible, and for a virtual inauguration.

Senator Thompson asked what progress has been made toward reinstating an African American Studies major. Associate Provost Morgan replied that he and College of Arts and Sciences Dean Sue Martinelli-Fernandez have met with a couple of the students involved in this effort. He related that a committee made recommendations which are being considered by members of the administration, deans, and representatives of the Provost's office. Senator Thompson asked what the recommendations were. Associate Provost Morgan replied that he has not seen the recommendations or report, but he thinks the recommendation was to move forward, either with an African American Studies major or department or both.

Parliamentarian Perabo, who is the Coordinator for the Department of Liberal Arts and Sciences as well as the African American Studies Program, has been serving on the Ethnic, Race, Gender, and

Sexuality Studies Committee (ERGS), formed in Fall 2020. Following the elimination of the AAS Major in 2016, the AAS Program became part of the Department of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which currently offers a minor in African American Studies. The AAS Subcommittee of ERGS has made a number of recommendations for strengthening the AAS Program. The current plan is to develop an African American Studies option within the Liberal Arts and Sciences major. Some restructuring of the Liberal Arts and Sciences Department will be necessary to facilitate the new option, and Parliamentarian Perabo has been working with a number of people offering resources that would benefit such an option. She hopes to have the feasibility study for the new option ready to move forward to committees by mid-February. She has been working on this initiative with the Black Student Association President, who is interning in the Liberal Arts and Sciences Department and doing research necessary for the feasibility study to create the new option.

Senator Thompson asked when it is anticipated that the African American Studies major will happen because that is the concern that has been expressed in recent meetings. Parliamentarian Perabo hopes that the African American Studies option will act as an intermediate step for the major, which she hopes can be developed in the relatively near future.

Senator Thompson asked if predictive analysis is being used to analyze WIU's enrollment and retention programming and, if so, how. Associate Provost Morgan replied that he is not sure, and Faculty Senate should speak to the Vice President for Enrollment Management for an answer to this question. Chair Lauer added that this information was included in the Vice President's presentation to Faculty Senate, but agrees that it is unclear as to what using predicative analytics entails.

B. Student Government Association Report  
(Cody Cornell, SGA representative to Faculty Senate)

Mr. Cornell related that SGA is currently reviewing its constitution preparatory to adding an indigenous peoples' statement and an anti-racism statement.

At meetings beginning this week, SGA started discussing plans to change the way that elections are held. Mr. Cornell related that the current SGA President and Vice President would like to move elections earlier in the year because they felt they did not have enough time to become initiated into and trained for their roles. They think there needs to be more time to adjust to these positions.

Mr. Cornell announced that SGA is moving its meetings this semester to 3:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and Thursdays instead of 4:00 p.m. He encourages Faculty Senators who have any questions about SGA to reach out to him via email at [ct-cornell@wiu.edu](mailto:ct-cornell@wiu.edu).

D. Other Announcements

1. Open Letter to the Mental Health Action on Campus Act by the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council  
(Amy Carr, WIU Representative to the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council)

Senator Carr stated that the open letter is not yet on the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council website because normally documents are first submitted to the IBHE Executive Director. The open letter was given to her in December, and the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council has not yet received a response. Senator Carr stated that the Mental Health Action on Campus Act passed in 2019, but it has not yet been implemented because of Covid and funding issues. She related that the legislation includes specific recommendations about ways to implement student mental health care. She added that the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council will next be working on a similar document for faculty.

Chair Lauer related that the CAGAS annual report showed there was a high number of selective withdrawals in 2020 and that the former CAGAS chair (Megan Owens) attributed this to, in part, the various mental health issues students are dealing with. Chair Lauer stated that CAGAS will be discussing actions they can take at their meeting this Thursday,

January 27, and the Senate Executive Committee will be picking up this conversation next Tuesday, February 1.

2. Chair Lauer related that the Provost Search Committee has completed their zoom interviews and in the next week or two will be selecting candidates to come to campus for interviews.
3. Election notices have been emailed to eligible faculty for at-large and college-specific vacancies on Faculty Senate for Fall 2022. Chair Lauer asked senators to encourage their faculty colleagues to consider running for one of the seats.

III. Reports of Committees and Councils

A. Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)  
(Josh Wroblewski, Chair)

**SENATE COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES**

Budget Transparency Committee

Dan Atherton, Agriculture	replacing	Mark Bernards	Spr 22 only	B&T
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Council on General Education

Katherine Broughton, RPTA	replacing	Vacant	2023	B&T
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**UNIVERSITY COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES:**

Bachelor of General Studies Advisory Committee

Kevin Bacon, Agriculture	replacing	Mark Bernards	Spr 22 only	B&T
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Honors Council

Tom Sadler, AFEDS	replacing	Mark Bernards	Spr 22 only	B&T
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There were no further nominations, and the slate of candidates was declared elected.

IV. Old Business – None

V. New Business

A. Anti-Racism Task Force

Chair Lauer stated that the President intends the new task force to try to find ways the University can address and combat racism on campus and in the community. He stated that President Huang wants one or two senators to serve on the task force. Chair Lauer strongly recommends that the senators be in their first or second year of service on Faculty Senate because the work of the task force will probably extend through at least next year. For this reason, selection of a senator whose service extends into the next year will help maintain a strong line of conversation between the task force and the Senate. He suggests that the senator(s) serving on it should not be in their third year, although senators in their third year of service will not be precluded from volunteering. Chair Lauer stated that the President already has the names of 50 volunteers for the task force, including two current senators, faculty, students, and members of the community, and wants to move forward quickly.

Senator Oursler asked if the task force has a mission statement of its goals. Chair Lauer responded that it does not at this point. He stated that creation of the task force will be formally announced at the next Board of Trustees meeting in a month. He recalled that there was animated discussion at the last Board of Trustees meeting about this issue from students relating events from their experiences in the classroom, student housing and dining, and other places. Chair Lauer anticipates

the new task force will attempt to prioritize which of these issues need to be addressed most urgently and come up with ways to address them.

**Motion:** To nominate Bill Thompson (Thompson)

There were no further nominations, and Senator Thompson was declared elected. Chair Lauer stated that he will pass along the name of the Senate volunteer to the President after today's meeting, but if an additional senator wishes to volunteer, they can reach out to him.

B. Election of CBT Senator to Senate Nominating Committee

Chair Lauer stated that a senator from the College of Business and Technology is needed to replace Senator Bernards while he is on sabbatical this semester. He explained that the Senate Nominating Committee selects senators and faculty to serve on a range of committees. Senator Thompson added that it is a good committee to serve on if senators are interested in getting a feel for how things work at the University. Senator Wroblewski added that there is not a huge time commitment and much of the work is done at the end of the semester.

**Motion:** To nominate Dan Atherton (Atherton)

There were no further nominations, and Senator Atherton was declared elected.

C. For the Good of the Body

Senator Thompson asked if Faculty Senate will continue to have meetings in this format in light of the continuing number of Covid cases. Chair Lauer replied that he will do whatever is the will of the Senate. Chair Lauer added that this meeting, which he attends in the Capitol Room, is the only face-to-face he does on campus. Senator Thompson thinks that with the high Covid rate in the county, Faculty Senate should continue to zoom its meetings while allowing a limited number of senators to attend in the Union.

**Motion:** To adjourn (Brice)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:30 p.m.

Jeremy Robinett, Senate Secretary

Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary