

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Regular Meeting, 28 October 2025, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom and Union Capitol Rooms

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT IN PERSON: D. Allwardt, S. Chakravorti, P. Cole, R. Di Carmine, H. Elbe, N. Gillotti, D. Gravitt, M. Hoge, R. Kelly, H. Mason, D. McArthur, J. McKenzie, A. Melkumian, J. Robinett, R. Sharma, S. Turkelli, J. Walker, L. Wipperling, E. Woell

SENATORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: E. Hamner, F. Tasdan

SENATORS ABSENT: E. Asare, A. Frederick

EX-OFFICIO: William Gblerkpor, Parliamentarian; Mark Mossman, Provost

GUESTS: Joyce Aikins, Lori Baker-Sperry, Tom Blackford, Julie Curless, Patty Eathington, Tahir Khan, Heather McIlvaine-Newsad, Kristi Mindrup, Holly Nikels, Lorette Oden, Renee Polubinsky, Eric Sheffield, Amanda Silberer, Sebastian Szyjka, Ripley Zanger

Chair Robinett welcomed new Senator At-Large, Rob Kelly, from the School of Law Enforcement and Justice Administration. He noted that President Mindrup has a standing meeting with state university chancellors and presidents that continues until 4:30, after which she will join the Faculty Senate meeting in person

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. October 14, 2025

MINUTES APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Provost's Report

Provost Mossman apologized for not being able to make it back from a meeting to be able to attend in person. He told senators that the searches for three positions in the Provost's Office are underway; search committees have met, and interviews should be held at the end of next week. He thinks this is good news and encouraged everyone to attend the open sessions for each candidate.

Provost Mossman reported that the Rebuild Communication Committee completed and submitted its report; the Provost agreed to that report, and the internal communications recommended by that committee have begun. He stated that every other Thursday an email will be sent from the Provost's Office; there is the expectation that deans will also send emails out to their colleges to provide updates and news on what is happening there in an effort to increase transparency. He added that the digital dashboard is up, which is another important effort toward increased internal communication that Chair Robinett will discuss further. He noted that the digital dashboard has already been posted on the Faculty Senate website (https://www.wiu.edu/faculty_senate/committees/index.php) and will soon be posted on the Provost's website as well. Provost Mossman added there are also plans to create a way that faculty can post questions on the Provost's website and receive responses to news coming out of the Provost's Office.

Provost Mossman is drafting a response to the Rebuild Interdisciplinarity/Co-Curricular Committee about their report, and he plans to meet with them next week. He met with the Rebuild Chairs and Directors Committee last week and thought it was an excellent meeting. Provost Mossman's

understanding is that this committee is moving towards a report. He also noted that the Rebuild Space, Efficiency, and Constituency Committees have all been meeting regularly as well.

Chair Robinett asked Provost Mossman to remind senators when dean searches will be reviewed. Provost Mossman responded that the search committees are being built, and the deadline for applications is October 30. He thinks that as soon as the final faculty representatives are in place, it will be possible to call those two committees and move forward from there.

Senator McArthur did some research on his department, Art and Design, using the data that the GIS Center used to formulate the presentation they gave to Faculty Senate. He thinks a lot of their assumptions were inaccurate in terms of capacity, particularly the capacity for the Department of Art and Design labs. He asked if the Rebuild Academic Use of Space Committee will be using the data that came from this presentation by the GIS Center as their working assumptions. Provost Mossman replied that information about the capacity for classrooms comes from the Registrar's Office. He stated that since this is a safety issue, this master plan is constantly updated by Facilities Management and the Registrar's Office, so that data is accurate. He recognizes that there will definitely be issues with room usage and utilization because all departments have different uses for their spaces. He thinks that, because of this, some information may not be 100 percent accurate and will act more as a guide for discussion because there certainly needs to be discussions about how each department and program uses their spaces.

Chair Robinett said one issue is that many spaces at WIU have been designated as special use, so information about them does not appear on the Registrar's Office master file which was used to generate the GIS Center report; the GIS report provides an opportunity to look at how often classrooms are utilized based on what appears in the Registrar's database. He stated that, in addition to using this information, the Academic Use of Space Committee has solicited information from chairs and directors related to how they view their spaces; some chairs and directors have not yet responded to this request, so they have been invited to participate in this survey again. Chair Robinett related that the Academic Use of Space Committee has also solicited data from the Office of Online Teaching and Learning (University Technology) related to how they categorize and classify the equipment they have in various rooms. He said the committee has also asked the Registrar's Office for their capacity list and has asked Facilities Management what they show rooms as being designated for. Chair Robinett thinks there is a lot of discrepancies between all of these, which suggests there are many ways to make things more efficient in knowing what spaces are being used and how they are being used. He thinks this is especially important when looking at the number of building service workers who are asked to do a variety of tasks and the limited dollars available for improving some spaces. He noted there are a lot of different data points that the committee is trying to figure out how to use.

B. Student Government Association (SGA)
(Ripley Zanger, SGA Director of Academic Affairs)

Ms. Zanger reported that SGA had a very long and productive meeting last week. She related that the SGA Director of Public Relations asked everyone present to list positives and negatives of SGA, which really helped the group assess where they are this year. She stated that while SGA has improved a lot, some weaknesses that were noted involved visibility and connections with the rest of the student body. Ms. Zanger thinks this is really important because that is the purpose of SGA.

Ms. Zanger related that to address this perceived weakness, SGA will host an event in the near future called Spill the Tea, which will replace their former Meet the SGA event. She told senators that SGA changed the name in order to hopefully attract a better turnout and so that students will feel like they can come to the event and be able to share. Ms. Zanger said SGA will also hold a weekly tabling event to help with visibility and outreach and will hold their first informal Town Hall meeting on November 19, which is another way students can get their voices heard.

Ms. Zanger asked senators to send students to her or to their SGA school senator if they come to faculty with concerns or other things that might pertain to SGA. She would like to get the word out

better about SGA because a lot of students who are not serving on SGA do not know about it, so they are trying really hard to fix that in order to become a better resource.

Ms. Zanger stated that SGA is still looking for senators from the Colleges of Fine Arts and Communication and from Business and Technology; they may have someone interested from B&T but she asked FA&C professors to talk to their students to see if any of them might be interested in serving. Ms. Zanger said SGA also still needs a senator to represent First Generation students; this is an at-large position, so if any senators have a first-generation student who might be interested, they can reach out to Ms. Zanger or to the SGA Speaker.

Ms. Zanger remarked, in relation to the Academic Use of Space Committee discussion, that SGA had someone speak to them recently about the WIU Food Pantry. She said SGA was told that the Food Pantry is looking for a larger space and that they had received funding for a refrigeration unit but were unable to get it because their location in Horrabin Hall is too small. Ms. Zanger is not sure if this falls under the Academic Use of Space Committee or if they only deal with classroom space, but she wanted to bring it up because it is on the mind of students.

Ms. Zanger related that a question was raised at the SGA Cabinet meeting yesterday regarding staffing the new Center for the Performing Arts. She said SGA has heard that there is minimal to no staffing for that building yet and that, therefore, there are no performances scheduled for next year. She said the person who brought this up wondered if it was true and, if it is, if there is a solution to the staffing problem.

Provost Mossman responded that the Center for the Performing Arts will achieve “substantial completion” earlier than anticipated – in February rather than in May. He stated that the first two steps for operation of the Center require the hiring of two positions, the most important of which is the technical director. Provost Mossman said this position has technically been approved, and efforts have begun to get that hiring process underway as quickly as possible because the position needs to be filled by January.

Chair Robinett explained that the Academic Use of Space Committee is not specifically looking at things related to the supplemental activities in different areas. He thinks it is important for everyone to recognize that there are no significant movements taking place on campus right now in regard to space while awaiting the selection of new leadership, including the two new deans, and while moving into the two-college model. He noted that, realistically, the university does not have enough financial or human resources to be able to move things multiple times, so moving something now with the possibility of having to move it again later seemed somewhat potentially unnecessary. Chair Robinett stressed this does not in any way imply that there is not a great deal of support for the food pantry and the efforts they have been making, but the university must be cognizant to avoid potentially moving things multiple times.

Chair Robinett heard earlier this week that the current SGA administration has filled student representative spots on Faculty Senate councils earlier than has been seen in recent years. He expressed his thanks to SGA for participating in shared governance across the institution and making sure that student voices are heard. He stated that while the upcoming SGA events will appear in the minutes, if Ms. Zanger has any promotional materials she wants sent out, he will be happy to do so.

C. Faculty Senate Chair’s Report

Chair Robinett related that since the last time Faculty Senate met, he had the opportunity to attend the Board of Trustees retreat and several Rebuild committee meetings, as well as talking with a significant number of colleagues about artificial intelligence (AI). He said there were two things that clearly stood out to him at the Board retreat, the first of which was a clear recognition that recruitment must be the top priority among WIU administrators. He related that Rich Toomey, the new Assistant Vice President for Admissions and Enrollment Support, shared information about ways that scholarship packaging is being improved; this will involve changing some of the commitment, freshmen, and transfer scholarships and some new dollar amounts that may be more

attractive to potential students. Chair Robinett related that Assistant Vice President Toomey is looking at ways to use Slate to improve and manage communications with prospective students and families; instead of having a staff member look at every email from prospective students, this can be automated as part of a communication plan. He related that Assistant Vice President Toomey hopes this will allow his area to better address how information is shared locally and at a distance and how to increase that footprint.

Chair Robinett told senators his second takeaway from the Board retreat was that cash flow is something that Faculty Senate will need to continue to keep an eye on for the next few years by consistently asking questions about where the university's finances stand. He related that Ketra Roselieb, Vice President for Finance and Administration, shared more detailed projections with the Board than what senators saw at the Faculty Senate meeting. Because of this, Chair Robinett has asked Senator Walker, Chair of the Budget Transparency Committee (BTC), to make sure the BTC follows up for a deeper conversation about what those numbers mean moving forward and how they could potentially impact the institution. Chair Robinett said he did not bring this up in order to alarm anyone but offers it as a way of making sure the Senate stays informed and continues its due diligence in participating in shared governance. He has appreciated that the administration has been willing to come to Faculty Senate meetings and that Vice President Roselieb has agreed to visit with senators again in the spring, but he stressed that understanding how the budget and cash flow work together is something that Faculty Senate has to do, and this needs to be followed up on fairly regularly. He has also suggested to Senator Walker that the BTC will want to follow up on payroll conversations and the ERP because these both will have financial implications on the institution moving forward. Chair Robinett noted that these affect how students are going to register, how employees are going to get paid, and the way that a great many things happen across the campus because of that centralized system. He hopes the BTC will follow up on these things at their meeting this week.

Chair Robinett encouraged the Board Trustees, as he has encouraged senators, to regularly check the digital dashboard for updates on the Rebuild and ongoing initiatives. He stated that, based on conversations he has had with Trustees since their retreat, he believes at least a few of them have been checking out the digital dashboard and trying to stay aware.

Chair Robinett related that the Academic Use of Space Committee is preparing recommendations to convert more of the university's general use classrooms into general use spaces. He stated that instead of always going through a specific department to use a general use classroom, conversion to a general use space would allow for centralization and more efficient and effective use throughout the day. He thinks this will allow people to potentially invest in these rooms; it would allow for strategic enhancements and better utilization of building service workers.

Chair Robinett noted that Provost Mossman has said the Rebuild Efficiency Committee has been meeting, and one thing this committee has been able to do, in collaboration with the Registrar's Office, is to adjust the timeline for submitting semester schedules. He explained that one reason this is important is that at times the university has been existing in one fiscal year but looking for adjuncts for a different fiscal year, so the adjuncts are brought in when the current fiscal year has already closed out or is near to closing out, which makes it difficult to track the overall expenses of the institution. He said the committee is working to get these types of things better aligned so that expenditures can be monitored and individuals can be more strategic with this process. Chair Robinett pointed out that overload, adjunct, and summer money is all part of one shared pool that gets distributed, so if those different areas are controlled in more efficient ways, it would make it possible to facilitate more opportunities by being more strategic with how those dollars are used. He added that this is one thing Faculty Senate learned last year from the work done by the BTC.

1. Digital Dashboard Update

Chair Robinett will send a reminder to committee and council chairs next week asking them to provide monthly updates to the digital dashboard so that it can be kept updated. He related that chairs enter their information, that information is reviewed, and then it populates to the

digital dashboard. He said there is no desire to ask colleagues who are already very busy to submit something every week but rather once a month or when they have significant conversations. Chair Robinett said that several persons have asked him if the Rebuild committees' final reports will be on the digital dashboard, but the dashboard is not that kind of repository; it is more of a Google Sheet. He plans to work with the Provost's Office to create a shared folder that can be accessed from either the Provost's Rebuild website or the Faculty Senate website where those Rebuild reports will be made available once they are accepted.

Chair Robinett pointed out that Provost Mossman has said that so far only the Rebuild Communication Committee's report has been approved. He related that one recommendation in that plan is for "listening sessions." He explained that instead of waiting for town halls, when there is potentially only a reactive moment for this to happen, the Provost's Office would regularly schedule listening groups where faculty could come together to discuss pedagogical issues or university concerns. He asked senators to let him, the Provost's Office, or Heather McIlvaine-Newsad, chair of the Rebuild Communication Committee, if they have ideas about things that it might be good to bring faculty together on in order to engage with each other. Chair Robinett thinks these listening sessions will provide faculty with a chance to reconnect and to build on those things that unite what the university is doing.

2. Ad Hoc Faculty Senate Governance Committee

Chair Robinett told senators that Senator Wipperling is chairing this committee, and there is a thorough report of the work they have been doing in this week's Executive Committee minutes. He has asked Senator Wipperling give a report to Faculty Senate today and may ask her to provide a short report from time to time, but, given that she will be reporting to the Executive Committee regularly, those minutes will serve as the main method of communication to the Faculty Senate moving forward.

Senator Wipperling reported that the committee has decided to recommend a model of one senator per school with an at-large senator elected for each additional 25 faculty members, based on where the faculty reside. She said specifics of this will be discussed further as the committee continues with this process.

Senator Wipperling related that the committee discussed whether to have an additional representative specifically from the Quad Cities campus. She noted that this was initially agreed upon, but in further discussion it was pointed out that members of the Quad Cities campus could run for election to represent their school, which is possible regardless of what campus a faculty member serves on, and in this way no campus would be elevated above the other. She related that it was also mentioned at the meeting that Faculty Senate has been unable to convince a Quad Cities faculty member to run for election for the past year and a half, although the committee is hopeful that this will not continue in the future. Senator Wipperling stated that the Quad Cities-specific seat has been removed for the moment, while knowing that this document, once complete, will go to Faculty Senate for discussion and to the full faculty before its approval. She added that the committee welcomes suggestions as they navigate this challenging task.

Senator Wipperling thanked the Faculty Governance Committee for their continued work on this initiative. She also expressed appreciation to Chair Robinett, who serves as an ex-officio member, and to Ms. Hamm since both provide valuable guidance and insight as the committee moves forward with this process. Chair Robinett asked everyone to keep in mind that as the committee develops what the Faculty Senate will look like in future, this will likely map onto Senate councils and committees as well so that the goal of faculty participation and shared governance is met.

Chair Robinett informed senators that the faculty survey on AI usage, knowledge, and assessment has closed, but the student survey is still open. He has posted the Qualtrics results dashboard in the

shared Faculty Senate Google Drive folder for senators who want to see that data. He explained that once the committee has had the chance to dig into the data, a campuswide presentation will be held to look at what students and faculty have said about AI. Chair Robinett related that one early takeaway that jumped out at him when going through the data is that ChatGPT and Grammarly AI were the most commonly used tools reported by both faculty and student respondents. He said faculty who responded tended to use AI for research and analytic purposes while students reported using it more as chatbots for quick information services. He added that across both groups, writing assistance, including brainstorming, editing, and proofreading, was the top reported use.

Chair Robinett reported that the biggest differences he saw were related to how each group saw policies and ethics related to AI. He noted that faculty in some of the comments described course-level policies that vary widely while students largely reported little or no awareness of campuswide policies. He said faculty reported broader use of AI tools and more concern about institutional ethics and academic integrity, while some student comments focus on fairness and a desire for clarity regarding what is allowed. He thinks the question of what is ethical versus what is permitted is an interesting tension coming out of some of this data.

Chair Robinett told senators that these conversations are continuing and expressed thanks to faculty who are serving on the AI reading group and on the AI discussion group who are looking at these surveys and data

Chair Robinett expressed thanks to those faculty who self-nominated to serve on the dean search committees. Chair Robinett had emailed senators to ask for an alteration in the faculty selection procedures based on how few nominations were initially submitted; he requested the alteration, in accordance with parliamentary procedures, in order to allow for more areas to be represented. He thanked senators for their quick response to this request and also reported one more change to what had originally been determined: Senator Hamner has recused himself from serving as the Faculty Senate representative for the dean search for the College of Humanities, Arts, Sciences, and Education. Chair Robinett explained that, given this occurred after the ballot was already distributed, he asked Senator DiCarmine to fill that role because she represents the same department that Senator Hamner would have represented on the search committee. He added that Senator Walker, who had also volunteered as the Senate representative, agreed to this change given that faculty from his school were also on the ballot. Chair Robinett stated he wanted to make sure that senators were aware of the logic behind this decision and appreciates Senator Hamner's ethical commitments, Senator DiCarmine's willingness to serve, and Senator Walker's understanding and collaborative spirit. He thinks this process has been one way Faculty Senate has shown that shared governance can work.

In addition to Senator DiCarmine representing Faculty Senate and the Department of English on the dean search committee, Josh Wroblewski will represent Theatre and Dance, Gloria Delany-Barmann will represent Education, Jena Gardner will represent Music, and Susie Brooks will represent Mathematics and Philosophy on the dean search for the College of Humanities, Arts, Sciences, and Education. The dean search for the College of Business, Health, and Community Programs will include Senator Chakravorti, representing Faculty Senate and the School of Accounting and Business Administration; Kathy Perone, representing Counselor Education, College Student Personnel, and Social Work; Minsun Doh, representing Recreation, Park, Tourism, and Hospitality; Angie Martin, representing Speech Pathology and Audiology; Yong Tang, representing Communication and Media; Jim McQuillan, representing Computer Sciences; and Emily Shupe, representing Health and Wellness. Chair Robinett remarked that it looks like there will be a lot of input from different areas on these searches, and he thanked all the faculty who self-nominated and those who were willing to serve.

Chair Robinett reminded senators that this can be a tough time of the semester for students and for each other; this long time before Thanksgiving is often when faculty see students with a variety of issues and problems. He asked that if faculty have students they have not seen in a while or whose behaviors have changed significantly, they take the time to complete a Leatherneck Care Referral so that individuals can reach out to their students and offer them appropriate support. He noted this is

especially important since this is the last week that students can drop a 16-week course. He thinks it is important that faculty check in and follow up both with students and with their colleagues.

Senator Mason remarked that when talking about where the budget comes from, she does not think the institution should just concentrate on projections but should be setting goals for recruitment and retention of students and should work significantly on bringing those students in, which is kind of working against the projections. She understands that projections are based on trends and where the institution has been, but she thinks WIU needs to be looking forward, setting goals, and putting time and effort into bringing students intentionally into the university. Chair Robinett thinks this is a wonderful conversation to have while President Mindrup is seated at the table; President Mindrup agreed absolutely, adding that this is on her list.

D. Other Announcements

1. President Kristi Mindrup

President Mindrup told senators it is always great to meet with them, hear their questions, and provide updates, many of which she hopes sound familiar to them either because the university community has been talking about them this semester or because senators have been active in part of the process. She expressed thanks for the faculty engagement across a number of initiatives within the university, including search committees, student outreach by departments, and some of the dynamic activities she is seeing across every college, school, and department that is engaging within their disciplines to increase awareness about WIU and attract students. She said it has been great to see students serving as ambassadors for their programs and participating in various activities across the state and beyond because these are the ways that the university's successes can be amplified. President Mindrup noted that amplifying WIU's success serves both as promotion and as a way to create access and opportunity for students. She added that it also shifts the narrative around the value of higher education, four-year and graduate degrees, which is a challenge in today's climate.

President Mindrup provided updates regarding priorities established this year. She recognizes that enrollment success is something that is on everyone's minds and was just mentioned as something that needs to be a key priority for the institution. She recognizes that projections are built around a context of assumptions about certain variables, such as a certain level of state funding or shifts in demographics, but she agrees that the institution also should ask what interventions can be applied in order to make a purposeful change in strengthening the enrollment. President Mindrup noted that Justin Schuch, Vice President for Student Success, who recently completed his doctoral studies, has been working with industry experts to look closely at both institutional and market data in order to start to identify geographic opportunities for the university to tap into new markets. She anticipates this will involve a collaboration between Student Success and Academic Affairs to expand WIU's market programmatically in order to serve the needs of students and the region. President Mindrup stated that, although there are details to be worked through, this is one of the reasons the academic revitalization is so exciting in this moment with the opportunity to be so intentional about these kinds of things.

President Mindrup informed senators that the new Assistant Vice President for Enrollment and Recruitment Initiatives has been on campus about a month and is trying to connect with everyone across the university to solicit input, hear insights, and share some of his perspectives in order to see how areas can work together to strengthen recruitment strategies. She noted that one of the primary charges for Assistant Vice President Toomey's position is to further enhance strategy and apply good practices. She thinks WIU is very fortunate to have Assistant Vice President Toomey on board because he has long-standing experiences at a couple of institutions and has not only initiated plans but has seen them through to success at Indiana State as well as at his most recent institution. She thinks that having someone with that very specific focus on enrollment strengthening, whether recruitment or retention, will provide the significant attention that this initiative needs in order to be successful. President

Mindrup added she always emphasizes that this is not only one person's responsibility, so while Assistant Vice President Toomey will spearhead the initiative, he will be working across divisions and in all areas of the university, with faculty, staff, and students, to strengthen plans, get everyone's input, activate, and move toward strengthening enrollment goals.

President Mindrup pointed out that there are still a number of external variables that continue to be challenging for the university, including navigating financial pressures and the population changes – which are starting to turn around a bit and show some glimmers of hope. She stated that the administration will continue to be aware of those, build them into future plans, and be strategic about responses to these variables while also trying to become more competitive across the state. She said this includes some advocacy at the state level to start to think statewide about the university system. She noted that there is an awareness of the emphasis on Illinois's flagship institution and the impact that it has on some regional institutions' enrollments. She believes there is some advocacy WIU can do, working together with partners across the state as well as with UPI and others, to make sure that the system of state higher education is doing well for the regions that are part of Illinois as well. She would like to see the state turn toward more of a holistic approach.

President Mindrup observed that part of enrollment strengthening is retention, and the second priority – cultivating student ambition and self-authorship – overlaps a little with student success. She noted that the Division of Student Success has initiated retention software that provides really useful quantitative data about student perspectives as well as anecdotal stories and input from their experiences while at WIU. She explained the great thing about the data is that it shows which students may be at low, middle, and high risk of leaving the university while also providing the ability to compare year to year, which is showing great improvement in retention efforts. President Mindrup noted that the percentage of students at highest risk is much lower this year than it was last year; the middle risk area has remained stable, and the low area of concern has grown a little bit, although it can be assumed that some students formerly in the area of high concern have shifted lower. She stated this has been really useful software to enhance the ability to work intentionally with students for recruitment.

President Mindrup thinks there was a great combined effort between Student Success initiatives and what faculty are doing in the classroom during what was branded as the first four days and the first four weeks of the semester. She said these have been very intentional efforts to keep students engaged across the campus. She noted that Student Success has initiated a point-reward system that has seen some success; the timing was great because the good weather at the start of the semester has encouraged students and others to be out on the campus, and it has been wonderful to see people engaging at tables and volunteering at recruitment activities and other events.

President Mindrup told senators that AI chatbots have been initiated in order to provide resources for students and give them direction about what may be useful to the experience that they are having at the university, whether they need mental health services or are looking to participate on campus. She explained the AI chatbot enhances what is being done at the university beyond the human, personal contact; it extends 24 hours a day so that students can constantly be in touch with a resource on campus that will provide them with information and a contact that they can follow up with. She has been seeing some great things from Student Success towards initiatives focused on retaining students because it is important to empower students to be able to navigate their experience at the university successfully.

President Mindrup stated that in the world of amplifying WIU's success, there are efforts underway to leverage how WIU has been recognized as an opportunity university. She said individuals will begin to see this in the university's messaging and branding – maybe not in direct wording but in the look and feel of what is trying to be accomplished with these

initiatives. She noted that social mobility is a bragging point for WIU because at this time the institution is number one in the state for the social mobility of its graduates; what this means is that for students at the same level at WIU and the University of Illinois, graduates of Western will be more successful and earn more than they would graduating from the University of Illinois. President Mindrup thinks this is a testament to the great work that WIU faculty do and the opportunities that students have to be involved on the campuses, to network, and to pave their way toward a successful life after graduation.

President Mindrup noted that another area that will be amplified in messaging is the Goldfarb Cener for the Performing Arts. She is excited about the progress on that building and stated that staffing will be put in place to activate those spaces. She added that the Center is seen regionally as a beacon of opportunity for the arts and performances, whether for WIU students or for bringing acts to campus. She thinks this will provide a wonderful opportunity to have a shining new space where people from all over the region can come and discover what is great about WIU. She stated that the new space and everything that happens within it will definitely be leveraged, which will amplify WIU's success. President Mindrup noted that while one typically defaults to thinking of this in terms of marketing, it will also be valuable in lobbying and making sure that legislators understand the value of our institution and its impact on the region. She stated that whether it is the university's Government Relations Office or working closely with UPI and other university partners, there are plans to really use those lobbying opportunities to amplify the good things that WIU is doing. She thinks the chances to get students involved in this process are also exciting because they can tell the Western story. She added this will lead to advocacy for the institution and its value for the region as well as the resources the university needs to be successful.

President Mindrup reported the university continues on its path toward financial sustainability and has made a lot of progress compared to last year at this time. She admitted there are some challenges foreseen for the coming year, but there are also strategies to mitigate those, including continued advocacy, revenue generation opportunities, additional shifting of costs, and those sorts of tactics that were found to be successful last year. She feels optimistic, although the Board approved a budget that projects a \$10 million deficit, that the strategies that are in place will be able to stabilize the financial situation moving forward.

President Mindrup has had some great opportunities to talk to colleagues across the state about ways their universities can partner with each other. She noted this is currently a long-term vision and nothing that the universities can jump into right away, but the discussions have included consideration of the potential future benefits of joining forces on things like shared ERP, shared technology, and shared resources. President Mindrup noted that there are things that all state institutions have in common that may be able to leveraged in partnerships for better costs across the state. She admitted this is "a very big animal" since there are many ins and outs surrounding all the differences between institutions, their levels of technology, and what they are currently using. She pointed out that some, like WIU, may still have old-fashioned programming that they are phasing into a more modern format, but, keeping that in mind, the group is keeping it on their radar. She added that they have put work teams together across their IT departments to really start to gain momentum in this direction; there are some smaller projects that IT representatives can start to "sink their teeth into" to learn how to work across institutions, so she is excited about that.

President Mindrup told senators another opportunity for revenue and financial stabilization comes from the Quad Cities campus. She has spoken previously about envisioning the Quad Cities campus as an innovation hub for WIU, and that model and mindset is continuing. She noted that the efficiency of the campus has been increased by moving to a one-building model while looking for revenue generation opportunities for the additional square footage footprint. She said those opportunities currently include a lease agreement which will cover the cost of utilities for a little while, as well as some prospects who might be interested in the

property. She added that whether this becomes a lease or turns into a possible sale would require Board of Trustees approval. President Mindrup noted that there also continues to be a \$7.2 million ask at the state level to fund the operation of the campus. She stressed that even though the size and footprint of the campus will be reduced, this funding would help provide the programmatic support that WIU never received from the state for the Quad Cities campus, as well as supporting the opportunity to establish workforce development, fortify the programs that are currently there, and offset the costs to the overall university. She noted that this funding request is still alive at the state level, but if it does not gain momentum the administration can consider reintroducing the bill in the future, particularly because some of the strategic partnerships on the horizon strengthen the idea that WIU is committed to both the Macomb and Quad Cities regions, whether for space utilization or for programming.

President Mindrup commended Faculty Senate for its work on search committees. She said the administration is committed to stabilizing the institution organizationally, so she is pleased there are a number of searches underway, whether they are the internal searches occurring in Academic Affairs or the external searches for three directors (Internal Auditing; Advancement and Alumni Relations; and Athletic Compliance).

President Mindrup announced that strategic planning for the institution will kick off in the spring. She believes that conversations coming out of the Academic Affairs Rebuild effort, the focus on the institution as an opportunity university, and insights and innovations discussions will fuse nicely to create a foundation for strategic planning. She is excited for the timing of WIU's strategic planning because higher education is changing so quickly, almost on a daily basis, in response to what is happening at the national level, state situations, and changes to higher education in general. She thinks this process is both an opportunity to center in on WIU's mission and focus as an institution and an opportunity to look at strategic planning itself. President Mindrup thinks the ways the university has worked on strategic planning in the past may have been a little slow, and the current plan does not have a lot of agility build into it. She believes there is a great opportunity at this moment to create a strategic plan that allows the university to be flexible while being solid in its foundation and its mission as an opportunity university that serves the West Central Illinois region and beyond on a global level.

Senator Cole remarked that he is the director of the small graduate program in the Department of History, and their international applications have plunged. He realizes that is very common both across our institution and across the country, but when he looks around the room there are probably one in four or five senators who are not US-born. He wonders what the university's strategy currently is because it had seemed like the former strategy had been to radically improve and increase international efforts, but now, because of the Trump administration, he wonders what the vision is or what can be done. Senator Cole believes that some of his classes are dramatically better because they include students from different places, so he wonders what the President is thinking about this. President Mindrup admitted this is a complicated question because WIU is in a moment where this is happening while also expecting a staff change and retirement coming up. She thinks there are some opportunities through the new Assistant Vice President for Admissions and Enrollment Support, who does have experience in international admissions. She believes the university is in a moment where there needs to be a review of the data and trends in order to shift gears a little bit, whether shifting gears in the regions where WIU is recruiting or shifting to an understanding that there may be a significant reduction in international students, similar to 2016/2017. President Mindrup told Senator Cole she wishes she had a more specific answer, but she can say that this is on the radar, and the administration is watching on a daily basis the impacts on international applicants and their ability to make their way to the U.S. and to WIU to attend university, so that is an ongoing conversation.

President Mindrup asked if Provost Mossman had anything to add. Provost Mossman said one thing being discussed is the possibility of shifting international recruitment to

undergraduate students. He noted that international studies at WIU has primarily been a graduate program; when he came into the Provost's Office in 2018, about 90 percent of the international students were graduate students. He thinks that with Assistant Vice President Toomey joining the team and in light of the general mission of the university, the big picture conversation is one focusing more on undergraduate international students. President Mindrup pointed out that part of this also includes studies of cost and the way that cost affects student decisions at the international level. She said this involves making sure the university is competitive and not dissuading any students while also making sure that the costs involved also cover the institution's expenses. She said this balance is one of the things being considered as the institution thinks about how to attract populations across the globe.

President Mindrup noted that WIU has a number of students from the Caribbean, a place that is being impacted by a significant force of nature at the moment. She stated that as the university becomes aware of students who may be from an impacted area or have family, friends, or loved ones there, WIU will, as it always does, employ its culture of care and understanding to those situations. Senator Hoge related that he has a student from Anguilla in his Animal Science 112 course who last week gave a speech about agriculture on his island, and this week the class engaged in a really good conversation about the storms, what is predicted, how things are on the island, and how a society survives catastrophe. Senator Hoge related the student said his country was without power for three months after a storm three or four years ago, so he agrees with the importance of helping WIU's Caribbean students.

Senator Hoge spends a great deal of time recruiting for Agriculture and was at John Wood Community College last week along with his school director. He related that one professor at the Ag Career Fair event said that it would be a tough sell for WIU because there were representatives there from the University of Illinois, Iowa State, and Missouri; when Agriculture Director Keela Trenepohl asked why the individual made that statement, the response was that the perception is that "the sky is falling" at WIU. Senator Hoge related that despite this, by the end of the fair there were more potential students at WIU's booth than the rest of the universities combined. He thinks this is because while fellow students can recruit, the perception of a faculty member being present at recruitment events, meetings, and public activities proves that the sky is not falling and the reality is that opportunities at WIU are good. Senator Hoge has been at WIU for 20 years and is excited to work with Assistant Vice President Toomey.

Senator Hoge asked what the correlation is for students at the high-risk level and whether this ranking is based on their academic preparedness because he sees students very early in the semester who do not seem to even know the basics of how to study. He does not blame public education and loves all levels of education, but some students coming to Western not only do not know how to get to the library but do not know what to do when they get there. He asked what the correlation is between academic preparedness and students leaving the university and whether it is very high. President Mindrup replied that academics are one element contributing to students leaving the university, but financial challenges are another, and personal reasons continue to escalate. She can get the data from Student Success and share it with senators. Senator Hoge noted that getting students to WIU is one thing, then the work begins to retain them. He noted that some students aspire to be veterinarians, but after the first exam he suspects that it may not be attainable for some. He thinks the risk level information is interesting because he did not know what these students' levels of preparedness was. Chair Robinett pointed out that Vice President Schuch will visit Faculty Senate in early spring, and this is one thing that can be added to the Senate's requests for conversation with him. Senator Hoge thinks that letting professors know in some way which students are entirely new to the college experience would alert faculty to pay extra attention to them.

President Mindrup asked if Provost Mossman had anything to add from the standpoint of advising and FYE. Provost Mossman stated that Connections Mapping is the answer to the

questions Senator Hoge is asking about why students leave and how the university assesses that risk. He did not have data in front of him, but he thinks the number one reason students leave is family concerns. Provost Mossman observed that the great thing about Connections Mapping was that the Provost's Office, along with early warning grades, was able to have data on at-risk students which, as President Mindrup noted, looks better than it did a year ago. He noted that with at-risk students, the Provost's Office was able to energize deans, directors, and chairs, who he knows also energized faculty to have interventions with those students. He added that data shows that the more interventions students experience, the more likely they are to retain; additionally, if a student lasts through the first four weeks, they are more likely to retain through the term, and if a student makes it through the first semester, they are more likely to get through the second semester. He believes it is important to get those interventions in place as early as possible.

Provost Mossman noted that WIU's change of major process is an issue that he has been on a quest to change for many years. He noted that if a student wants to be a veterinarian and takes Senator Hoge's class, then the student realizes this goal may not be attainable, there seems to be no other option for them. Provost Mossman thinks this is something the university really needs to work on. He believes that advising in particular should let students know, especially first-year students, that there are other options at WIU, that not all majors are high-risk majors, and that if a student cannot pass the Stats class for Nursing, for instance, they could go into Emergency Management, Social Work, or a related Public Health field. He said this is another thing the Provost's Office has been working on.

Senator Gravitt asked if part of the reason WIU's statistics look better is because admissions criteria was changed about a year ago. President Mindrup admitted this is probably part of the reason. She thinks last year was the first year the administration watched for a change as a result of that policy change, and although no change was attributable to this last year, they are seeing it this year. She suspects the improvements being seen are the result of some combination of this policy change along with several interventions to initiate early contact with students, keep data about them, and watch the trends in how they are navigating their semesters. She noted this is a multi-pronged approach.

Senator Allwardt remarked that it would be helpful if the report on low-, medium-, and high-risk students evolves to include some indication of what these students are at risk for. She had one student flagged as at-risk who is highly engaged and carries a 4.0, so she initiated a conversation with the student about how things are going, but without knowing what triggered the risk assessment she did not really know where to go with the discussion. She recalled another conversation with an at-risk student where she brought up the student's GPA, which offended the student because they had really improved it, so Senator Allwardt had to backpedal. She thinks faculty need to be very careful how they have these conversations and hopes the report can grow over time. President Mindrup remarked this is good feedback.

Chair Robinett pointed out that there are some FERPA concerns related to these metrics and how broadly they are shared, so that would have to be thought through. Senator Allwardt thinks even if the report could indicate whether the risk was academic versus non-academic it would be helpful. She suggested it might also be helpful if there was a person the faculty member could reach out to talk more about a student's situation so that the faculty member could target their interactions better. Senator Hoge conducts a 20-minute interview with all of his at-risk students and finds out a tremendous amount even before the first exam is given. He has found that these 20-minute conversations where he asks students to just talk about themselves are very highly correlated with their academic performance on their first exams.

Chair Robinett remarked that he is very excited that the Center for the Performing Arts is coming online, but he wonders if there have been conversations with legislators or others about the operating expenses for this rather large building. President Mindrup admitted this is a challenge when the university gets new buildings like the Center for the Performing Arts

and the Quad Cities campus. She said the institution has been putting every effort into fundraising for the Center, and there are plans to advocate for help with additional operating expenses, but it is also important to figure out a way to make the Center self-sustainable, supported by external funding and through some allocation wherein the university can support the initial investment. Chair Robinett remarked it sounds like there are plans in place for how those things would be covered; President Mindrup confirmed this is correct.

Chair Robinett remarked there has been a lot of conversation about the two percent the Governor's Office withheld from the budget. He asked if there is any update on that that can be shared. President Mindrup replied that the administration continues to advocate for this; they met with the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) within the last couple of weeks and advocated for it then. She related that the officials spoke to the IBHE about WIU's financial situation and some challenges that are expected in the spring, and IBHE officials asked what percentage of WIU's overall budget would be represented by the additional two percent of funding. President Mindrup said that WIU officials told them this would be approximately \$1.5 million, to which IBHE officials replied that figure is not that significant. She said WIU officials quickly replied that it is quite a significant figure for Western, as well as for all the institutions across the state. She thinks it is important to continue to advocate for the two percent since the administration is seeing that the financial obligations of the state might be a little different in this moment of external pressures. She stated that the administration will keep this on their radar, as will UPI, who is participating to make sure that the state does not forget about that two percent, which was initially suggested to be part of the planned distribution. She stated that luckily WIU's administration did not rely on receiving a three percent increase in appropriations, although it would certainly have made a difference for the university in the coming year, but they will not allow the potential of those additional funds to get lost in the shuffle.

Senator Cole related that a tenured university professor he knows spoke last month at an online conference; someone secretly recorded the presentation, selectively edited it, and posted it online, following which three days later the professor was fired from his state institution in Texas. Senator Cole observed that many faculty, himself included, sometimes teach subjects that can be considered to be controversial. He asked President Mindrup what she thinks about these types of situations because, although it is easy to get caught up in the finances and recruitment aspects of higher education, universities are under attack right now, and this is something he thinks about frequently. Senator Cole said he does not have a good answer to this problem, but he is glad to work in the state of Illinois. He has never heard President Mindrup's viewpoint on these matters and would be glad to know what she thinks. President Mindrup replied that she believes in academic freedom, first and foremost, which she thinks is important to state. She noted that when there are pressures to shape or modify WIU's curriculum outside of what is known from the disciplines and the institutional mission, the administration focuses and zeroes in on that and considers any implications it may have for WIU policies. President Mindrup said her intention is not to be political or to stir polarization but to make decisions aligned with the university's policies and core values, which is something she has heard across the university community. She pointed out that these core values include academic freedom and access and opportunity for students from all backgrounds; they include the things WIU stands for, such as providing a well-rounded education for Western students. She noted that this means experiencing curriculum from diverse perspectives and different vantage points, being able to think critically, and being able to consider viewpoints across the spectrum. She thinks WIU faculty do a good job of situating their classes in the context of the world in addition to their disciplines and the trends in their fields. President Mindrup remarked she is not at WIU to rock the boat because for an institution like WIU and many others that can create some unintended challenges. She does, however, support WIU faculty's efforts in their classrooms and what they are doing to teach what they know to be sound pedagogy and the standards of learning in their fields.

Senator Gravitt remarked that she is serving on two faculty searches in the School of Engineering and Technology. She said there were over 60 applicants for one and nearly 60

applicants for the other. She has never been involved in a search with so many applicants and noted that about 99 percent of them were foreign international faculty fleeing red states. She observed this could be considered to be good for WIU but is also scary in a way. Senator Allwardt seconded what Senator Gravitt is seeing. She has never seen so many overqualified candidates from very specific geographic regions simply flooding the search in her department. Senator Allwardt observed this is an interesting experience; Senator Gravitt added that it is also sad because there are not enough places for them to go.

Senator Chakravorti remarked that he teaches marketing and wonders if there is a plan to create retention and recruitment institutional and promotional marketing campaigns as part of the strategic plan, using some of the highlights that President Mindrup has noted make WIU so attractive. President Mindrup replied that there is, but she encourages Faculty Senate to invite Vice President Schuch and Alisha Looney, Director of Marketing and Communications, to come to Faculty Senate to share some of the details and breakdown of how that is taking shape.

Senator Hamner noted that President Mindrup indicated that while the enrollment cliff has been an issue, the administration is starting to see some positive signs; he asked if she could expand on that. President Mindrup replied the cliff is anticipated to hit its low point next spring as far as the population in general, and she thinks the university has the opportunity, through some of its initiatives that are in play, to take advantage of that upcoming upswing. She noted that the fact that WIU has 5,300 students can be leveraged to the institution's advantage when reaching out to students who are attending flagship universities both in Illinois and in other states and who might be feeling lost in the shuffle because these institutions are over-enrolling. She thinks WIU has the opportunity to point out that we are a smaller institution that provides students with personal attention in and out of the classroom, that this is a special place that feels like home, and that people care about the success of Western's students. She thinks there is an opportunity to take advantage of this situation.

Chair Robinett recalled that this was also discussed at the Board retreat: identifying some specific locations where there is population growth in the college-age demographic and increasing strategic marketing to those locations. He noted that instead of shooting everywhere, resources can be focused into some of these demographic spaces. He recalled that some places in central Illinois were mentioned where WIU could then partner with current students in those specific regions.

Senator Gravitt observed that the remarks about increasing college student populations do not agree with Agriculture professor Dan Atherton's demographic curve projections, but she will try to get more information on that. She said his projections show a gradual incline that is still going to get steeper. She noted there was a story in the online *Journal for the American Society of Engineering Education* that talked about a university in Arizona opening a senior community where senior citizens could pay to take college courses and live on campus in their own environment. She noted that while universities tend to focus on younger students, there is a huge population of retirees who might value further expanding their education in an on-campus experience. She thinks universities might want to think in terms of "senior college" rather than junior college. President Mindrup remarked that this is interesting.

Chair Robinett thanked President Mindrup for joining Faculty Senate. President Mindrup thanked senators for their questions and invited them to drop her an email or stop by her office because her door is always open.

III. Reports of Committees and Councils

A. Council for International Education (CIE)

v

1. Request for Multicultural Perspectives Designation

- a. SPA 225, Deaf Culture, 3 s.h.

Chair Robinett requested that the department add the course prefix and number in the heading at the top of the form and add the semester hours where it is requested farther down the page.

Senator Chakravorti observed that the syllabus does not really go over the different projects but just mentions them. He asked if the department could elaborate on those. Julie Curliss, who teaches SPA 225, responded that she tries to keep the projects a little more open in order to meet students where they are. She has students from a variety of different majors, including Special Education, Chemistry, Music, Law Enforcement and Justice Administration, and others. She noted that, based on her students' personal interests and areas they would like to pursue, she offers a more general rubric. She has had students create a children's book, a podcast, art projects on canvases or crochet, or write a paper, among others. She said there is no specific requirement such as generating a Canva presentation, but students do have to obtain approval from her ahead of time so that the project can meet a number of components. She added the projects are open-ended and student driven but are based on each individual's area of interest as it relates to them and their future profession.

NO OBJECTIONS WITH CORRECTIONS

Chair Robinett noted that this is the first new Multicultural Perspectives course that has been approved and thanked CIE for ushering the Senate through this new process.

IV. Old Business – None

V. New Business

A. For the Good of the Body

Senator Mason heard that the Food Pantry issue was brought up at yesterday's Deans' Council and wonders what other means they could explore for more space. She understands that it cannot be moved at this time, but she thinks this will be a big issue going forward because food insecurity is a reality for a lot of people. She remarked it seems that those at the Food Pantry have worked hard to get the donations, but there is insufficient space for them, so she wonders what else they can do if they are continually running into the same issue. Senator Mason heard that last year Horrabin Hall was technically too hot to store some of the food; she has a student who needed meat from the Food Pantry and did not think they offered it, but found out that it was actually stored in a refrigerator in the Dean's Office, which is not somewhere people would think to go for this. Chair Robinett responded that, having served in a variety of spaces and places at WIU, one thing he thinks it is important to recognize is that there are many different perspectives on how spaces are utilized, what is approved, what is not approved, and what has been approved at different times in the past. He would like Faculty Senate to make sure to always seek further understanding of the history of a situation, what the current situation is, and what that might map into moving forward. He thinks it is also important for Faculty Senate to recognize that there are consequences for dedicating spaces for different purposes throughout time; some areas of the campus have moved multiple times by stating that they want a certain space, then after gaining that space, potentially changing again.

Chair Robinett noted that the other component when going through this is that the university overall is in a time of change. He has never, in any meeting he has attended, heard anyone at the university say that they do not want to support students in regard to addressing food insecurity, so he thinks the administration is taking what steps that they can take. Chair Robinett pointed out that the President is the highest authority at WIU next to the Board of Trustees, and she has said she is aware of the situation. He said that President Mindrup has asked those involved with the Food Pantry to supply

additional data related to the claims that have been made, and he believes the administration is waiting on that data to be received in order to potentially look at what else can be done.

Senator Hoge read an article in his field of animal science that indicated that 14 to 18 percent of Americans, regardless of whether they are urban or rural, experience food insecurities. He pointed out that there is a gorgeous space on the second floor of Knoblauch Hall that was formerly used by Dietetics and has a refrigerator, freezer, and cooking lab. He used the space for a couple of meats labs to do some blind panel case studies, and he sees lots of opportunities in the space. He thinks it is a great space, but he does not want to speak out of turn to represent a population when he does not know who is in charge of that space. Senator Hoge added that the School of Agriculture's Hoof and Horn Volleyball Tournament requires a canned good as its entry fee, and that goes to the university Food Pantry. He thinks it serves a critically important service.

Chair Robinett clarified that the second-floor space Senator Hoge is referring to is coordinated by the Department of Recreation, Park, Tourism, and Hospitality and is owned by the College of Education and Human Services. He said the space is used by a high school WACS class as part of an effort by the department to serve community needs and resources. He said it is often used, and there are procedures related to how individuals can request use of that space. He explained that one thing required to utilize this space is that a full-time staff member be present in order to protect and take care of the equipment. Chair Robinett noted that all of this was clearly documented when different mergers took place at the institution and some programs merged with different departments, which led to the College of Education and Human Services defining how that space would be used and what the rules would be for that utilization. Chair Robinett thinks that as senators learn more from and with and each other about what has led to spaces being understood in certain ways, it begins to open up really meaningful conversations about whether there are other ways these things could be done.

Chair Robinett clarified that the walk-in freezer that used to be in this space has not been there for the past two years because when it broke the institution did not have the funds to replace it. He suspects that most senators have a similar story about a space in their areas that over time has been used for one thing or another, then at some point another group thinks they could use that space for storage or for a grad office, so over time a sort of squatter's rights have sort of taken over certain spaces and places on the campus. He encouraged senators to take the time to talk with their building service workers about their efforts to manage their buildings and spaces because sometimes they are not informed that someone has moved into an unoccupied office or that a classroom has been reutilized for something else.

Chair Robinett related that there is a lot of conversation happening on the campus about what can be done about the Food Pantry; it is not falling on deaf ears. He knows that Interim Associate Provost Holly Nikels is regularly engaged in this, and there have been numerous conversations with the College of Education and Human Services.

Senator Hoge asked, as the university transitions from four to two colleges, whether Chair Robinett envisions synergies, for example in regard to this space on the second floor of Knoblauch which has a nice dining room and a beautiful kitchen. He wonders if there will be synergies across departments that seem to go together, such as Agriculture and Recreation, Park, Tourism, and Hospitality, to go together and put money into a shared space such as this, or whether that is even doable. Chair Robinett replied he thinks that is very much the intent. He thinks the reason the effort is being made to get the deans selected is so that they can then pull together the groups within their colleges to actually have conversations about what spaces they are using, how they are using them, and what curricularly is currently in one space that could potentially benefit another. He noted that the more people who can use some of these spaces, the more colleges can justify improvements that might take place to them. Chair Robinett stated that while he focuses a lot on finances right now because those are a lot of the conversations and spaces he is in, there might be pedagogical practices that can be put into place by these new groups coming together that would allow for enhancement of spaces to benefit them. He observed that some furniture from the Quad Cities campus is now being moved to the Macomb campus, so thought needs to be given to whether there are ways to better equip

spaces. He thinks this is why the two new deans need to be in place to help facilitate these conversations so that it is not one department yelling at another or yelling into a chasm and instead these deans can champion things. Senator Hoge remarked it sounds like the hope is that rather than “my” some spaces can be “ours” so that with this change of verbiage spaces can help maximize interactions.

Chair Robinett suspects that administrators are tired of him talking about the importance that the social contract of the institution must be reaffirmed. Provost Mossman remarked that the reason for the space committee in the Rebuild is so that the institution stops making bad decisions about spaces. He noted that the Food Pantry has been moved at least three times. He said sometimes a decision about a space is made between a dean and chair, but no one else knows about it, and this is the kind of situation that the current administration has inherited. He said the idea of having a space committee and developing an Academic Affairs space plan as part of the Rebuild effort is to solve these kinds of problems in an equitable way.

Senator Chakravorti asked if there have been any other kinds of data collection done besides what senators saw at the last Faculty Senate meeting in the presentation by the GIS Center, regarding classroom space allocation. He wonders what other kinds of data have been collected to get a proper idea of the spaces and how it is being collected. Chair Robinett remarked this is a wonderfully timed question considering who will join the next Faculty Senate meeting. He said the next Senate meeting will include a representative from Facilities Management, and this is one of the things that will be discussed. He added that there has been a recent retirement in Facilities Management, so he is not sure who will come to Senate, but he has asked them to present what the overall conditions are of campus buildings. He related that Facilities Management determines this by looking at the building systems, the building envelopes, the wiring and plumbing, and other aspects of the buildings to determine the cost over time and the time horizon of repairs, if the state gives WIU any money for them. He noted that the wide array of data can also lead to one of the challenges – analysis paralysis of which data sets should be used in order to guide some of these decisions. He will add Senator Chakravorti’s question to the list of things to ask the Facilities Management representative to provide to the Senate.

Senator Hoge said he loved the presentation from the GIS Center, but he thinks the next step is actually communicating with the people in those buildings, sitting down with the department chair, coordinator, and faculty in order to have serious conversations. He thinks this should go beyond a faculty member saying that for the last 22 years they have always done a certain thing in a certain building and room and instead turn to consideration of having three different faculty members integrate throughout a room in a day to maximize that space. He suspects this communication component is the next step or two in the sequence, after which there can really be a conversation about effective use of spaces. Chair Robinett noted that Dan Schmidt is the chair of the Academic Affairs Space Committee, and he initiated a survey of department chairs and directors in order to collect some of this information. He said that not everyone responded, so Mr. Schmidt has reached out to deans for help in rounding up the last ones he has not heard from. Chair Robinett stated that once that information is collected from at least the department chair and school director level, the space committee can use it for what they are working on, and it can be shared with the new deans once they are selected so that they can see a snapshot within each of their areas and can in some ways hit the ground running. He added that, if nothing else, the Rebuild has been incredible in what has been learned about the processes and procedures at the university, or sometimes the lack thereof and inefficiencies.

Senator Gravitt related that when she served on the Senate Council on Campus Planning and Usage, they looked into the possibility of standardizing class schedules. She noted that because there are so many varieties of when different faculty teach classes, there are even overlaps within departments. She noted that if a faculty member wants to teach two days a week, this works fine with Tuesday/Thursday, but a Monday/Wednesday class overlaps with the university’s current scheduling blocks. She thinks this conversation needs to be brought up again at the university level in order to facilitate ease of scheduling. Provost Mossman confirmed that another part of the Rebuild is to look at the way that classes are scheduled. He noted that the initial issue was that reduction in the number

of classes led to a chaotic schedule; there were formerly more General Education courses offered, so that students had a variety to choose from, but now there are much fewer, so a student may resort to taking a Gen Ed course online, wrecking the face-to-face culture on campus, or they just may not take the course. He said from this beginning the conversation has really gotten into the weeds. He related what is now being considered is at what point chairs/directors and deans submit the schedules into the system, which correlates with the revisions to the ACE sheets that are also being written. He noted that there is a pilot program being tried in Business now and in Law Enforcement and Justice Administration in the spring to develop something like a hybrid block schedule. Provost Mossman thinks this has been fascinating because it shows how the minors students take really impact the way they move across campus and the ways to think about coordinating courses. He noted that mapping from Chad Sperry of the GIS Center also shows how students track across campus on any given school day. He pointed out that WIU still has a giant campus with half the students that were here 15 years ago, and they are spread out across a lot of spaces. Provost Mossman thinks everyone would agree that the university needs more students, faculty, and staff, and fewer spaces so that there is the sense of a robust campus culture. He thinks all of this is tied together and agrees with Chair Robinett that the success of the Rebuild already has been to have to really think through a lot of these issues that have previously been basically ignored. He thinks that in itself has been valuable. Senator Gravitt agreed she would prefer not to have her students leave her class 15 minutes early to get to the next class because there is a 15-minute overlap in their times.

Senator Allwardt gets kind of frustrated at these conversations because Social Work faculty are out on field experiences on Fridays so would have to hire a whole set of adjuncts to teach all of their field experiences in order to do Monday/Wednesday/Friday classes. She hopes these kinds of considerations are included in these discussions. Provost Mossman said they will be, without a doubt. Senator Allwardt realizes it is difficult because one size does not fit all and that makes it difficult for Social Work students to complete their Gen Ed courses. She said Social Work faculty have talked to their advisor about how to help facilitate this for their students, but it is hard when everyone is doing different things and they do not coordinate.

Senator Hoge remarked he likes to pick a “statement for the meeting,” and he has chosen for this meeting the statement from Provost Mossman that “We have to stop making bad decisions.” He is going to use this with the students in his classes but will give Provost Mossman the authorship of that statement. He thinks it is the most impactful statement of the Faculty Senate meeting today. He is going to a meeting at 6:00 p.m. with a bunch of students and is going to open with that statement.

Motion: To adjourn (Gravitt)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm
Faculty Senate Office Manager and Recording Secretary