

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE
Regular Meeting, 15 November 2022, 4:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT: J. Albarracin, D. Atherton, S. Bailey, D. Banash, D. Barr, B. Bellott, M. Bernards, L. Brice, D. Brown, G. Cabedo-Timmons, A. Carr, C. Chadwell, D. Hunter, J. Land, T. Lough, S. Macchi, K. Perone, B. Petrocovich, B. Polley, E. Shupe, B. Thompson, J. Wroblewski, Y. Tang
Ex-officio: Craig Whetten, Parliamentarian

SENATORS ABSENT: L. Ebert Wallace

GUESTS: Jeff Brown, Joe Cantu, Craig Conrad, Katrina Daytner, Dennis DeVolder, Peter Gloviczki, Paige Goodwin, Denise Gravitt, Everett Hamner, Sue Hum, Rick Kurasz, Sarah Lawson, Jessica Lin, Sue Martinelli-Fernandez, Kyle Mayborn, Christopher Merrett, Kristi Mindrup, Russ Morgan, Mark Mossman, Lorette Oden, Betsy Perabo, Renee Polubinsky, Linda Prosis, John Smith, Sebastian Szyjka

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. October 11, 2022

APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Approvals from the President and Provost

1. Approvals from the President

- a. Request to change the title of faculty named as Distinguished Faculty Lecturers to Distinguished University Professors.
- b. Request for the previously approved reduction of the GPA gateway for acceptance into the Teacher Education Program for the Elementary Education: Elementary option, Middle Level Program, and Special Education Program to be made retroactive to the beginning of Fall 2022.
- c. Request to allow students transferring in AAS degrees in Early Childhood Education or a related field from accredited community colleges in Illinois to waive their General Education requirements, retroactive to the beginning of Fall 2022.
- d. Request to allow the Elementary Education: Early Childhood Option to adopt an advanced placement credit “swap” to provide credit for previous work/life experience.
- e. Request to reduce the GPA requirement for acceptance into the Teacher Education Program from 2.75 to 2.5 for the Elementary Education: ESL and Multilingual Options, retroactive to the beginning of Fall 2022.
- f. Request to allow incoming students with GPAs of 2.75-2.99 to be eligible to receive the services of the Reach Program, beginning in Fall 2023.

2. Approvals from the Provost

- a. New course request: MUS 110, Treble Choir, 1 s.h.
- b. General Education Designation: SPAN 320, Spanish for Heritage Speakers, 3 s.h.

B. Provost's Report

Provost Zoghi reported that units and colleges across the university have been busy developing their strategic plans and initiating different programs that he will be report on in more depth in the near future. He stated that for now these plans are just in the initial stages. Chair Thompson asked what the Provost has been learning at the town hall meetings. Provost Zoghi replied that the town halls have been very well received, and there has been very good participation so far. The Provost said there have been excellent questions asked, and he is looking forward to the upcoming town halls. He added that faculty who have additional questions after the town hall meetings can email them to him or the President.

B. Student Government Association (SGA) Report
(Joe Cantu, SGA Director of Academic Affairs)

Mr. Cantu reported that SGA's recent town hall was very successful, and students got to hear a lot of good things. The event, which offered an opportunity for students to meet with the President and Provost, took place last week in the University Union. Mr. Cantu said the town hall included an SGA cabinet meeting so that students could see what that is like and be encouraged to attend in future.

C. Other Announcements

1. Reproductive Freedom Support
(John Smith, Interim Vice President for Student Success and Director of Beu Health Center)

Interim Vice President Smith provided senators with an informational sheet on the services provided through student insurance. Chair Thompson asked if Interim Vice President Smith has seen any increase in student interest or additional questions about reproductive freedoms since the Dobbs Supreme Court decision. Interim Vice President Smith responded that he thought there would be a lot more inquiries than they have had. He said Beu has averaged about five or six questions per year from students asking what the Health Center can help them with during the ten years he has been director. Interim Vice President Smith said Beu has been able to help students with the majority of the medical issues that they needed addressed during that time. He told senators that there are a couple of different foundations that are able to help students get transportation to and from different services they might need and connect them with outside resources in a manner that has been pretty successful.

Interim Vice President Smith said the current insurance coverage for students has been the best one he has seen in his time at the university regarding coverage of things students want or need. He added that basically all student reproductive rights and freedoms are covered under this policy, and the issue now usually involves transportation to specialists that will work with Beu so that some tests and other services can be provided there. He said sharing the results with those specialists has become much easier since they can be sent electronically rather than on paper.

Chair Thompson asked if WIU provides prenatal care. Interim Vice President Smith responded that Beu refers students to specialists in the community and follows up with in-house care as needed. He said Beu operates similar to urgent care or prompt care facilities; they can do minor procedures but nothing major. Interim Vice President Smith added Beu does have a surgical site on campus where it can do minor procedures; an appendix was once removed at Beu during an emergency while he has been at the Health Center, but this is uncommon.

Chair Thompson remarked that he tried to get information from Human Resources on reproductive support for employees provided by various insurance plans and will continue to try to get that information. Interim Vice President Smith stated that he has investigated other policies that WIU might get for its students, but they are three to four times the expense of the current policy and do not provide the same level of coverage. He found policies ranging from \$700 per semester to \$4,500 per semester. He explained that WIU has their policy with WellFleet, a company that broke off from Blue Cross Blue Shield; this is WellFleet's first year in the marketplace. Interim Vice President Smith is curious whether when this policy comes up for renewal in March it will provide the same services at the same level. Chair Thompson asked if WIU negotiates its student insurance policy; Interim Vice President Smith replied that they do. He explained that WIU works through a broker, and next year is the last one with this broker; after that, WIU will probably use an Illinois Public Higher Education Cooperative (IPHEC) vendor or one of the insurers moving forward, unless that does not meet the needs of WIU students. He said that while the university will try to get the best price for its students, it is also important that the policy include the services that WIU students need. Interim Vice President Smith will begin meeting with SGA in January about this topic and expects that a decision will be made in early March, after which a proposal can be taken to the Board of Trustees. Chair Thompson remarked that it is good to know that WIU students have access to a wide range of services.

2. Informational Early College Credit Report

Registrar Sarah Lawson provided an updated early college credit report showing total new freshmen with credit hours earned prior to attending WIU (any credit type); total dual credit/dual enrollment student credit hours (SCH) by group; estimated tuition lost due to dual credit; fall tuition collected from dual credit students; fall tuition collected from all freshmen; and total tuition collected from dual credit students minus mean dual credit hours for Fall 2017 through Fall 2022. Chair Thompson remarked that the number of student credit hours that are being consumed by early college credit, although it varies somewhat, has remained fairly consistent through the years. He observed that this year WIU lost about \$800,000 in tuition and the year before the figure was over one million. Chair Thompson noted that the cost of tuition can really be cut approximately in half because of WIU's discounted rate although the report shows the basic tuition rate. He noted that since students do not pay full tuition but rather closer to 57 percent, the figure would be closer to \$400,000 rather than \$800,000 for this year.

Chair Thompson thinks it is concerning that, of the students who do bring in some form of early college credit, the average this year was about 15 hours, about a semester's worth of credit, and some years it is a little more. He noted that a minority of WIU freshmen bring in early college credit, but for the ones who do the semester hour total is pretty high. Chair Thompson theorized that perhaps one of the reasons that WIU's early college credit numbers are not as high as other institutions might be because 57 percent of WIU students come from some of the most under-funded high schools in the state, and another 30 percent come from the second worst funded state high schools. He noted that the better funded the high school, the more likely they are to offer early college credit courses. Chair Thompson thinks it is good news that early college credit, while still a problem, is not an overwhelming problem for WIU at this time, but it might speak to the type of high schools that WIU students are coming from, which relates to retention-based questions about student preparedness for higher education.

Chair Thompson thinks Faculty Senate should keep an eye on these numbers going forward. He stated that the Council on General Education has asked for historical data so that they can see if the numbers they have now are reflective of past years. He stated that the amount of General Education credit as a percentage of all undergraduate credit is about 34 percent and has stayed about the same for the past four or five years, similar to the number of General Education credits that are being consumed by early college credit, which are also fairly consistent year to year.

Senator Banash asked if any work has been done to see how this is affecting the preparation of students for different majors. He asked if students coming in with their Math Gen Ed completed are able to succeed in their majors and if their skills are where they need to be or if the Gen Ed credits these students bring in are not doing what they really need to be doing. Senator Banash said a similar question could be asked for the Humanities and other areas, and he wonders if anyone is studying this. He feels like the whole bargain for universities has been driven by economics, but he wonders if the university knows how good these early college credit courses are versus what students would receive from courses taken at WIU. Senator Carr is not sure there has been that level of finely grained research into this topic, at least not for WIU. She has seen overall rates of retention but does not know if these are broken down by school. She offered to email someone this question. Chair Thompson remarked that the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) says students taking early college credit courses retain at a higher rate because he has asked this question, but he thinks Senator Banash's question about whether early college credit courses are doing what they are supposed to do is a good one. Senator Banash wonders if the higher retention rate is because of self-selection: ambitious students with goals in mind have already chosen to take early college credit classes while students who may be less motivated or less focused do not. He thinks it may be interesting to try to figure this out. Senator Carr remarked that an interview with some advisors indicates that some students bringing in early college credit have to retake a number of classes. She said this was a small study, but if anyone is interested, she can provide slides from Dr. Xiaodan Hu from Northern Illinois University who studies this. Senator Carr said Dr. Hu's theme is that studies of early college credit are totally ambiguous – neither totally great nor totally terrible – when looking at the overall picture. She added this is based only on measuring such things as retention and graduation rates and does not measure student development issues or whether students have the same range of General Education options they would have if they went straight into a four-year university. Senator Carr said Dr. Hu is very aware that the data only speaks to the questions being asked.

Senator Petrocovi remarked that WIU does not have much say in what is being transferred in; most of the dual credits come from community colleges, and most Gen Ed courses are IAI articulated, so the university has no say in whether to accept these courses or not. He noted that it is sometimes difficult to judge the level of education for courses taught at WIU versus community colleges, and some courses being transferred in are being taught by mathematics teachers at high schools who have taken higher level math classes. He noted that many high school teachers take WIU's Master of Mathematics in order to teach dual credit courses. Senator Petrocovi does not know if the IBHE looks at the level once a course has been approved, and WIU has little control over this. Senator Banash remarked that English has the same difficulty; if a course is determined to be equivalent to ENG 180 or 280, there is little WIU's Department of English can do about this, and their faculty see a lot of variation in students transferring these credits in.

Senator Albarracin related that she did some research on dual enrollment as part of a presentation to the IBHE which showed that one of the shortcomings of these courses concerns citizenship and the lack of exposure to students of other backgrounds, ages, and cultures. She noted that when students take courses with the same high school students that they in some cases have been with since kindergarten, that eliminates an important part of their college experience.

Chair Thompson reiterated that the information provided by Registrar Lawson is informational because there is nothing Faculty Senate can do about it, but he thinks it is good to keep an eye on this data and continue to be aware of it. He recommended that this report be updated every year in order to keep the conversation going.

III. Reports of Committees and Councils

A. Council on Curricular Programs and Instruction (CCPI) (Paige Goodwin, Chair)

1. Curricular Requests from the Department of Broadcasting and Journalism

a. Request for New Course

i. BC&J 447, Sports and Public Relations, 3 s.h.

Senator Tang thinks this course will be a great addition to the Department of Broadcasting and Journalism and will help with retention. He asked the Chair how this new course will benefit the program. Broadcasting and Journalism Chair Peter Gloviczki said broadcasting and journalism are both growing areas, and he is grateful for the support of colleagues across the university to add this new course to the department's curriculum. He believes this course will serve BC&J students well and provides the opportunity for the department to think about how they want to move forward.

BC&J 447 APPROVED

2. Curricular Requests from the School of Engineering and Technology

a. Request for Change of Major

i. Construction and Facilities Management

CHANGE OF MAJOR APPROVED

3. Curricular Request from the School of Music

a. Requests for New Courses

- i. MUS 264, Keyboard Skills for Popular Music, 1 s.h.
- ii. MUS 268, Singing in Popular Styles, 1 s.h.
- iii. MUS 354, Music Therapy Clinical Skills III, 1 s.h.

Chair Thompson asked what the School of Music hopes to accomplish with these new courses or what problem is being solved by creating them. School of Music Director Jeff Brown explained the school has taken a fresh look at the Music Therapy curriculum for a variety of reasons, including to make sure students are developing the skills they need for the changing nature of the profession. He explained that Music Therapy graduates are healthcare professionals who work in a variety of clinical settings with everyone from special needs patients to individuals in hospice care. He informed senators that one of the skill sets these students need, which the school hopes to develop in the first two of the proposed courses, is additional training in popular music skills, which is used frequently in clinical settings. Dr. Brown stated that a Music Education course changed content last year, which created an opportunity to change the Music Therapy option to include some of the clinical courses that will serve these students well without adding any credits to the program.

Senator Tang remarked that it appears the School of Music is creating lots of new courses, which is great. He asked if they have enough faculty to handle so many new courses. Dr. Brown replied that the first two proposed new courses will replace another existing course, so it will not add more workload for the school. He stated that existing Music Therapy faculty can teach all three of the new courses, and there are other instructors in the school who may have load available to teach them as well. Dr. Brown

observed that the third proposed course is actually expanding what was formerly a 3 s.h. clinical skills sequence into a 4 s.h. sequence; the same faculty will be teaching those courses, but the content will be spread out over four semesters rather than three.

NEW MUSIC COURSES APPROVED

- b. Request for Change of Option
 - i. Music Therapy

CHANGE OF OPTION APPROVED

4. Curricular Requests from the School of Accounting, Finance, Economics, and Decision Sciences

- a. Request for New Course
 - i. ECON 489, Behavioral Economics, 3 s.h.

Chair Thompson remarked this looks like an interesting course and asked what the school's thinking was about it and where it came from. School of AFED Director Jessica Lin replied this course came about from the research area of a member of the faculty. She related that over time the school has attracted new economists who are very passionate about behavioral economics and have published several papers in this field. She added that one of their graduate students is also doing research in this field, but AFED has never offered a course on this topic. Dr. Lin said this seemed like a move that was a little overdue given the interest from faculty and the research from their graduate students. Chair Thompson remarked that matching curriculum to the expertise of the school is a very good thing.

ECON 489 APPROVED

IV. Old Business – None

V. New Business – None

VI. For the Good of the Body

Senator Brice stated that it has been his pleasure to serve on Faculty Senate during his career at WIU, and he has always taken his business on the Senate very seriously, but he finds that he is taking some of that business too seriously for his health. Senator Brice announced that for that reason he is resigning from Faculty Senate, from the Executive Committee, and from Faculty Senate committees, although he will continue to serve until the end of this semester, which ends with the meeting of December 6, in order to provide time to find his replacement. Chair Thompson stated that Senator Brice has been a very active and passionate member of Faculty Senate and thanked him for the time he has spent on serving on it.

Motion: To adjourn (Brice)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:37 p.m.

Julia Albarracin, Senate Secretary

Annette Hamm, Interim Faculty Senate Recording Secretary