

**WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**  
**FACULTY SENATE**  
*Special Meeting, 15 December 2015, 4:00 p.m.*  
**Capitol Rooms - University Union**

**ACTION MINUTES**

**SENATORS PRESENT:** M. Bean, S. Bennett, V. Boynton, J. Brown, A. Burke, G. Cabedo-Timmons, M. Carncross, D. DeVolder, K. Dodson, D. Halverson, R. Hironimus-Wendt, K. Kapale, C. Keist, N. Lino, J. McNabb, J. Myers, C. Pynes, T. Roberts, T. Sadler, B. Siever, A. Silberer, S. Szyjka  
Ex-officio: Kathy Neumann, Interim Provost; Janna Deitz, Parliamentarian

**SENATORS ABSENT:** T. Westerhold

**GUESTS:** Mari Aanenson, Meshack Afithile, Julia Albarracin, Marjorie Allison, Andrea Alveshere, Esteban Araya, Barbara Ashwood, Bill Bailey, Neil Baird, Andy Baker, David Banash, Judy Berglund, Davison Bideshi, Matt Bierman, Krista Bowers Sharpe, Jason Braun, Lee Brice, Rebekah Buchanan, James Caldwell, Ute Chamberlin, Gordon Chang, Rachel Chaves, Brian Clark, Tom Cody, Merrill Cole, Simon Cordery, Susan Czechowski, Tracy Davis, Sam Edsall, Bonnie Elder, Jose Fernandez, Wil Gradle, Greg Hall, Scott Harris, Sarah Haynes, Magdelyn Helwig, Jennie Hemingway, Redina Herman, Margaret Hoffman, Scott Holt, Molly Homer, Bob Intrieri, Ginny Jelatis, Kristy Keefe, Ruth Kelly, Bill Knox, Casey LaFrance, Ilon Lauer, Jeff Laurent, Dana Lindemann, Cassidy Litle, Angela Lynn, Chuck Malone, Hal Marchand, Martin Maskarinec, Kyle Mayborn, Kim McClure, Ken McCrary, Bree McEwan, Patrick McGinty, Jim McQuillan, Shawn Meagher, Deb Miretzky, JoAnn Morgan, Russ Morgan, Rafael Obregon, Lorette Oden, Daniel Ogbaharya, Nancy Parsons, Betsy Perabo, Jennifer Plos, Bill Polley, Renee Polubinsky, Andrea Porras Alfaró, Brian Powell, Michael Quigley, Kim Rice, Daneen Richardson, Steve Rock, Mike Romano, Susan Romano, Jessica Ruppert, Mallory Sajewski, Diane Sandage, Gary Schmidt, Margaret Sinex, Erskine Smith, Bonnie Sonnek, Sharon Stevens, Holly Stovall, Wenhong Teel, Jack Thomas, Letisha Trepac, Tammie Walker, Jacqueline Wilson Jordan, Ron Williams, Ed Woell, Lora Wolff, John Wozniak, Erica Wurth

Chairperson Pynes thanked senators for their attendance at the special meeting. He observed that they have already performed a semester's worth of senatorial work and acknowledged that it has been a stressful time for faculty colleagues across campus who have received notification of possible layoffs, some of whom are members of Faculty Senate.

Chairperson Pynes clarified that Faculty Senate has not called an emergency meeting, as has been stated in some conversations across campus. Faculty Senate does not call emergency meetings; it is a special meeting. He announced that President Thomas today notified the campus that he has requested the Board of Trustees (BOT) table the vote on staff reductions scheduled for December 18. President Thomas has asked to address Faculty Senate today. Chairperson Pynes stated that the special meeting was called to give voice to faculty in this process. He stated that while the Senate wants to hear from the Provost and the President, other items on the agenda will proceed as planned.

Chairperson Pynes pointed out that the Senate Constitution allows that special meetings may be called by the Senate Chair. He explained that this special meeting was called in response to the largest cuts to date in Illinois to teaching faculty and ongoing concerns about the University's fiscal health, which has been affected by the state budget stand-off and enrollment declines. Chairperson Pynes pointed out that in its preamble the Senate Constitution states that the founding faculty "establish this Constitution as a means of facilitating faculty participation in the formation of basic University policies and pledge the cooperation of the faculty in the continued progress of Western Illinois University as an institution of higher education." According to its Constitution (Article I, Purpose of the Faculty Senate), the Faculty Senate "serves as a means by which the opinions and viewpoints of the faculty may be determined and communicated to the administration of the University, and it shall serve as an agency through which the faculty may participate in the formation of basic University policy." The Constitution lists several ways in which these goals can be accomplished; Chairperson Pynes highlighted #10, "Determine the policies which will provide for faculty participation in the preparation of the budgets of the University," and #11, "Participate in discussion and make recommendations on any subject which affects the welfare of the University." Chairperson Pynes stated that since recent news and events affect the welfare of the University, the Faculty Senate is going to weigh in.

Chairperson Pynes recognized the many guests, some of whom may never have attended a Faculty Senate meeting. He informed them that guests may ask questions, but questions from senators will take priority; he also asked those who

wished to comment to raise their hands. Chairperson Pynes explained that this special meeting was called so that those faculty who represent faculty could talk about the issues affecting WIU. He observed that Faculty Senate is not the administration, and even if faculty are in or are represented by University Professionals of Illinois (UPI), the Union also represents a significant amount of non-faculty members, so UPI's response may be different from the response of faculty to current news and events. He stated that if faculty views are different from those of the Union or WIU's administration, the Faculty Senate wants to make those views clear through the only body at WIU that solely represents faculty, faculty views, and faculty concerns.

Chairperson Pynes recognized the other Executive Committee members – Vice Chair Jill Myers and Secretary Jeff Brown – who have done a large amount of work and who were willing to quickly agree to this special meeting. He stated that Senators Myers and Brown are engaged and want to do the right thing for faculty. Chairperson Pynes also stated that the special meeting could not have been accomplished without Parliamentarian Janna Deitz and Recording Secretary Annette Hamm. He stressed that this body wants to do the work and is here to do so.

## I. Announcements

### A. Provost's Report

Interim Provost Neumann yielded to President Thomas, who thanked the Senate for having him at this special meeting. President Thomas sent a letter to the University community at approximately noon today stating that he has asked the BOT to put the resolution for layoffs on hold until there is more time for discussions with various individuals. He knows that layoffs are a very difficult thing for many people to consider. The University has experienced budget reductions from the state since 2002 and has been able to float with the reserves that were in place. While President Thomas has promised in the past that there will be no layoffs or furloughs, a couple of years ago he informed the University that he was unsure how much longer he could continue to do so, and six months ago he stated that this promise could no longer be made. President Thomas reminded senators that President Goldfarb practiced very sound fiscal management, and President Thomas has continued to follow that lead and has built reserves to float the state when they did not come through with funds and sometimes did not meet scheduled payments. Budget Director Matt Bierman made a presentation on the budget at the faculty assembly, and the President has told the state legislature that the University has already cut "to the bone." President Thomas stated that most funds are now earmarked for personnel. He talked to the BOT about these concerns at the summer 2015 retreat. Interim Provost Neumann has been charged to reduce in terms of number of positions, which President Thomas stated has been a challenge for everyone.

President Thomas stated that the administration has tried to work with various constituencies. The administration sent a survey out to all WIU employees and received responses from 1,001 individuals, an overwhelming amount. President Thomas stressed that the administration has tried to be as open and transparent as possible about the process. He has testified in Springfield on many occasions; the last time he was asked to testify to represent mid-sized institutions in Illinois, while the President from the University of Illinois represented large institutions and Chicago State's President represented small state institutions. The three met with Governor Rauner and many legislators. President Thomas said that he spoke about the challenges and what WIU has to do to keep its doors open, as he and Interim Provost Neumann did in open town hall meetings with each college, the Library, and WIUQC.

President Thomas stressed that he understands how difficult these decisions are on the University, adding that they affect individuals he sees on a daily basis and with whom he is friends. He asked the BOT to table their decision on layoffs to see what other options the University can come up with to prevent as many layoffs as possible, but the President stressed that there will still need to be tough decisions made. President Thomas has asked the Faculty Senate Chair and his designees as well as UPI leadership to suggest options that perhaps have not yet been considered so that the administration can exhaust every opportunity to try to decrease the number of layoffs as much as possible.

President Thomas pointed out that WIU has not had layoffs and furloughs while some other state universities are going through them for the second time. The presidents and chancellors of the state universities meet on a weekly basis now because of the uncertainty across the state. They thought that a budget would be forthcoming in January, but the Governor now says that there may be no budget before

April. President Thomas stressed that the state of Illinois is in a crisis of confidence. He stated that parents have contacted him to say that their children want to come to Western but they want assurance that WIU's doors will be open for four years. President Thomas sent a letter to the University community reaffirming that WIU will be open in spring 2016 and beyond.

President Thomas stated that 3,000 WIU students are eligible for Monetary Award Program (MAP) funds, and WIU paid 2,700 students MAP funds on behalf of the state. WIU was the last state institution to do so; President Thomas had hoped by holding out to put some pressure on legislators, but WIU could not hold out without other state institutions doing the same. Students sent the President thank you emails saying they would not have been able to attend without those funds. WIU plans to cover MAP funds again for spring semester, but that amounts to \$5.5 million per semester in addition to not receiving budgeted funds from the state.

President Thomas related that faculty serving on the President's Round Table discussed the budget crisis last year and this semester. He pointed out that when two-thirds of the faculty say that they prefer layoffs to furloughs, it puts the administration in a predicament. President Thomas stressed that the administration understands the hurt and pain these decisions cause, and added that it is difficult for the administration to make these decisions as well. He thinks that there are many things that WIU can do to get beyond these hard times, but it is a challenge. He wanted the University to pause for a moment before making these decisions, to come back to the table and see what can be done as a University, because "WIU is a family," which is why he has asked the Board to put the layoff resolution on hold until January 12. President Thomas explained that this date was not chosen in order to have the BOT meeting when faculty and students are not back from break but because January 15 is the contractual deadline to give notice to faculty if there are to be layoffs.

Senator Boynton asked what the process will be for the greater discussion between now and January 12. President Thomas responded that he has contacted the UPI President and Senate Chair to determine a meeting schedule. He has provided them with a list of the names that have been targeted for layoffs and plans to meet with them to see what can be done to offset that proposal or what is the best process of addressing the issues. Senator Hironimus-Wendt thanked President Thomas for attending the meeting and asked if he would be willing to entertain furloughs in lieu of layoffs. The President responded that he would absolutely be open to this.

Interim Provost Neumann told senators that the University has had to make reductions over the past several years due to declining enrollments but has been able to do this so far through attrition and by not filling open positions. She pointed out that every college received the same percentage cut to their budgets last year, and no further steps were necessary because there were sufficient open positions that spending levels could be reduced by the necessary levels. She said that this opportunity has now, however, been exhausted, and the University has reached the point of a three-step process for budget stabilization: selective reduction, elimination, and reinvestment in departments that need it. Interim Provost Neumann told senators that the University is now in Step 1. She pointed out that WIU has the same staffing level now that it had in 2003 when the institution had almost 2,000 more students, and she believes there are areas where the University is over-staffed. Interim Provost Neumann stressed that this situation is through no fault of the faculty; some areas simply have more staff than there are students available to take those classes. She stated that this time the University is unable to make cuts across the board, and the Colleges of Arts and Sciences and Education and Human Services will feel the most impact. She explained that Education and Human Services has experienced a drop in teacher education students, while Arts and Sciences is impacted because they offer the most general education classes and with fewer students attending there is less need for those classes.

Interim Provost Neumann explained that some of the factors taken into consideration included: how the departmental staffing level has changed over the past few years; how the number of majors has changed; student credit hour (SCH) production; and the possibility of moving faculty into areas of greater demand when and if possible. She stated that the University is also looking at ways to gain administrative efficiency, which was not part of the narrative of the most recent budget announcement. Some ways to gain administrative efficiencies include mergers of academic departments, administrative mergers, and reorganization of job duties. Interim Provost Neumann stated that the administration is looking at ways

across the board to try to gain efficiencies and match the University's expenditure liability with its available funds.

President Thomas told senators that one step that has already been taken is reduction in administrative salaries. The administrative leadership team and deans have voluntarily agreed to reduce their salaries beginning January 1, 2016. President Thomas stated that this may be extended to all administrators, in addition to trying to reduce administrative positions.

Senator Roberts asked if President Thomas expects the state budget to be finalized in April. President Thomas clarified that he is repeating what Governor Rauner said; previously the Governor had said the budget would be finalized in January, so the timeline remains uncertain. Senator Roberts observed that this uncertainty will make it difficult for the University to project the impact on the budget of decisions that might be made next month regarding faculty reductions and other proposed changes. President Thomas stated that even if the state signs a budget, WIU will still need to make reductions based on several years of declines in state appropriations overall and reduced enrollment.

Senator McNabb asked if data is available on the impact of articulation or 2+2 agreements on the University. She noted that the College of Arts and Sciences has been disproportionately hit by the proposed layoffs and expressed concern that articulation and 2+2 agreements with community colleges make it easier for students to take Gen Ed courses elsewhere than at Western. Assistant Vice President Ron Williams responded he does not have any hard data at this point but noted that these types of agreements are primarily marketing tools. He added that most transfer students have not completed their associate's degrees and must still take some Gen Ed courses at WIU. Senator McNabb stated that she would be interested in seeing data on this in order to assess what impact these agreements have on the WIU educational experience.

Senator Boynton asked if other factors such as First Year Experience (FYE) and honors classes were considered in addition to factors such as SCH production when making decisions about layoffs. She noted that departments agreeing to offer FYE courses cut their SCH in half since the maximum enrollment is limited for those courses, while honors courses generate zero SCH production hours. She also observed that some departments cooperate in offering courses on the Quad Cities campus, which results in smaller classes than if they were offered on the Macomb campus. She asked if these factors were taken into account or if all departments were treated as if they offered the same array of courses. Interim Provost Neumann clarified that SCH production for honors and UNIV 100 courses does get counted for the home department of the faculty member teaching those courses. Senator Boynton noted that she teaches an FYE course with 22 students whereas if the course were not FYE she would have 45 students in the class, so her department is losing SCH production by agreeing to offer FYE courses. Interim Provost Neumann observed that FYE courses have been in place for a number of years, and there have not been fluctuations in the vast majority of "Y" courses being offered, so this variable would not amount to a huge difference. Senator Boynton countered that some departments do not offer FYE courses. Interim Provost Neumann explained that departments are being compared to themselves, not to each other, and FYE courses have been in place for the time period being reviewed. Senator Boynton asked if SCH production is being compared department to department; Interim Provost Neumann responded that it is not. Each department is being compared to itself over a number of years.

Senator Sadler asked if number of faculty in departments, student/faculty ratio, and number of majors was taken into account when making decisions regarding faculty reductions and whether these factors were weighted equally. Interim Provost Neumann explained that trends were analyzed, which included SCH production. She stressed that SCH production was compared within department as opposed to comparing Department A to Department B. Other factors analyzed included number of majors; changes in graduate enrollment; number of faculty, broken down by Unit A and Unit B; and student/faculty ratio historically, such as whether there have been a lot of changes or if it has remained relatively flat. Interim Provost Neumann stated that in departments with multiple disciplines, such as Philosophy and Religious Studies, these factors were split out between the disciplines. Senator Sadler asked if any one factor was focused on first before any other; Interim Provost Neumann responded that this was not the case. Senator Sadler asked about the thought process when considering all of these factors together. Interim Provost Neumann explained that the analysis was done equally, and the same factors were considered for all departments.

She noted that some departments have been “bottom-up” while other departments have not; some departments are very much administrative structures. She also added that some programs which are very different from each other – such as Construction Management, Graphic Communication, and Engineering Technology within the Department of Engineering Technology – were analyzed as if they were each departments. In the School of Music, the analysis was taken down to the level of areas of expertise. Senator Boynton noted that in her department one faculty member is proficient in Latin American history; another specializes in Asian history; one faculty member specializes on Hitler and the Holocaust, while another is a specialist on the Civil War, and they are the only experts the department has in those fields. Interim Provost Neumann stated that, using the School of Music as an example, laying off the bottom person may result in laying off an oboist, a flutist, or someone with a very specialized area of expertise. Senator Boynton asked if some areas of expertise are more important than others. Interim Provost Neumann responded that some areas of expertise were specifically identified to her, but conversations are ongoing about how narrow the analysis should be within departments.

Interim Provost Neumann stated that the goal is not to eliminate any department completely, leaving all curriculum available so that students have opportunities for exposure to those content areas. Senator McNabb asked who determines areas of expertise in the conversations the Provost has been having; Interim Provost Neumann responded that they have been identified by the deans who have been working with the chairs. Senator McNabb asked if there was a long process of conversation prior to the news that was disseminated last week. Interim Provost Neumann responded that deans, since they directly report to the Provost, helped fill in the areas of expertise for the faculty members in their colleges.

Senator Sadler expressed concern that Hispanic and foreign student enrollments at WIU are growing, but some areas of expertise may now be at risk because of the layoff process. He noted that certain faculty are scheduled to be laid off in strong or emerging areas of growth. Interim Provost Neumann responded that faculty members who are scheduled to be laid off have the option of meeting with or emailing her, which is where this kind of dialogue can continue and a more personal conversation can occur about what other areas they may have expertise in. She noted that chairs and deans may not even be aware of faculty specializations outside their home areas. Those meetings have already begun.

Senator Roberts asked if seniority within departments was a factor in determining who to lay off between two faculty members with the same academic rank. Interim Provost Neumann responded affirmatively, adding that every department has a seniority list. Senator Bennett asked how decisions were made regarding layoffs of Unit B support professionals; Interim Provost Neumann responded that there is a Unit B seniority list as well. She added that those in academic support professional (ASP) positions have not been affected by this process so far except for one position; in that case, it was determined that the job functionality of the position was perhaps underutilized and that the same job functionality could be achieved through other avenues.

Senator Lino asked if the University would be freezing hiring at some point. Interim Provost Neumann responded that WIU cannot do an across-the-board hiring freeze because some departments are growing or have vacancies that must be filled in order to fulfill the mission of that department. She noted that the University needs to be able to reinvest in such growing areas as Law Enforcement and Justice Administration and Nursing because their resources are stretched very thin.

Senator Szyjka observed that teacher education often experiences cyclical changes in the number of pre-service teachers in the program at any one time – seeing higher and lower numbers and changes in the number of students taking graduate courses. He asked to what extent it was considered that there might be a change to the positive in this area through recruitment efforts, teacher retirements, and the general cyclical nature of teacher education. He noted that if there is an influx of teacher education students in three to five years, it will require the University rehiring or the unlikely possibility of bringing back professors who have been laid off. Interim Provost Neumann replied if a trend currently shows increasing enrollment in a department, that was taken into consideration when decisions were made. Departments that are not currently showing this trend would need to have staffing levels readdressed when enrollment reaches the point where additional resources are needed.

Senator Cabedo-Timmons observed that the only professor of Chinese and Japanese in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures is facing layoff. She noted that this will create a hardship for her department because the new foreign language major (World Languages and Cultures) is growing, and one of the requirements is to take a second language. She also noted that President Thomas has traveled to China for recruitment, and Chinese students are bringing money to the University. The faculty member who received layoff notification evaluates these Chinese students in terms of Gen Ed. Interim Provost Neumann said she hesitates to discuss any individual personnel actions in the venue of a Faculty Senate meeting, but if there is a program with low demand, that factor was taken into consideration. President Thomas reiterated that individuals who are affected by possible layoffs have the option of meeting individually with the interim provost to discuss special considerations.

Senator McNabb asked why effort was not taken before now to ascertain the other areas of expertise that faculty in danger of being laid off might possess. She observed that it appears that decisions were made first and now individuals have a chance to highlight their other strengths; she wonders why faculty were not first asked to submit information about what they have to contribute beyond what is immediately evident. Interim Provost Neumann responded that these discussions involve very individual conversations. Senator McNabb asserted that it seems slightly counterproductive to have these conversations after layoff announcements have already been made. Senator McNabb suspects that another round of layoffs may be necessary, yet she has never been asked to complete an audit of what she can bring to the University that might not be generally known. She suggested that everyone get to know each other better at the outset.

Senator Carncross asked if there are plans for nonrenewal of Unit B contracts; Interim Provost Neumann responded that there are a number of non-negotiated temporary faculty that will not have their contracts renewed.

Chairperson Pynes announced that questions would now be entertained from guests. Susan Czechowski stated that she is a tenured professor who has taught in the Department of Art for 15 years. She teaches some 100-level foundations classes but mainly 300-level print-making courses. She added that there are ten faculty below her in rank within the department. Ms. Czechowski asked how a faculty member who is a full-time tenured professor can be on the layoff list. She believes that junior faculty who only teach 100-level foundations classes should have been on the layoff list instead of her, noting that if she is capable of teaching 300-level classes then she is certainly capable of teaching additional 100-level classes. Chairperson Pynes responded that this is a personnel matter that will require a private conversation with the interim provost. Interim Provost Neumann stated that, in theory, every faculty member in every department should be able to teach foundational 100-level classes. She explained that consideration must be given to the level of expertise above 100-level classes, to make sure that those classes are covered while addressing any redundancy. She reiterated, however, that further discussion would be a personnel matter that should be undertaken in private.

Women's Studies faculty member Holly Stovall asked for the breakdown by race, gender, and nationality of the group targeted for layoff. Interim Provost Neumann responded that she does not know the breakdown by race or nationality; she can follow up with a breakdown by gender but did not bring that data with her. Senator Boynton asked if the list is broken down by international faculty versus United States citizens. Interim Provost Neumann responded that it is not.

President Thomas remarked that these are good questions and some of them do need to be followed up with a response. He encouraged Ms. Czechowski and Dr. Stovall to speak to Interim Provost Neumann in her office. He added that such factors as international faculty, diversity, and gender do need to be seriously considered, but there is no language in the UPI contract that allows the administration to take these factors into account; the contract only addresses issues of seniority. Legal Counsel Rica Calhoun stated that her background is in equal opportunity and access, so these are concerns that she shares. She noted that, leading up to these decisions, an assessment team was assembled which included representatives from number of offices that address those specific interests, including Equal Opportunity and Access, Budget, Risk Management, Internal Auditing, Human Resources, and Legal Services. She asserted that this team made sure that those considerations went before the vice presidents for consideration when decisions were being made.

Senator Roberts remarked that although international status was not a factor, he is not clear if race, gender, or other demographics were part of the decision making process. Interim Provost Neumann reiterated that these factors were not considered; decisions were made based upon contractual language, which does not include provisions to make those distinctions. She added, however, that Attorney Calhoun's assessment team did look at those factors. Senator Sadler wonders what the University community should think if the gender breakdown, once it is announced, shows that an overwhelming number of those who are laid off are female. Attorney Calhoun responded that this could indicate disparate treatment – decisions made based upon membership in a protected class – or disparate impact, meaning that even though the methodology was applied equally, there was a disparate impact on a group of people. She explained that the decision making process includes cross-reference with the University's affirmative action plan to determine where underrepresented groups are and to provide that information to the vice presidents as they make those deeper decisions, which can involve more detailed discussions with the various constituency groups to come to some type of agreement. She pointed out that affirmative action initiatives and diversity plans have taken place in earnest over the past 15 to 20 years, so staff reductions, whether at private or public entities, will result in losing diversity because those individuals were likely the last hired.

Western English as a Second Language (WESL) instructor Jessica Ruppert asked if the administration discussed the layoff methodologies with UPI and whether UPI approved them. Interim Provost Neumann responded that the administration has had discussions with UPI representatives, although there was a period of time when the two were not at the negotiating table. She explained that there is not an approval process, but the administration is following Articles 24 and 40 of the UPI contract.

Department of English faculty member Barbara Ashwood asked if the administration views the targeted 17:1 student-faculty ratio as a change in faculty working conditions that would need to be bargained with UPI; Interim Provost Neumann responded that she does not. She explained that if in a couple of years the administration was to go through this exercise again and mandate that all departments whose student-faculty ratios are not 17:1 must reach that target, then it would be a negotiable part of working conditions. She explained that the current goal is greater efficiency as to how the University utilizes its resources to get back to a 17:1 ratio.

**Motion:** To limit further discussion to five minutes so that the Senate can consider the rest of its agenda items (Boynnton/McNabb)

#### **MOTION APPROVED 16 YES – 5 NO – 1 AB**

Senator McNabb observed that senators have heard a lot about ratios and the issues of enrollment and majors, but she wonders to what degree the University's core values featured in the discussions that led up to recent decisions, including, for example, the removal of female faculty and faculty of color. Senator McNabb elaborated that one of Western's core values is social growth; students need to be exposed to people who are different than themselves in positions of educational expertise. She asked if these types of factors were considered at the front end. Interim Provost Neumann responded that Western's core values have remained central to the recent discussions. Interim Provost Neumann said she frequently expresses concerns to the President that using rank order as the determiner will result in impacts that are not desirable, so these issues have been very much part of the discussion.

Dr. Stovall asked if deans are the ones who identified faculty to be laid off; Interim Provost Neumann said they were not. Deans identified faculty members' areas of expertise for the Interim Provost; for instance, the Dean of the College of Fine Arts and Communication identified which faculty members were flutists, oboists, or pianists.

Political Science faculty member Julia Alberracin asked what the role of UPI will be going forward in these discussions. President Thomas responded that he will work with the UPI President and the Senate Chair to look at the process again, considering what has already been done and what can be done going forward.

Ms. Ruppert asked if faculty are laid off or retained because their departments are closer or further away from the targeted 17:1 student-faculty ratio, whether this does not mean that the ratio is a work condition. Interim Provost Neumann responded that the ratio would only be a condition of work if it is applied in subsequent years for future staff modifications. She noted that some areas are staffed at an unnecessarily high level given current student demand. She believes that University employees must be good stewards of their fiscal resources, which includes trying to make sure that WIU is staffed appropriately to meet the student demand in various areas.

V. New Business

A. Faculty Responses to the Current University Layoff News

**Motion:** That the Senate move into executive session so that the members of the Senate can speak frankly while there is a quorum (McNabb/Boynton)

Senator McNabb explained that some senators have childcare needs, and she thinks it is important to maintain full staff while the remaining items of New Business are examined. Senator DeVolder asked for justification for going into closed session. Chairperson Pynes responded that Senator McNabb's justification is so that senators can have a frank discussion and so that quorum is maintained after 5:00 when senators have a history of drifting away. Senator DeVolder expressed concern that this may not be legitimate justification for going into closed session. Senator Hironimus-Wendt stated that he concurs, adding that while he understands and appreciates the opportunity to be candid, he also recognizes that there is a disgruntled, upset, and hurt faculty body that should hear the senators' discussion. He would vote against going into executive session. Senator DeVolder pointed out that there are very few items on the list of possible justifications for going into closed session, and discussion of sensitive issues is not one of them; justification under the Open Meetings Act is more rigorous than that.

Senator Szyjka said that he has developed a statement, and he would like the public at-large to hear his story while the discussion of layoffs is continuing as it may impact the University community. Senator Dodson stated her support for keeping the meeting open. She noted that some of the faculty's concerns and hurt feelings seem to surround a perceived lack of transparency, so she thinks the meeting should remain open so that everyone can hear what is going on. Senator Dodson observed that there has been a lack of communication between faculty and the administration, so she thinks it would be wrong at this point for senators to exclude their fellow faculty from the discussion.

Chairperson Pynes passed the chair's gavel to Vice Chairperson Myers so that he could comment as a senator. He related that Faculty Senate this semester held a meeting at which it was known that the Interim Provost and Budget Director were going to discuss the University budget; the meeting was also to include information regarding the Academic Program Elimination Review (APER) Committee. UPI sent an email to faculty at that time stating that the Union sees "no room for any discussion of this matter other than a notice to the collective bargaining unit." Senator Pynes said Faculty Senate has been told many times by certain groups that frank, open discussions cannot be held on the Senate floor to discuss various items before the body, and on the day in question there were practically no questions raised for the Provost and the Budget Director. This indicated to him, as the presiding member of the Faculty Senate, that some individuals felt intimidated to speak about these issues; now suddenly, when bad news occurs, individuals want to show up at Senate and talk about them. Senator Pynes stated that if everyone present wants to hear the remainder of the discussion, he has no qualms about that, although he would like to say some things in private without members of the administration present. He noted that while he is willing to speak publicly about sensitive matters, not all senators may be as forthcoming because many senators frequently do not speak at the meetings. Because of that, Senator Pynes recommends that Faculty Senate go into executive session so that people feel they can speak freely. He noted that senators are elected by faculty members of the University to represent them, so there is no conspiracy afoot. He stressed that everyone wants to do the right thing in the right way, and sometimes that requires a private discussion. Chairperson Pynes took the gavel back from Vice Chairperson Myers.

Senator Boynton asked what executive session means and whether it would be appropriate to ask the Provost to leave the meeting. Interim Provost Neumann stated that she would be happy to leave the meeting when she is no longer needed for comments. Senator McNabb reiterated that her concern was maintaining a quorum and offering senators the opportunity to have their say before some must leave the meeting. She stated that if everyone at the table is willing to remain for the rest of the meeting, that is fine; but, working from precedent, senators often leave early. She stressed that her motivation to go into closed session is not secrecy, although she concurs with Chairperson Pynes's thoughts about the need to speak frankly, which has sometimes not been the case this semester, and she supports the need for a free exchange regarding the business before the Senate.

Parliamentarian Deitz noted that *The Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*, which governs Senate meetings, defines a closed meeting only as one "open only to members of the assembly in which sensitive or confidential matters may be discussed and acted upon." She stated that, given the fact that in the past there has been an attempt to chill some of the discussion on the Senate floor, her understanding is that, procedurally, a closed session can be voted upon in response.

Senator Hironimus-Wendt pointed out that unless a quorum is called, it can be assumed that a quorum still exists. Parliamentarian Deitz confirmed that the Senate still has a quorum of members.

**Motion:** To end discussion (Roberts/McNabb)

**MOTION TO END DISCUSSION APPROVED 21 YES – 0 NO – 0 AB**

**MOTION TO GO INTO CLOSED SESSION DEFEATED 7 YES – 13 NO – 1 AB**

As part of Faculty Responses to the Current University Layoff News, Senator Szyjka read from a statement he prepared for the meeting:

"I would like to inform the Faculty Senate and state for the record that I, Sebastian Szyjka, was laid off this morning at 10:00 AM (12.15.15). I would like both the Faculty Senate and the Board of Trustees to hear my story.

I have been part of the Western Illinois University family since 1997 – as an undergraduate student studying to become an elementary/middle school science teacher. After completion of my degree, I left the institution to build various aspects of my career. I returned to WIU as an assistant professor in 2010; however, my professorship actually began at Central Michigan University as an assistant professor of science education. When I learned of a position at this university in the area in which I was an expert, I took the opportunity to become a faculty member here. I actually took a pay cut to become a professor here because I thought highly, and still think highly, of my fellow colleagues – whom I now represent as my constituency.

I would like everyone to learn of some of my credentials and how I am being forced to take my talents and skills to another institution. Since my arrival at Western in 2010, I far exceeded the expectations of the department criteria for tenure and promotion two- or threefold. In the area of scholarship, I have published five articles in peer-reviewed journals, and authored grants in the amount of \$350,000, from which I was able to pay my faculty employees approximately \$70,000. I have presented at premiere research conferences in both areas of Science Education as well as Literacy Education. I have an active line of research in three or four areas within my area of expertise. In the areas of teaching, I have earned near perfect instructor evaluations approaching 5 on a scale of 1 to 5. I have met and exceeded the requirements for service by being on college, departmental, and University committees

In the most respectable manner, and as a member of Faculty Senate representing the faculty of COEHS, I urge the leadership of this institution to consider, and for the Faculty Senate to pass, a resolution to reexamine the process by which the scheduled layoffs are occurring and, most importantly, delay any layoffs until the following occur: (1) The governor and state achieve a budget agreement, or appropriate even a piecemeal solution in terms of the release of funds. We

know that they are in talks now, and there is mild optimism, according to the weekly update from the office of House Republican Leader Jim Durkin; (2) Members of the university community agree upon more specific conditions of layoffs as per the specified rotation.

With respect to all of my colleagues in the various departments of the university: There is an outlined order in which layoffs need to proceed according to the contract. That hierarchy purportedly has been violated somehow and in some way, as evidenced by the various forms of protest, angst, and uncertainties, and presents a serious dilemma that must be addressed before any actual layoffs should 'officially' occur with the vote of the BOT. Layoffs are ugly any way you look at them, but they are even uglier if they are done outside of the bounds of a union supported or negotiated contract. To the best of my knowledge as a result of a short reading, layoffs should occur in the following order: First, temporary and adjunct faculty. This would include part-time faculty. Second, faculty of the associate designation. This would include Unit B. Third, tenure-track faculty. Fourth, tenured professors.

If something isn't done, if action isn't taken, and if the Board of Trustees are not convinced to agree to due process in regards to layoffs, then a dangerous precedent will be made. The public perception of the University might suffer, students might choose other universities over Western Illinois University, parents may have uncertainties in sending their children to this institution.

Let me be perfectly clear: I am not interested in the nuances of negotiations between the administration of the university and union officials, nor am I bitter with the fate that has met me today. I am not against layoffs. What I am most concerned with from a layperson's perspective is adherence to the contract, or process, or what have you. From what I can tell, the perception many individuals are holding is skewed because of the difficulties everyone is having in applying the appropriate interpretation of language found in the UPI agreement to the imminent layoffs. Therefore, it is crucial that we take several steps back, pause, and re-examine the procedure or process for which layoffs should be actually occurring.

Just some questions to think about as I conclude my statement: Why are other universities in the Illinois system not taking as drastic measures as this institution? Are we that different financially to require layoffs prior to the state agreeing upon a budget?"

Chairperson Pynes asked if there are additional faculty responses to the layoff announcement. Senator Myers reminded senators that they need to consider very seriously the students currently attending WIU because some of the comments being made are very derisive. She stated that now is not the time to "pit ourselves against each other." She pointed out that final exams and grades are coming up, but she has heard some faculty say that if their job is cut there is no reason for them to administer final exams. She reminded that the point is to recruit, educate, and retain students, and even if the University is going through difficult times what should be first and foremost considered is the students currently enrolled and that their degrees mean something to them. Senator Myers believes that when decisions are being made about funding/not funding and investing/reinvesting in programs, it should be kept in mind how much it means to students that they are supported in what they are doing, and that many could not be attending college without funding assistance. She can imagine nothing worse than not having the money to complete the final year of a student's college education. She stated that while it is horrendous for faculty to lose their jobs, it is also horrendous for students to have their hopes and dreams dashed, adding that some students have jobs waiting for them to complete their degree, which they cannot do without the funding to complete it. She stressed that faculty need to consider the students that are currently at the University as well as themselves.

Senator Szyjka stated that he was under the impression that the discussion on the floor was to provide faculty responses to the proposed layoffs. He stressed that he values his students and does everything possible to ensure their success. He expressed willingness to give assurances to the administration and his superiors that he will perform the job that he was hired to do to the best of his ability despite being laid off or let go. Senator Szyjka does not see a positive outcome from focusing on the negatives that could take place because of contract negotiations or nuances in language; the central purpose for faculty is to teach and help their students. Senator Szyjka stated that he, like many WIU professors, is

a product of this institution, and when he arrived at WIU as a student he did not know what he wanted to do with his life. Senator Szyjka believes he exemplifies what the institution wants its students to achieve, but because of the layoff they may not get to see that future, at least in his case, and that would be an outrage. Senator Szyjka said he completely understands where he stands in terms of seniority in his area; there are three faculty on the Macomb campus teaching science education methods courses, and he sees the need to address that. What Senator Szyjka would like to see a public reaction to is the specific algorithm that was used, which was not fully explained at the outset of this process. He thinks this point is important to his constituency and to Faculty Senate as a governing body.

Senator Hironimus-Wendt related that he has been laid off twice in his career in higher education, so he has empathy with those who have received those notices. He related that his dear friend Holly Stovall has been issued a pink slip but told that her layoff is on hold, and teaching at WIU represents achievement of a dream for her. Senator Hironimus-Wendt stated that, similarly, teaching at James Madison University was the realization of a dream for him, but he was laid off from that position after two years and laid off at Millikin University after nine years. Like Sarah Haynes in Philosophy and Religious Studies, he had recently purchased a house before being laid off. Senator Hironimus-Wendt observed that senators were elected to work from a perspective of dignity, which sometimes can be missing in challenging times when emotions get the best of individuals. He pointed out that the privilege has been offered of coming up with an alternative plan, and he hopes that can be successful. He does not believe that the violence that is being felt at the University can be undone with more violence, and he hopes that discussions can quickly move away from this aspect. Senator Hironimus-Wendt stated that he wants to see no layoffs. His colleague Beate Wilson in Sociology and Anthropology is a real person with real children who has lived in Macomb for many years with a husband who teaches at Macomb High School. She is a Unit B faculty member, and Senator Hironimus-Wendt does not think that Unit B faculty are worth less than Unit A. He stated that whatever the ad hoc committee determines, he hopes it is not layoffs, adding that everyone in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology is willing to take furlough days to avoid the layoffs of their colleagues.

1. Proposed Resolution (McNabb)

**Faculty Senate Resolution in Response to the University's Recently Announced Faculty Layoffs**

**RATIONALE**

**WHEREAS**, the concept of the university evolved during the European Middle Ages to designate a guild of master students and teachers and is currently defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as “an institution of higher learning offering tuition in traditionally non-vocational subjects and typically having the power to confer degrees”<sup>1</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, a public institution of higher learning in Macomb, Illinois that serves the Western Illinois region and beyond currently operates under the modern designation of university and identifies four core values, the primary of which is “Academic Excellence”; and

**WHEREAS**, the faculty of Western Illinois University are charged with being stewards of the University's mission and core values through their teaching and primary duties, through their scholarship, and through their service; and

**WHEREAS**, the administrators of Western Illinois University are charged with being stewards of the University's mission and core values through personnel decisions that safeguard the quality of the educational experience the University offers its students; and

**WHEREAS**, the challenges of difficult budgetary circumstances prompted the announcement of

faculty layoffs on December 8, 2015 without the concurrent publication of the rubric by which faculty reduction decisions were reached or the sufficient evaluation of contributions made by academic departments, programs, and faculty in the creation of said rubric; and

**WHEREAS**, the metrics used to review departments and programs in preparation for personnel reductions have failed to account for activities that contribute to the University's mission of academic excellence but do not contribute to semester credit hour production, including but not limited to offering courses in support of the First-Year Experience Program, the development of WIU-Quad Cities, and the Centennial Honors College.

## **RESOLUTION**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Faculty Senate of Western Illinois University hereby protests the indiscriminate elimination of faculty positions as contrary to the mission of academic excellence established in the University's four core values and detrimental to the educational experience of its students.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, THAT** this Resolution be permanently recorded in, and distributed via, the Minutes of the Western Illinois University Faculty Senate.

<sup>1</sup>Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "university," <http://www.oed.com> (accessed 13 December 2015).

Senator McNabb explained that she amended original language in the second paragraph from the bottom of the resolution referring to "elimination of tenure-track and tenured faculty positions at the rank of assistant professor, associate professor, and full professor" and replaced it with "indiscriminate elimination of faculty positions." She explained that last week when the news of layoffs began to trickle out, she felt moved on behalf of Faculty Senate to draft this resolution as a statement of faculty commitment to education. She noted that there have been a number of comments about the role of UPI, and she understands the position of that body, but she sees her primary role as a faculty senator to discuss what being a faculty member means, what being a professional in the field of higher education means, and, mostly, what being a member of the University community means. Senator McNabb, as a historian, studies the philosophy of the university, a concept which was developed by the French in 1100, so she sees WIU faculty as, in effect, noble practitioners of a very old craft. She stressed that it is imperative in difficult times that individuals take a moment to reflect on who they are and what their purpose is at WIU, and Senator McNabb's purpose is to serve her students. She stated that while faculty could have chosen many other career paths, they chose this one because they are passionate about education. Senator McNabb pointed out that WIU is not a vocational school or a technical college; as a first generation daughter of a technical school graduate she does not denigrate those, but WIU is a university, and a university prioritizes the education of its students not solely for career training but for the education of the whole person, a sentient member of the global community. Senator McNabb stated that she cannot think of a job more vitally important. She wants to know more about how the proposed layoffs will affect WIU's academic excellence and values and whether the formula that was used to determine the list of 50 faculty members took those things into consideration.

**Friendly amendment:** To add "and unilateral" to the next to the last paragraph so that it reads, "...protests the indiscriminate **and unilateral** elimination of faculty positions ..."  
(Roberts)

## **FRIENDLY AMENDMENT ACCEPTED**

**Motion:** To adopt the resolution as amended (Bean/Boynton)

Senator Hironimus-Wendt stated that while he loves the spirit of the resolution, he feels compelled to abstain from voting for or against. He noted that prior to the change in language,

he had received several calls expressing the concerns of Unit B faculty to wording, which has now been addressed. He believes it is a moral dilemma that four weeks ago the Senate voted to create a committee that will be charged in the spring with considering the dynamics of programs for possible elimination. Senator Hironimus-Wendt explained that if he is in favor of sanctioning a committee that will work with the administration to consider possible program reductions, he does not feel right voting in favor of a resolution that says he is opposed to layoffs because, although he likes the language change, they are still layoffs.

Chairperson Pynes clarified that senators did not vote to create the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee; the Senate conducted the election of members to the Committee as a courtesy to the administration and the Union. Senators may, as faculty members, have voted for their college representatives, but as senators they did not vote to create the APER Committee. He added that Faculty Senate is obligated to run the election for membership but has no control afterward over the Committee. Chairperson Pynes has received many emails from faculty who are confused about this distinction. He received a call from a faculty member who wanted Faculty Senate to add a Quad Cities representative to the Committee, but those decisions are beyond the control of the Senate, whose only responsibility is to run the elections.

Senator McNabb said her concern is with the process used for making decisions; she thinks that is the real purview of the Faculty Senate and separate from the role of the Union. When Senator McNabb heard what was allegedly being used to determine which individuals should be laid off, such as SCH production, number of majors, and faculty ratios, it sounded to her a lot like a program review. She observed that a program review actually requires some kind of opportunity for the program itself to take a position; in this case, questions of expertise were not directed to the faculty in the department, so she thinks there needed to be greater consultation about this process. She believes this is what is driving the questions about metrics and rubrics, which she thinks are more appropriately addressed by Faculty Senate than by some other bodies.

Senator Szyjka stated that his understanding of the Academic Program Elimination Review Committee was that it was to provide an objective review of programs from a non-biased perspective where information and data would be collected for decision-making purposes. Senator McNabb clarified that she was not referring to this Committee but to the decisions made this week regarding personnel layoffs.

#### **RESOLUTION APPROVED 15 YES – 0 NO – 6 ABSTENTIONS**

##### **B. Discussion of MAP Funding and Delayed Degree Granting**

Chairperson Pynes stated that one idea he has heard to address the budget crisis is to treat MAP funding like a loan from the University to those students receiving it so that students would not be able to receive their degrees or be allowed to graduate until the funds were repaid. Under this scenario, students would receive a letter stating that their degree is granted, but an official certificate would not be provided until MAP funding is received from the state. It is thought that students would put pressure on the legislature to provide that funding to universities.

Senator Boynton asked about the impact on students who would not receive their bachelor's degrees. Chairperson Pynes explained that students would have their bachelor's degrees on the condition that the state pays the MAP money it owes; degrees would not be given to students with outstanding debt, including debt owed by the state in the form of MAP funds. Senator Hironimus-Wendt said while he recognizes this is merely a discussion item, he would require a lot more convincing to vote in favor of something like this. He finds the idea that the University would treat the poor as somehow different because they are given grant money to be distasteful.

Senator Silberer asked if students are anywhere informed when they receive MAP grants that if the state does not pay the University back that students are somehow responsible for the funds. Budget

Director Matt Bierman responded that the financial aid statement received by students indicates that funds are being applied “pending state funding,” and most Illinois universities have been covering MAP funding in this way. WIU has applied MAP funds to student accounts, so to create a loan that money would have to be removed from their account balances. He added that this is not impossible, but would certainly be an “interesting move.”

Senator Siever asserted it would be wrong to hold students hostages for the state’s misdeeds, adding that he cannot imagine such a move would improve student sentiment toward the University. He also cannot imagine that the outcome would be the desired one.

Senator Lino asked if it would be possible to engage in negotiations with students to try to pay back the money. Chairperson Pynes clarified that there is no actual proposal on the table; the suggestion is simply an idea proposed by other universities. He added that faculty senates at other universities are trying to think of strategies to help their situations.

SGA President Wil Gradle stated that the general sentiment among students is that they are being used as bargaining chips at the state level. He stated that while he can understand and empathize with the rationale, the sentiment would be that the University as a whole is holding students hostage while students are receiving no benefits from the process. He stressed that this strategy would not be a positive one from the point of view of students.

Board of Trustees Student Representative Michael Quigley expressed his strong opposition to this idea, which falls disproportionately on lower-income students. He pointed out that, if adopted, students would not only owe Sallie Mae loans but would also owe the University additional money while they already graduate with a great amount of debt.

Registrar Angela Lynn said she can imagine trying to implement such a policy and telling a student who took five years to complete a bachelor’s degree that he/she will only receive confirmation of graduation but not an actual degree. She has checked with registrars at other state universities and none are doing this; while the idea may have been “floated” elsewhere, it is not actually being done elsewhere. Registrar Lynn stressed that WIU does not always have to benchmark new ideas, and she does not think this is an area in which the University will want to stand out. She does not think that parents will want to send their students to WIU for four years only to find that the University is holding hostage the student’s degree verification.

Senator Boynton expressed her agreement with Mr. Quigley and Registrar Lynn. She stated that educational opportunity is one of WIU’s core values, and denying degrees would remove that opportunity. Senator DeVolder added that it would have been more honest to not allow students to float MAP money in the first place than following this idea.

**Motion:** To adjourn (McNabb)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Jeff Brown, Senate Secretary

Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary