

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Regular Meeting, 3 December 2024, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom and in Union Capitol Rooms

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT IN PERSON: B. Brewer, D. Brown, C. Chadwell, H. Elbe, D. Gravitt, D. Hunter, D. McArthur, J. McKenzie, A. Melkumian, B. Petracovici, J. Robinett, S. Turkelli, J. Walker, L. Wipperling, E. Woell

SENATORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: D. Allwardt, B. Bellott, E. Hamner, B. McDonald, R. Sharma, K. Wiseley

SENATORS ABSENT: J. Albarracin, E. Asare

EX-OFFICIO: Krista Bowers Sharpe, Parliamentarian; Interim Provost Mark Mossman

GUESTS: Audrey Adamson, Marjorie Allison, Lori Baker-Sperry, Dan Barclay, Tom Blackford, Keith Boeckelman, Zaire Bradsher, Amy Burke, Amy Carr, Dennis DeVolder, Andre du Plessis, Tara Feld, Kishor Kapale, Sarah Lawson, George Mangalaraj, Jim McQuillan, Christopher Merrett, Nathan Miczo, Amy Mossman, Holly Nikels, Rafael Obregon, Lorette Oden, Betsy Perabo, Renee Polubinsky, Linda Prorise, Christopher Pynes, Polly Radosh, Tim Roberts, Jim Schmidt, Justin Schuch

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. November 12, 2024

MINUTES APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Approvals from the President

1. Request to merge the School of Management and Marketing with the School of Accounting, Finance, Economics and Decision Sciences

B. Provost's Report

1. Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Four-Year Review
(Lori Baker-Sperry, WIU Assessment Coordinator, and Amy Mossman, Professor, English)

Dr. Mossman told senators that the Year 4 review is due to the Higher Learning Commission in March. She said that she has shared a lot of information about this with Chair Robinett and is happy to answer any questions. Chair Robinett thanked Dr. Mossman for her thoroughness in responding to the series of questions he presented to her and explaining the different pathways of this process. He said this is explained more in the Senate Executive Committee minutes.

Chair Robinett asked if there are ways that departments will need to assist with this process or ways that they will be able to provide Dr. Mossman with additional information. Dr. Mossman responded that the review is really just updates and significant changes, so what she has done is cloned the 10-year assurance document and added any updates. She is in the process of contacting people in areas where she knows updates are needed; she is also sending individuals sections of the document and asking them for updates. She plans to reach out more to departments in December and January if she has questions but reiterated that the process is basically making sure that nothing significant is missed.

2. WIU Quad Cities Innovation Campus

(Christopher Merrett, Dean, Innovation and Economic Development, and Director, Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs)

Dean Merritt explained the idea is to transform the Quad Cities campus into a regional catalyst for innovation, education, and economic development. He emphasized there will be partnerships with public as well as private sector groups and other institutions of higher education. Dean Merritt explained that while the focus will be on innovation, the institution will focus on the three general areas of healthcare, manufacturing, and education. He thinks this aligns nicely with what the university has been doing for over a century: driving social mobility and economic growth for the WIU region.

Dean Merrett told senators he provided Chair Robinett with a .pdf of a *Washington Post* article which came out last week titled “Rural students’ options shrink as colleges slash majors.” He said that this article, which discusses urban and regional as well as rural campuses, discusses nationwide higher education restructuring similar to what WIU is undergoing. He noted that the University of North Carolina-Greensboro is restructuring or eliminating close to two dozen programs, which is illustrative of the national context. He added that the regional context, such as the Quad Cities region, shows an aging and maybe stagnant or shrinking population. Dean Merritt pointed out that from 1980 to 2023, the U.S. population increased by about 48 percent, but the Quad Cities metro area declined by just over one percent, which raises a lot of questions about how to attract and retain young people to that region. He said WIU’s response to spur innovation and economic development is the creation of the WIU Quad Cities Innovation Campus. He thinks this could be considered enlightened self-interest because as WIU helps the Quad Cities, the Quad Cities can also help WIU.

Dean Merrett explained the university’s approach to the Innovation Campus is collaborative and scholarly while also being geared toward economic development. He said it is aligned with the foundational documents of WIU, including the Strategic Plan, commitment to DEI, and reports generated by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE), including the statewide Thriving Illinois plan and a more focused study called Thrive Quad Cities. Dean Merrett told senators the Quad Cities Innovation Campus will reside within Academic Affairs because it is an academic endeavor. He noted that with the understanding of the fiscal challenges facing WIU, this initiative will be pushed forward with no new administrative hires. According to his PowerPoint, the reporting line for the Innovation Campus will be President, Provost, Associate Provost for Innovation and Community Engagement, and Director of Workforce Development and Applied Learning. The PowerPoint indicates that *possible* future hires might include a Director of Educational and Community Partnerships and a Director of Research and New Initiatives but stresses that there will be no new hires for now.

Dean Merrett provided a brief outline of eight initial ideas to advance the Innovation Campus:

- Create a business incubator;
- Establish an APEX accelerator, a technical assistance outreach center that helps businesses sell goods and services to local, state, and federal government agencies;
- Expand the existing Small Business Development Center to focus on minority, women, and veteran owned businesses as well as an international trade center;
- Secure \$16.5 million affiliated with the Illinois Innovation Network (IIN) and the Capital Development Board (CDB) funds that are assigned to WIU;
- Offer consulting on a fee-for-service basis;
- Amplify existing IIN Innovation Hub activities, such as Corn Belt Ports, an entity which already has space on the Quad Cities campus;
- Build on existing academic programs;
- Propose new academic programming.

Dean Merritt noted that there will be some work involved in getting the IIN and CDB funds freed up, but they could be used to reimagine how the Quad Cities generates revenue for the

university based on consulting on a fee-for-service basis. He noted that the Bi-State Regional Commission, the regional planning council for the whole Quad Cities, has indicated the region's need for business incubators, and the Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce has spoken about the importance of entrepreneurship, innovation, and business incubators. He explained this links into the \$16.5 million IIN/CDB funds as efforts are made to link the Quad Cities Innovation Campus with the Quad Cities Manufacturing Institute (QCMI). Dean Merrett explained the QCMI involves a partnership between the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Iowa State University, the Rock Island Arsenal, and WIU.

Dean Merrett emphasized that building on academic programs will focus on healthcare, education, and manufacturing in both undergraduate and graduate programming. He noted that the Early Learning Center on the Quad Cities campus is part of this idea, which aligns with the IBHE'S 2024 Thrive Quad Cities report. He related that some new initiatives are being considered, such as Supply Chain Management, which the Rock Island Arsenal has expressed an interest in. Dean Merrett said there is great interest in the region in workforce development and thinking about how WIU can contribute to this. He said this will involve designing, thinking about, and teaching innovation as well as working with community college partners in the region and engaging in 2-plus-2 programming.

Dean Merrett informed senators it currently costs about \$7.2 million to run basic operations on the Quad Cities campus. He said that as thought has been given to how to offset this, the administration has been looking at proposed capital funds, start-up funds, and revenue streams, including:

- \$7.5 million in IIN capital funds;
- \$9 million in CDB funds for the WIU Phase 2.5 construction plans;
- Illinois Congressional Delegation funds earmarked for FY 26;
- Federal grants from the NSF, EDA, and other federal agencies;
- Sponsorships and investments from community partners;
- Revenues from the WIUQC Innovation Campus business incubator;
- Fee-for-service money from community and economic development consulting services;
- Financial and in-kind support from local municipalities;
- State appropriation request(s);
- Continuation and increase of existing grants – SBDX, APEX Accelerator, Small Business Administration.

Dean Merrett related that next steps will include developing a feasibility study for the business plan; the feasibility study will explore if and why the enterprise is a good idea, and the business plan will describe how the enterprise will work. This is underway and will hopefully be completed by February or March. As part of their research, Dean Merrett and others have been conducting multiple site visits to operational business incubators, including Distillery Labs in Peoria; existing incubators and maker spaces in the Quad Cities; Innovate Springfield at the University of Illinois-Springfield; mHUB and the 1871 Incubator in Chicago; University Park at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville; the Office of Innovation and Economic Development at Southern Illinois University-Carbondale; and UIUC Enterprise Works in Champaign. Dean Merrett pointed out that engagement is needed to support this initiative, including federal, state, and local elected officials and regional partners in higher education. He pointed out there is also a need to deepen relationships with economic development organizations and financial institutions, including the banking and investor community, the Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce, and the Illinois Manufacturers Association. Other entities the group want to meet with include but are not limited to: the NAACP, the Development Association of Rock Island, Quad Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Rock Island Labor and Trades Council, Renew Moline, and the Development Association of Rock Island.

Dean Merrett related that efforts are being made to engage with WIU constituencies, including Faculty Senate, the Board of Trustees, Chairs' Council, Council of Administrative Personnel,

Illinois Federation of Teachers, IBHE, UPI, and the School of Engineering and Technology. He wants to make sure that faculty and Faculty Senate input is received and incorporated into this vision.

Dean Merrett explained that if one is to create a business incubator or innovation campus, it needs to be part of a larger innovation ecosystem, including local and state governments, centers of innovation, intellectual property rights information, and sources of capital access. He noted that the Distillery Labs incubator in Peoria has mapped out their innovation ecosystem, and he thinks something similar needs to be developed for the Quad Cities. He observed that the Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce has started to create an inventory in a significant way by working on a census of key actors in the Quad Cities innovation ecosystem. His PowerPoint indicates that WIU's task related to this is to expand on existing efforts in the Quad Cities; identify key elements in their innovation ecosystem; and ensure complementarity, synergy, and engagement moving forward. Dean Merrett pointed out that the administration has already started including new business startups and entrepreneurship with a focus on minority, women, and better-known businesses. He noted that WIU already operates a procurement center, the APEX Accelerator, but it currently only serves Macomb down to the Metro-East area. He said the administration would like to open a full-fledged APEX Accelerator on April 1 and actually had a soft opening of this on September 1.

Dean Merrett noted that international trade imports/exports and the business incubator are new areas that WIU is now exploring. He explained that while there are some existing business incubators in the Quad Cities, one can see by drilling down that they are actually more like co-working spaces and not really full-fledged business incubators. Dean Merrett said this explains why the State Regional Council has said there needs to be incubators in order to drive innovation in communities.

Dean Merrett stressed the point is to reimagine the Quad Cities campus by building on existing strengths while also developing new programming aligned with IBHE's report, Thrive Quad Cities, which states that "the path forward for the Quad Cities is one of collaboration and innovation." He thinks WIU is aligned with what the IBHE is talking about but needs to secure new revenues in order to help drive economic development in the region. He noted that a key part of this is promoting student and faculty engagement achieved in collaboration with internal constituencies as well as external regional partners. He ended his presentation by asking how WIU's faculty and the Faculty Senate can help drive this initiative forward.

Senator Hunter asked how this initiative integrates with the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs (IIRA), for which Dean Merrett serves as Director, and whether that office will move to the Quad Cities campus. Dean Merrett responded that there are no plans to move IIRA to the Quad Cities, and the Small Business Development Center already reports to him. He noted that IIRA offers a Masters in Community and Economic Development. He added that the Dean for Innovation and Economic Development position transcends both campuses. Senator Hunter observed that one slide showed that there would be an associate provost in charge of the Innovation Campus and asked if that was a new position or a lateral move. Interim Provost Mossman responded that would be a new position, but right now the university is under a hiring freeze and wrestling with the budget. He noted that when envisioning how the Innovation Campus will function, the administration does not want to have a model where there is a separate administrative structure for the Quad Cities campus, as there has been in the past. He noted that instead it will work inside of Academic Affairs, so it will make sense to have an associate provost in that role.

Senator Hunter asked if the feasibility study is being done internally or if a consultant is being hired for that. Dean Merrett responded this is a great question; typically, this type of feasibility study is conducted by an external third party and would cost anywhere from \$50,000 to \$75,000, which WIU does not have at this point. He stated that IIRA has conducted other feasibility studies for business incubators in the state, so this study will be conducted internally. He offered to share the full PowerPoint presentation with anyone who is interested

in seeing it because a final couple of slides discuss resources and what a good feasibility study looks like. He said there is information comparing and contrasting business incubator feasibility studies for three or four different universities which show the things that WIU should be looking for. Dean Merrett believes his team can do an awesome job with this.

Senator Woell remarked that the second slide mentioned the words “scholarly” and “intellectual,” but he wonders in what way the Innovation Campus would be considered scholarly given that most of the plan sounds like it is geared toward entrepreneurship, commerce, and manufacturing. Dean Merrett responded this involves how one conceives of outreach; he prefers to think of it as praxis rather than outreach, so that it does not just involve an issue of transactional helping. He explained that IIRA for the past 30 years has conducted research and gathered information that informs their outreach; then they do the outreach, find out what worked and what did not, and that information goes back to inform future research. He thinks that idea of an internal feedback loop is part of what they want to do with the Innovation Campus. Dean Merrett also thinks a key element is challenging WIU’s faculty to ask how they can see themselves contributing to this, what kinds of community engagement would make sense to their respective departments, and what kinds of research, teaching modifications, or revisions could be part of that. He sees teaching, research, and outreach as integrated and different facets of the same academic achievement.

Senator Gravitt noted that she came from industry before turning to teaching. She thinks the common sense question is how long it will be before this initiative is fully realized and what time window is needed to make it work. She thinks the plans sound wonderful, but they are reliant upon obtaining funding, clients, and other needs. She asked how long this experiment will run if these things are not obtained. Interim Provost Mossman thinks this is an excellent question and recognizes that the basic principle of the Innovation Campus is a connection to various parts and pieces of public and private agencies, private industry, and many other kinds of things. He said this is why he, Dean Merrett, and others are visiting different innovation hubs and campuses to learn how to get this kind of project up and running quickly. He said mHub in Chicago was recommended because they were able to get their space up and going in about five years. Interim Provost Mossman admitted that the Innovation Campus will be dependent upon funding at the start, and if it is to succeed it must generate funding through different kinds of agencies, federal and state grants, Department of Defense grants, and other dollars coming in. He stressed the point is to reach the stage where the Innovation Campus starts to generate dollars, and the five-year window is what the university is currently engaged in. Senator Gravitt asked whether, if WIU does not get the funding in 2025, the administration will try again in 2026, 2027, and 2028, or drop the idea if funding is not obtained within two years since WIU has not gotten funding for its Quad Cities campus for the past 20 years. Interim Provost Mossman responded that if WIU does not get funding from the state, whether for the Quad Cities or Macomb campus, the university will be in the boat it is in now.

Chair Robinett remarked that there have been many conversations over time about certificate programs and the ways they could be used in order to produce revenue that does seem to fit well with the workforce mentality of the Innovation Campus and may be able to help move that forward.

Dean Merrett remarked that in regard to the question about how long this process will take, the university has already started on it and has already delivered. He noted that the idea of expanding the procurement process is based on a \$400,000 small business development grant. He said the intention is to space things out so that the university can show some early wins and gain momentum. He related that Ann Friederichs, Director of WIU’s Small Business Development Center, has been working with a small-scale manufacturer who wants to prototype a product but could not afford to do it on his own. He said Ms. Friederichs connected the manufacturer with Rafael Obregon, Director of the School of Engineering, and his students developed the prototype. Dean Merrett pointed out this shows the potential for business development outreach, student engagement, faculty engagement, and commercialization, which makes a kind of value chain.

Interim Provost Mossman related that every spring university representatives are asked by the state legislature how many minority vendors WIU hires and how many minority businesses the university supports. He thinks that with the Innovation Campus this number will increase substantially. He noted that one of the problems with economic development in the Quad Cities is that small or midsize businesses cannot afford to go to the Rock Island Arsenal to have a schema created for their business, for example, but WIU's role will be to engage those small to midsize vendors and businesses and create an economic environment where they can get the materials they need to succeed and grow.

Senator Hunter asked if there is a distinct definition of workforce development and how it differs from community college responsibilities so that it can be ascertained that WIU is not overlapping. Interim Provost Mossman responded that the pathway model that Dean Merrett described is what WIU plans to work with when talking about specific degree programs. He stated, for example, that a student might be attending Black Hawk College, might step out after achieving an associate's degree, then step back in for a year, work with WIU toward a bachelor's degree, step back out, and then perhaps works with Iowa State and the University of Illinois on what they are doing. He stated that workforce development is directly connected to actual community needs. Interim Provost Mossman said another example is that the Rock Island Arsenal is very interested in Supply Chain Management and is looking for juniors and seniors who would be willing to do internships there. He stated that while community college graduates might be able to step into this, what the Arsenal is currently looking for is juniors or seniors.

Chair Robinett thanked Dean Merrett and Interim Provost Mossman for their report and promised to invite them back to discuss the Innovation Campus further.

B. Student Government Association Report
(Zaire Bradsher, Director of Academic Affairs)

Mr. Bradsher reported that Alonso Ruffin, SGA Vice President for External Affairs, has developed a student-faculty luncheon to be held at 11 a.m. on December 1 in the Olson Dining Hall. He said this will provide recognition to faculty members as well as providing an opportunity for students and faculty to connect. He said that interested faculty should reach out to Alonso Ruffin or Jackie Price, Director of the Student Development and Success Center.

SGA's Vice President for Internal Affairs organized a meeting with the SGA on the Quad Cities campus. Mr. Bradsher said their representatives expressed concerns about the lack of communication or miscommunication with the administration.

Mr. Bradsher reported that Stephen Druse, SGA Director of Technology, is speaking with professors and University Technology about tech renovations planned for the University Writing Center next semester. He has also developed a five-year plan for SGA to "future proof" the organization and prevent momentum loss in future years. He said Mr. Druse has also created a form for student outreach to gain a better perspective on what students would like to see improved across campus, particularly in regard to technology.

Mr. Bradsher told senators he is working on a mental health event for the spring semester, while SGA's Attorney General, Jeffrey Keith, is working on rewriting the SGA Constitution.

C. Faculty Senate Chair's Report

Chair Robinett encouraged senators to visit the Board of Trustees (BOT) website where the Board Book should be posted sometime tomorrow. He said this should give an idea of what may potentially happen at the BOT meeting on Friday, December 6.

Chair Robinett expressed his thanks to Senate councils and committees and hopes senators had a chance to review their preliminary reports in the Senate Drive. He commended them on the work they have been doing toward the charges presented to the councils and committees from the Executive Committee this fall. He added that this will be discussed more in January.

Chair Robinett has attended more Space Allocation Committee meetings. He said they have discussed the status of campus buildings and the need to shrink the amount of space being used. Chair Robinett told senators that potential academic reorganization and building utilization will be ongoing conversations for the spring semester. He said that while there is no significant action planned in the short term, he wants it to be on everyone's radar that these conversations are occurring.

Chair Robinett attended his monthly meeting with the University Technology CIO Group, who are continuing to work on financial aid for students from this fall. He said they are testing the new system to make sure that the integration will go smoother in the spring. He has been told there are still about 300 students who are having problems with their financial aid accounts this fall, but University Technology is working to alleviate this. Chair Robinett related that the CIO Group is also in the process of updating language for technology policies. He said they plan to share these more in advance this time in order to avoid many of the questions that occurred during the initial rollout related to what was going on. Chair Robinett also learned that admissions applications will be moving to Slate soon in order to make that process go smoother, and work on the new ERP is progressing. He added that members of the CIO Group will attend a spring Faculty Senate meeting to provide a full update.

The Department of Art and Design holiday sale will be held December 9-11 from 10-6 in the Brattain Lounge. A portion of those proceeds provide financial support for the students.

D. Other Announcements

1. Amy Carr, WIU Representative to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) Faculty Advisory Council (FAC)

Dr. Carr told senators she plans to report on highlights of the October and November meetings of the IBHE FAC, but these meetings are six hours long so there is a lot she is unable to cover. The October minutes are available for senators to read through on the Senate Drive. She noted that the October meeting was held at Roosevelt University, a Hispanic-serving institution with 25 percent Hispanic students. Members heard a presentation about a grant program intended to promote post-baccalaureate opportunities for Hispanic Americans. She said these try to bring Hispanic students into various graduate degree programs, such as counseling, a profession which is overwhelmingly white. She said Roosevelt offers micro internships for students who work full-time and some fellowship opportunities focused on graduate programs.

Dr. Carr heard a presentation on the dual language teacher leader program, which combines training for dual language teaching with the credentials to become a principal in one shorter timeframe. She said the IBHE FAC also heard a presentation on engaged learning practices in the honors college and from Jackie Moreno of the Illinois Student Assistance Commission (ISAC). Dr. Carr told senators that ISAC did a lot of work over the summer to help get more FAFSA applications processed, which really made a difference.

Dr. Carr related that the November meeting was held at Rosalind Franklin in North Chicago, a graduate medical school. She said the original Chicago Medical School was founded in 1912, in part for Jews who were not allowed to attend other medical schools; their mission statement originally said the school was for Jews, women, African Americans, and the working class, although now it is a consortium of colleges. Dr. Carr related that the medical school was renamed after Rosalind Franklin, who was crucial to solving the structure of DNA. She said the institution focuses on interprofessionalism and emphasizes the importance of communicating and coordinating with others, including those who do not share one's expertise, in teams in order to reduce burnout in the medical field. She said they stress working with each other and sharing competencies through a lot of simulation-based training.

Dr. Carr told senators that the House and Senate higher education funding bills, based on the work of the Higher Education Funding Commission, will probably not appear until later in the spring semester, although there is a lame duck session in January. She noted that state income is expected to be lower this year, so she is not sure there is a lot of hope that they would be passed. Dr. Carr related there are also efforts to pass a Tier 2 pension bill.

Dr. Carr noted that there is supposed to be a public university faculty representative on the IBHE, which has not been filled since last January when the individual in that seat moved out of state. Dr. Carr and one other IBHE FAC representative have submitted their names to fill this seat, although there have not yet been any interviews and other Board positions are also being filled. She added that it is up to the Governor to fill these seats rather than the responsibility of the IBHE Chair.

Dr. Carr related that Jill Gebke, who works for the IBHE staff, spoke to the IBHE FAC about a \$2 million grant to establish re-enrollment of adult learners who stopped out. Ms. Gebke told them that this year saw the highest enrollment at Illinois public universities, taken collectively, an increase of two percent with most of those being full-time transfer students.

Dr. Carr related there was an effort to ask the FAC to sign the CARLI statement in support of faculty librarians at WIU and elsewhere. She noted this is interesting because the FAC does not have any authority beyond advising the IBHE. She said that after the FAC Chair met with the IBHE Executive Director and legal counsel, the Chair told the IBHE FAC was not allowed to sign any statements. Dr. Carr said what the IBHE FAC did instead was to authorize writing their own statement with a link to the CARLI statement; Dr. Carr and four other IBHE FAC members will work on drafting that for presentation at their December meeting and will post it on the IBHE FAC website. She said Ms. Gebke sent her the administrative rules for libraries, which will be quoted in the document along with the IBHE's own administrative goals, which mention maintaining libraries. Dr. Carr related that the community college caucus and the private institution caucus have also begun talking a lot more about the importance of libraries in their constituencies as well.

Dr. Carr related that Pranav Katari, IBHE Chair, met with the Faculty Advisory Council to discuss a number of things. He said one thing they are developing is direct admissions programs based on grades and GPAs and which would include transfer students. She believes there is a common app being developed for transfer students as well. Dr. Carr related that she asked a question about interdisciplinarity in the liberal arts; Dr. Katari responded that many programs being approved are multidisciplinary, such as a content area with data science.

Dr. Carr would like for the Americans with Disabilities Act to be on everyone's radar. She stated that Title II, Article 2, and the Illinois Information and Technology Act, requires that by April 24, 2026, everything that is done in teaching be ADA compliant, except for physical textbooks. She related that colleagues who are working on this at other universities have told her this will include vetting every website, so if a faculty member wants to link a website, it might take awhile to have it vetted. She noted that PowerPoints will require everything to be tagged, which can be very challenging in some fields, such as chemistry. She stated that maybe this could be a use for AI, or perhaps universities will do as the University of Illinois-Springfield and assign the task to student workers. Dr. Carr said this conversation took up all of the public caucus meeting and has resulted in a Higher Ed and Technology working group for the Faculty Advisory Council that will try to develop something this year to address the forthcoming requirement. Chair Robinett remarked that the new disability requirements are something that the CIO Group and instructional technology staff are aware of and have had conversations about. He said there is a long way to go to get WIU to where it needs to be in regard to this, but it is on their radar. Dr. Carr finds it interesting how many different universities are working on this but in very different ways from one another.

A. Council on Writing Instruction in the Disciplines (WID)
(Nathan Miczo, Chair)

1. Request for WID Designation

- a. IS 325, Global Social Networks, 3 s.h.

Dr. Miczo remarked that the WID Council worked with individuals from Computer Sciences who were very willing to make changes to bring the course in line with the guidelines recommended by WID Council members.

WID DESIGNATION APPROVED

B. Council on Curricular Programs and Instruction (CCPI)
(Amy Burke, Chair)

1. Curricular Requests from the School of Computer Sciences

- a. Request for Change of Major

- i. Information Systems

CHANGE OF MAJOR APPROVED

- b. Requests for Changes to Emphases

- i. Business Intelligence
ii. Information Systems
iii. Cybersecurity

CHANGES TO EMPHASES APPROVED

- c. Request for Additional Emphasis

- i. Computer Information Systems

ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS APPROVED

C. Council on General Education (CGE)
(Alisha White, Chair)

1. Requests for General Education Inclusion

- a. CHEM 114, Chemistry of Health, 3 s.h.
b. REL 100, World Religions, 3 s.h.
c. AAS 100, Introduction to African American Studies, 3 s.h.
d. WS 190, Introduction to Women's Studies, 3 s.h.

REQUESTS FOR GEN ED INCLUSION APPROVED

D. Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)
(Julia Albarracin, Chair)

1. Faculty Nominations

SENATE COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

Council on Admissions, Graduation, and Academic Standards (CAGAS)

Julie Cox, SPA	replacing	Jobu Babin	2025	AT-LARGE
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Council for International Education (CIE)

Dave Hunter, Engineering Tech	replacing	Sanjeeta Ghimire	2026	B&T
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Chair Robinett recognized that Senator Hunter is being very generous with his time and has agreed to serve on a Senate council while also serving as a senator, which is not typically allowed. He added that no other volunteers have been found for this position, and Senator Hunter volunteered due to his interest. There were no further candidates, and the slate of nominees was declared elected.

IV. Old Business

Chair Robinett reminded everyone that Faculty Senate is the established government organization for faculty at WIU; the Board of Trustees has outlined procedures for staff and students to establish their governing bodies as well. He noted that each of these governing organizations has been delegated authority to promote shared participation and wise decision making to ensure channels of communication. He reminded guests that while they may ask questions during Faculty Senate meetings, senators and faculty will take precedence in order to be recognized. He asked that those wishing to comment raise their hand in person or use the react feature on Zoom and promised to do his best to recognize everyone in the appropriate order. He specified that comments and questions should be relevant to the issues being discussed and thanked everyone for complying with the procedures of Faculty Senate.

Chair Robinett explained that the Old Business items were postponed from the previous Faculty Senate meeting and were already motioned and seconded at that meeting. Chair Robinett specified that he was asked at that meeting to divide the question, and the question has been divided. He recalled that discussion had just begun related to item A. when further consideration was postponed until the December 3 Senate meeting.

A. Faculty Senate Protest and Censure of Western Illinois University Board of Trustees' Actions

***WHEREAS,** The Constitution of the Western Illinois University Faculty Senate states that its purpose is to “serve as a means by which the opinions and viewpoints of the faculty may be determined and communicated to the administration of the university,” and “through which the faculty may participate in the formation of basic University policy,” specifically “policies for continuous curricular development” involving the improvement of instruction, the acquisition of academic resources at libraries, the evaluation of instructional procedures, and the assessment of student learning (Article I, Preamble, Numbers 1 and 2), and*

***WHEREAS,** as the final institutional authority, the WIU Board of Trustees “entrusts the coordination and management of the University to the President with the understanding that provisions shall be made for advisory participation by the faculty, staff, and students in university decision-making” and have stated that it endorses the principle of shared governance within the framework of its Regulations (Bylaws, Introduction), and*

***WHEREAS,** current and former members of the Board of Trustees and current members of the University administration publicly acknowledged WIU faced budgetary challenges for years and failed in their responsibility to provide sound supervision and oversight of the University budget resulting in a budget deficit and cash flow issues that precipitated faculty and staff layoffs and terminations, **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Faculty Senate of Western Illinois University protests recent actions by the University Administration that run counter to the philosophy of shared governance, and*

***BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the Faculty Senate censures the Board of Trustees for its years-long failure to provide sound supervision of the budget, and calls upon its current members to review its procedures to determine how the same mistakes can be avoided in the future; and*

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

Chair Robinett pointed out that the resolution very clearly states “current and former” in regard to what is being protested and calls on current members of the Board of Trustees to identify ways that would allow some of the practices that have occurred in recent years to not continue. He added that the wording “current and former” was something the committee which drafted the resolution discussed as it was moving forward.

Senator Hunter related that he had to leave the previous Faculty Senate meeting early and wonders if it was mentioned what the potential repercussions are for the Board if the resolution to censure is approved. Chair Robinett responded that one thing that has been noted historically in conversations related to this process is that it can be unpredictable how different bodies work with this. Chair Robinett held this conversation with the drafting committee when they were developing the document and stressed trying to make it as objectively neutral as possible while still providing a call for action in the hopes that the Board would view this as an offer to work collaboratively to avoid things that have happened in the past. He concluded in response to Senator Hunter’s question that there is no way of knowing.

Trustee Polly Radosh remarked that the third “Whereas” asserts that the Board “failed in their responsibility to provide sound supervision and oversight of the University budget, resulting in a budget deficit and cash flow issues that precipitated faculty and staff layoffs and terminations.” She asked senators how they would know whether the BOT offered any oversight or had any influence at all with the administration regarding the budget. Chair Robinett responded that one thing Faculty Senate might potentially look at is the fact the former Vice President for Finance and Administration, Paul Edwards, is no longer at WIU. He thinks senators might consider the comments that were made publicly during Board meetings where it was expressed that if particular budgetary things were not addressed, there would not be budget approvals happening in the future. Chair Robinett noted that he has attended Board meetings for several years and has seen it made clear to a variety of vice presidents and administrators in attendance that the BOT expected more thorough reports in regard to what was happening budgetarily and for action to be taken. Trustee Radosh observed that this would indicate the Board was offering oversight and insight into the budget, not failing to do so.

Trustee Radosh informed senators that the Board does not have any control over the hiring of people such as the fiscal officers of the university. She said they can offer insight, oversight, and suggestions, but they do not hire and cannot force the administration to fire someone who is incompetent. She said the Trustees try to influence and do meet regularly with the President and the finance team to discuss the budget and try to move forward in a way that is fiscally responsible for the university.

Trustee Radosh thinks one of Faculty Senate’s frustrations is that the BOT did not act sooner and should have done something before things got as bad as they are, which seems to be clear from the resolution. She told senators the BOT discussed acting sooner; they discussed layoffs two years earlier than they actually occurred. She said Trustees felt that there would be no benefit to laying off employees sooner; they wanted to wait for retirements to kick in while hoping that this would result in fewer layoffs and more programs being preserved. She told senators this strategy was right because there were fewer layoffs because the BOT waited. She does not know who would have benefitted from laying off employees two years earlier, resulting in more people being laid off, and asserted that the BOT tried as hard as they could to manage things the best they could.

Senator Wipperling asked who is responsible for firing if not the BOT. Trustee Radosh responded the President and the administration are responsible for firing. She stated that in the case of former Vice President Edwards, the BOT could not fire him; they could only urge the President to take some action or fire him but they could not force the President to do so. Senator Wipperling asked if the BOT appointed Interim Provost Mossman. Trustee Radosh responded the BOT does not have the authority to appoint any administrators lower than the President; the President is the individual who appoints administrators. Senator Wipperling asked if the BOT appointed Interim President Mindrup; Trustee

Radosh responded that they did. She added that the BOT's oversight is primarily restricted to the President with regard to personnel.

Senator Brewer remarked that current Vice President for Finance and Administration Ketra Roselieb provided Faculty Senate with a very clear picture that showed losses of up to \$8 million in some years and \$4 million in others. He thinks that while some of the intentions of the Board of Trustees were great, the BOT is at the helm and has the captaincy to drive that process, and it seems like they did things too late. He remarked that when President Huang left with the parachute that followed him, it appeared to be way too late. Senator Brewer recalled that Interim Associate Provost Christopher Pynes has pointed out that faculty did not have to have a raise, but the BOT approved that raise, which Senator Brewer thinks might have provided the Board with the opportunity to present the university's situation and to be transparent. He thinks that after repeated warnings to the President with no teeth in them, the BOT does have the authority; he suspects that BOT Chair Stutz actually gave a mandate to the President after a Board meeting because the following week a vice president was removed who was reporting false enrollment or tuition figures that were unauthorized by the Board. He thinks Trustee Radosh is underestimating how much power the Board actually has and that if they have looked at the graphic for four years that shows the train wreck happening at WIU, it would be very hard to say they are not responsible for it. Trustee Radosh said that is not her intent; she is instead trying to say that the BOT has limited powers. She admitted that the Board can refuse to approve the university budget, but if they did that WIU would be unable to meet payroll. She added that the BOT threatened to do this for two years but got nowhere with that, and the third year is when the current actions happened.

Senator Brewer remarked that even when discussions are occurring about moving around buildings at WIU because there is not enough money to run them, the BOT this past summer said they did not want to get rid of the President's mansion because of the historical value. He noted that there will be no historical value if there is no university. Trustee Radosh pointed out that the Board did end up voting to approve the sale. She clarified the reference to the historical value was during the discussion phase of the decision, and the Board did not say they did not want to sell the building but that they needed more information.

Senator Melkumian referenced Trustee Radosh's statement that the Board was considering layoffs two years earlier than they occurred. She stated that while she is unsure how much transparency would have helped faculty and departments, during those two years new faculty were hired with the promise of tenure track positions, and now these faculty are back on the market. She pointed out that this was not very prudent and was not good for anybody – not good for faculty or for the morale of the departments. Senator Melkumian observed that one of the points that faculty think was irresponsible is that the Board did not tell anyone what they were thinking or planning. She recognizes that too much information can sometimes not be good, but this affected the planning, structure, and standing of the university's programs and education. Trustee Radosh responded this is a fair criticism. She stressed that the BOT has no control over who is hired in terms of faculty, so that is out of their control, but it is a fair criticism that there should have been more warning. She pointed out that the problem is that if the BOT were to give warning that they have to lay off 60, 80, or 105 people, that spurs panic. Senator Melkumian responded she does not know how much transparency the BOT should offer, but she thinks some would have been better than none.

Senator Gravitt thinks the university's budget was so convoluted for years that no one had a true understanding of where it sat. She wonders, if the Trustees could not figure it out and it took months for the current administration to do so, why that was allowed to perpetuate for decades. She thinks no one really knew where the "pies" were or parts of the pies and how money was being shuffled. She said UPI was hearing some conflicting stories about money being available or not available in various places, and this is all part of her frustration in terms of Board of Trustees oversight. She noted that there were different stories about the budget for years, but the BOT never said the university needed to bring in a forensic accountant to figure it all out.

Trustee Radosh responded this has been her frustration as well for the five years she has served on the Board. Trustee Radosh said that while she cannot account for why things were that way, when she was

BOT Chair she asked numerous times for the type of budget information the Board is getting now but was told it was not available, they could not get it, that was the best that could be done, or it had always been done that way. She said there were always reasons why the Board did not get more information, but the current Board Chair is a finance person whereas Trustee Radosh is not a finance person but an academic. She noted that there are not and historically have not been many finance people serving on the Board. She pointed out that Trustees are all volunteers who do the best they can and bring their own expertise to the job. Senator Radosh added that she is able to answer questions about curriculum and faculty governance, but finance is a challenge for her, while Board Chair Stutz is excellent and has pushed repeatedly. Senator Radosh believes the university is in a better place, adding that she cannot account for why the university was not here before.

Senator Gravitt remarked this speaks to why Faculty Senate included the third “whereas.” Trustee Radosh reiterated that these are things for which the BOT has no control over. She stated that if the Faculty Senate wants more people with finance expertise on the Board, they need to talk to the Governor who appoints Trustees. Senator Gravitt asked if Trustees talk to the Governor; Trustee Radosh responded they receive directives but do not talk to the Governor much.

Senator Hunter thanked Trustee Radosh for attending the meeting. He said one underlying frustration is that the administration who helped to build this dilemma have all left; everyone is looking for who to blame, but no one is taking responsibility. He noted that it may be that no one still here at WIU is responsible, but faculty are asking for someone to take responsibility. Trustee Radosh remarked that she appreciates this and understands where it is coming from, but the responsibility does not fall on a single person. She stated that if one could say the fault was President Abraham, President Huang, or President Thomas who brought WIU to where it is, things would be easy, but it is not possible to do that because the fault belongs to everyone, going back to when Trustee Radosh served on the faculty. She believes the fault lies in a combination of factors that are endemic to the institution itself and the way WIU does things, which does not often lead to accountability. Trustee Radosh thinks this is a byproduct of shared governance in that no one has single responsibility for anything; she shares that frustration and the desire to be able to say one person did this, but she can’t. Trustee Radosh told senators she has served under eight university presidents in some capacity; there have been frustrations with every one of them, and some have left the university in better shape than others.

Senator Wipperling remarked that if two years ago Trustee Radosh would have had this conversation with Faculty Senate and at least have shared that something needed to be done soon and that the BOT was open to ideas, there might have been a conversation instead of a race, or perhaps there could have been a minor decrease of something in order to save 30 to 40 of those 110 jobs. She suggested that people might have been willing to retire a year early if they knew that three of their faculty friends could keep their jobs. She thinks if this type of transparency had been in place, there might have been a team effort for faculty to be a part of the solution versus currently feeling like their hands are tied.

Interim Associate Provost Holly Nikels remarked, as someone who was at the bargaining table with UPI for the current contract, that the union was told very explicitly that the raises would result in layoffs. She recalled being in the room when UPI representatives were told that if raises were approved, it would cost some people their jobs. She noted that some of these conversations happened, but it did not matter, and the decision was still made.

Trustee Radosh told senators the BOT has heard a lot of criticism, but no one has come forward to tell them they should take a specific action or suggested that if the BOT did something the university could be in a different position. She said they have heard lots of remarks saying that they should not have done this or that, and that they should not have fired the librarians, but Trustee Radosh does not know where the university could have found \$1.2 million if they did not take these actions. She wants someone to come forward with an idea of where to find \$1.2 million without taking these actions because these are not choices that anyone likes to make. Trustee Radosh stressed that the BOT wants WIU to survive, and it is so close to the margin currently that if the right choices are not made, the university will not survive. She reiterated that the BOT is doing the best they can and encourages anyone to bring them their ideas.

Chair Robinett stated that one thing he would say in response is that this is the role of the Board. He expressed his appreciation to Trustee Radosh, adding that he has told Trustees that he appreciates the work they do and recognizes that it is largely a thankless job when the university goes through bad times. He pointed out, however, that ultimately the Board of Trustees is the highest authority representing WIU. Trustee Radosh reiterated that the BOT is composed of seven volunteers who bring a variety of skills and attributes to their positions. She stated the BOT is not some omnipotent being that can make things happen; they do the best with what they have, and they need more help and ideas from Faculty Senate and others. She does not think it is up to the BOT to come up with all the ideas and encouraged those who think they can do something better to tell them.

Chair Robinett said that while he appreciates the work the Board of Trustees does, when looking at where the university is currently and the merry-go-round of leadership WIU has seen in recent years, he has seen a number of individuals, such as Dr. Nikels and Dr. Pynes, put into interim positions of authority where they have had to make huge decisions. Trustee Radosh remarked she has been banging this drum for five years and agrees with Chair Robinett 100 percent. She does not think, however, that wringing hands about where the university should be and should have been is enough because “this is where we are.” Chair Robinett said he echoes Senator Hunter’s comment that there is accountability somewhere, and he would like to know where.

Senator Gravitt remarked she appreciates Trustee Radosh asking for help. She always tells her students that managers have to make decisions, so if someone is going to complain to them they should at least come with an idea of what they could do to fix the situation. Senator Gravitt noted that the presentation faculty representatives gave last spring was the first time that faculty had been invited to go to a Board of Trustees meeting and provide suggestions on ways that they could help. Senator Gravitt was one of the presenters from her college, but for years before that the BOT was operating “up there” while she was in the trenches doing the task of teaching classes. She noted there was previously no reaching out from Trustees saying they wanted to hear from faculty, so her suggestion would be for the BOT to keep inviting people to come to their meetings. Senator Gravitt had no idea that the Board would welcome suggestions from her because they had never asked for faculty opinions; WIU faculty have experts in accounting and economics, yet none were ever asked to help the BOT decipher what was going on with the budget when no one could figure it out.

Trustee Radosh remarked the Board often offers the President advice, and a year and a half ago they gave him a list of 12 things they thought would move the university forward. She said two of those were accomplished: an early retirement incentive and to negotiate with the union before getting to the point of a strike rather than after. She said these were the top two on the list, and the Board got through on these but not on the other ten, one of which was the issue of engaging the campus community for solutions. She apologized that this happened but does feel that the Board tried. She thinks the current administration is interested in pursuing more information, ideas, and insights from the campus community, and she hopes to see this moving forward.

RESOLUTION OF CENSURE APPROVED 16 YES (12 in-person; 4 zoom) – 2 NO (1 in-person; 1 zoom) – 1 ABSTENTION (1 in-person)

B. Faculty Senate Protest and Censure of Interim President, Interim Provost, and Interim Associate Provosts’ Actions

***WHEREAS,** The Constitution of the Western Illinois University Faculty Senate states that its purpose is to “serve as a means by which the opinions and viewpoints of the faculty may be determined and communicated to the administration of the university,” and “through which the faculty may participate in the formation of basic University policy,” specifically “policies for continuous curricular development” involving the improvement of instruction, the acquisition of academic resources at libraries, the evaluation of instructional procedures, and the assessment of student learning (Article I, Preamble, Numbers 1 and 2), and*

***WHEREAS,** as the final institutional authority, the WIU Board of Trustees “entrusts the coordination and management of the University to the President with the understanding that provisions shall be*

made for advisory participation by the faculty, staff, and students in university decision-making” and have stated that it endorses the principle of shared governance within the framework of its Regulations (Bylaws, Introduction), and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees have delegated that “except as limited by the scope of collective bargaining negotiations between the Board and the academic employees and the requirements of good faith collective bargaining, the appropriate and duly constituted committees of faculty government shall participate in the decision-making process of the University in the following areas:

- a. University curriculum.
- b. Basic policies with regard to campus planning and facilities construction and utilization.
- c. Creation of administrative positions at the level of Dean and Vice President and the selection of administrative officers for such positions as well as of the President of the University.
- d. Academic planning and the determination of priorities for the conduct and development of the University” (Board Procedures, Section I, Subsection 3), and

WHEREAS, the process designed and enacted by Interim President Mindrup, Interim Provost Mossman, Interim Associate Provost Pynes, and Interim Associate Provost Nikels for deciding who would be subject to termination was marked by a lack of transparency and communication with college and department/school-level administrators as well as support staff and faculty members, and

WHEREAS, the termination of contracts for approximately 105 University faculty and support staff—including about 40 instructors, 25 assistant professors, 14 associate professors, 7 professors, and 19 support staff members has inevitably affected the ability of faculty to meet its charge of participation in university curriculum and academic planning and has endangered the viability of many academic programs and jeopardized their academic standing in terms of reputation, accreditation, and ability to recruit students, and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate of Western Illinois University protests recent actions by the University Administration that run counter to the philosophy of shared governance, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate of Western Illinois University hereby censures Interim President Mindrup for the lack of communication and transparency in the decision-making during the termination of contracts for approximately 105 University faculty and support staff, and calls upon her to commit to more open communication with campus constituencies moving forward, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate of Western Illinois University hereby censures Interim Provost Mossman, Interim Associate Provost Pynes, and Interim Associate Provost Nikels for the lack of communication and transparency in the decision-making that led to the termination of contracts for approximately 105 University faculty and support staff, and

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

Chair Robinett asked for any discussion of this motion; there was none.

RESOLUTION OF CENSURE FAILED 7 YES (6 in-person; 1 zoom) – 8 NO (4 in-person; 4 zoom); 5 ABSTENTIONS (4 in-person; 1 zoom)

C. Faculty Senate Protest and Censure of Interim Provost’s Actions

WHEREAS, The Constitution of the Western Illinois University Faculty Senate states that its purpose is to “serve as a means by which the opinions and viewpoints of the faculty may be determined and communicated to the administration of the university,” and “through which the faculty may participate in the formation of basic University policy,” specifically “policies for continuous curricular development” involving the improvement of instruction, the acquisition of academic resources at

libraries, the evaluation of instructional procedures, and the assessment of student learning (Article I, Preamble, Numbers 1 and 2), and

WHEREAS, as the final institutional authority, the WIU Board of Trustees “entrusts the coordination and management of the University to the President with the understanding that provisions shall be made for advisory participation by the faculty, staff, and students in university decision-making” and have stated that it endorses the principle of shared governance within the framework of its Regulations (Bylaws, Introduction), and

WHEREAS, the Board of Trustees have delegated that “except as limited by the scope of collective bargaining negotiations between the Board and the academic employees and the requirements of good faith collective bargaining, the appropriate and duly constituted committees of faculty government shall participate in the decision-making process of the University in the following areas:

- a. University curriculum.
- b. Basic policies with regard to campus planning and facilities construction and utilization.
- c. Creation of administrative positions at the level of Dean and Vice President and the selection of administrative officers for such positions as well as of the President of the University.
- d. Academic planning and the determination of priorities for the conduct and development of the University” (Board Procedures, Section 1, Subsection 3), and

WHEREAS, Interim Provost Mossman enacted by fiat comprehensive changes to the University’s General Education curriculum at a time (May 2024) that precluded many faculty stakeholders from offering any input about, or objection to, them; and

WHEREAS, Interim Provost Mossman failed to engage in practices of shared governance exercised by the Council on General Education, the Council on International Education, and the Council on Admissions, Graduation, and Academic Standards in contradiction to tradition and assurance arguments made to the Higher Learning Commission in WIU’s Assurance Argument in 2021 including:

- Faculty of Western Illinois University develop the curriculum and oversee academic matters (2.C.5)
- The Council on General Education reviews the General Education Curriculum, oversees and advises on ongoing assessments of that curriculum by other agencies, and works to ensure that the curriculum reflects the University’s philosophy and goals of General Education. (3.B.1)
- Western’s administration ensures that faculty and, when appropriate, staff and students are involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes through effective collaborative structures. The processes and structures of shared governance involved in setting academic requirements, policy, and processes were discussed in Core Components 2.A.2 (academic integrity), 3.A.1 (accreditation, curriculum and program review and approval, and assessment), 3.C.2 (curriculum), and 4.B.1 (assessment). The Faculty Senate and its committees and councils are also discussed in Core Component 5.A.1. (5.A.3), and

WHEREAS, in unilaterally making these changes to the General Education curriculum, Interim Provost Mossman has failed to meet the standard of shared governance, facilitated programmatic confusion among students and faculty, and diminished the University’s General Education curriculum array of courses engaging and developing understanding of human and cultural diversity (HLC 3.B.3),

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate of Western Illinois University protests recent actions by the University Administration that run counter to the philosophy of shared governance, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Faculty Senate of Western Illinois University hereby censures Interim Provost Mossman for disregarding the traditions of shared governance in his unilateral enactment of changes to WIU General Education, and calls upon Interim President Mindrup and Interim Provost Mossman to ensure that the engagement, not simply notification, of faculty in curricular decision-making is restored within Academic Affairs, and

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

Interim Associate Provost Pynes pointed out that one of the issues in the resolution regards whether or not shared governance was followed here. He noted that there were two General Education Review Committees, the most recent in 2019, but both times that the university attempted to evaluate and make changes to General Education no changes were made. He stated that the Interim Provost had to decide how to change Gen Ed in order to solve several problems, one of which involved whether the institution appeared to be transfer friendly. He noted that the administration heard from Admissions and from counselors across the state that WIU is not transfer friendly, and one complaint was that the university required additional Gen Ed; advisors also said that WIU's Gen Ed was too complicated. Interim Associate Provost Pynes told senators that Interim Provost Mossman thought that, given how the prior two Gen Ed reviews went, there were be no changes resulting from another one and no recommendations made.

Interim Associate Provost Pynes told senators that along with the curricular forms approved by Faculty Senate to go forward to the Provost's office is a cover letter; the letter includes space at the bottom for the Provost to approve or not approve the recommendation. He noted that the Provost is the ultimate authority and chief academic officer at the institution, and historically once curricular reviews are completed and approved by Faculty Senate all the Provost has done is also approve those changes at the end. He told senators that 28 percent of the student credit hour (SCH) of the university is Gen Ed, and asked if any senators know how much of that is Illinois Articulation Agreement (IAI) compliant or non-compliant. Senator Melkumian responded that faculty are not provided with this information and had no idea about this until it was brought out this past May. She said it was shocking to see the changes to Gen Ed bulldozed through without going through Faculty Senate or any of the proper channels because that was not shared governance. Interim Associate Provost Pynes remarked that shared governance works in a lot of ways, and the prior two General Education reviews included that shared governance. He stated that 35 percent of the General Education that WIU produced was IAI non-compliant, so the idea with the changes was to try to funnel all of the General Education in the most efficient way possible. He added that in general IAI-compliant Gen Ed courses enroll 28 students while non-IAI complaint Gen Ed courses enroll 21.

Interim Associate Provost Pynes told senators that when it comes to layoffs and trying to make the university more efficient, the Provost's office is trying to figure out how to keep as many programs and people as possible while trying to offer General Education in the most efficient way they can. He said that while his Gen Ed courses used to have 45 students, they have fallen to 25, a significant drop, because enrollment at the university is down. Interim Associate Provost Pynes believes that shared governance works but thinks the problem was that WIU was not in a situation where shared governance was relevant; it was in a situation where leadership was needed and decisions had to be made about how to reduce costs and make things more efficient. He said one way to do this is with a principle that is independent of the institution, but nobody at this table and nobody on the General Education Review Committee could decide which Gen Ed categories should be cut. He related that the way the Provost's office decided to go was with an independent justification – IAI – and to reduce Gen Ed to try to make it more efficient while keeping as many Gen Ed courses as possible and changing the narrative about the institution not being transfer friendly. Interim Associate Provost Pynes noted there were a lot of problems Interim Provost Mossman was trying to solve, and he did it in a way that leaders do by making a very important and difficult decision when there was no time to wait.

Interim Associate Provost Pynes believes the two General Education Review Committees represent shared governance; there have been two attempts to change Gen Ed, the last one when Interim Associate Provost Pynes chaired the Senate, but nothing can happen because nobody likes to make change. He thinks this is not about shared governance but about people being upset that change is happening, there are not enough students, people are getting laid off, and things are not great. He stressed there is an argument to be made that shared governance happened, but at the very end the Provost, who is the chief academic officer, could say no to everything Faculty Senate does and do

whatever the Provost wants to do because that person is the actual leader. He noted that shared governance does not mean shared leadership, and there has to be someone who makes the decision.

Senator Gravitt remarked that she comes from a college where a lot of faculty agreed there needed to be some General Education reform, but how it was done was egregious. She pointed out that the changes did not occur until everyone was gone for the semester, and they were mandated to take effect this fall, so there was no way to make curricular changes to catch up with all the courses that were going to be dropped from Gen Ed and all of the curricular requirements. She recalled there was a massive amount of chaos, and a month later everyone was hit with layoff notices. Senator Gravitt served on CCPI during the last General Education review and knew what was happening when every program had to justify their Gen Ed requirements. She thinks most people also recognize that programs would not voluntarily reduce their Gen Ed and that the Provost is the leader and can make those decisions, but this could have been done in a more strategic and staged fashion and did not have to happen all at once. She thinks the changes could have been made effective next fall in order to give everyone the opportunity to make the necessary curriculum changes in a more well-rounded, less panicky way with less upheaval. She suspects Linda Prosise, Administrative Aide to the Provost, had an atrocious workload this past summer; she cannot get to curriculum reviews because her list of things she still needs to go through remains so high. Senator Gravitt said she is not arguing that Gen Ed changes should not have happened but thinks they did not happen any way close to the correct way that would have been conducive to moving the university forward in a nice, organized fashion.

Senator Wipperling remarked that when she hears Interim Associate Provost Pynes say that WIU is not transfer friendly, what she hears is “transferring out.” Interim Associate Provost Pynes said he really means transferring in. Senator Wipperling said she translates this as transferring out because if students are being given less Gen Eds to choose from and they are all IAI-compliant, it gives students more freedom to transfer out. Interim Associate Provost Pynes remarked that another problem at WIU has been retaining students from one college to the next because the College of Arts and Sciences has had what it called “enhanced General Education.” He said that not everyone within that college likes the enhanced Gen Ed; some programs like it while others do not. He related that many students would transfer out of WIU because they did not want to transfer from a college with fewer Gen Ed requirements, such as the College of Business and Technology, to one with more, such as Arts and Sciences.

Senator Wipperling said this seems to be talking about standardizing the amount of Gen Ed, which seems to be off-topic. She reiterated that what she is hearing is that the changes to Gen Ed will make it easier for students to transfer out. She believes that if the university is trying to work on retaining students and giving them options of many different experiences while they are here obtaining a liberal arts education, this is downgrading the quality of diverse experiences that these students get at WIU to such a degree that now they can get this education anywhere. She said this raises the question of why they should get their education at WIU. Interim Associate Provost Pynes responded that what the administration did was try to address the issue of retention by trying to keep students at WIU through allowing them to transfer from one college to another far more easily. He said there were many accounts from students who were leaving the institution because it was harder to transfer from one college to another, namely the College of Arts and Sciences. He said the Provost’s office standardized this to make it easier for everyone to understand how Gen Ed works at WIU.

Interim Associate Provost Pynes told senators that from his standpoint he thinks shared governance works, but shared leadership does not work, which is why the Provost made the decision. He reiterated that there were historic attempts to make changes to Gen Ed which did not work, and the fact that Interim Provost Mossman was able to do this indicates that he has the necessary leadership, ability, and authority.

RESOLUTION TO CENSURE APPROVED 15 YES (10 in-person; 5 zoom) – 4 NO (3 in-person; 1 zoom) – 2 ABSTENTIONS (2 in-person)

Chair Robinett thanked Trustee Radosh and Interim Associate Provost Pynes for being present. He recognizes that this was not a comfortable situation and thanked them for their opinions.

V. New Business

A. For the Good of the Body - None

Motion: To adjourn (Hunter)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary