

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Regular Meeting, 4 February 2025, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom and in Union Capitol Rooms

ACTION MINUTES

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

SENATORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: B. Bellott, E. Hamner, R. Sharma, J. Walker

SENATORS ABSENT: J. Albarracin, H. Elbe, B. McDonald

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

GUESTS: Greg Baldi, Zaire Bradsher, Amy Burke, Amy Carr, Roberta di Carmine, Patty Eathington, Miguel Huerta, Rick Kuracz, Sarah Lawson, Lisa Melz-Jennings, Nathan Miczo, Holly Nikels, Betsy Perabo, Renee Polubinsky, Linda Prosise, Christopher Pynes, Jim Schmidt, Erin Taylor, Melissa Telles, Craig Tollini, Alisha White

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. December 3, 2024

MINUTES APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Approvals from the Provost

1. Request for Change of Major

- a. Information Systems

2. Requests for Changes to Emphases

- a. Business Intelligence
- b. Cybersecurity
- c. Information Systems

3. Request for Additional Emphasis

- a. Computer Information Systems

4. Request for WID Designation

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

5. Requests for General Education Designation

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

B. Provost's Report

Interim Provost Mossman expressed his thanks to the Academic Program Elimination Review (APER) Committee, including Senator Hunter who serves on it, for their incredibly difficult work. Interim Provost Mossman admitted that he originally asked for an impossible due date of the first week of December, which upon reflection would have been very hard to meet. He related that the committee has now completed most of its work; a couple of weeks ago, they requested some additional items from the Provost's office, such as ACE sheets and other things to evaluate. He anticipates that he will receive the committee's report within the next two weeks. Senator Hunter noted that the APER Committee plans to meet on Monday, February 10 to finalize the executive report, so Interim Provost Mossman could receive it as early as next Tuesday. Interim Provost Mossman added that once it is received in the Provost's office, the document will be reviewed and move forward from there.

Interim Provost Mossman told senators his other update is regarding the Honors College. He said the changes to the Honors College were an anticipated transition which occurred very rapidly because their advisor, Krista Skein, got another job and resigned her position. To provide some context, Interim Provost Mossman related that the university originally had an honors program which was run primarily through departments and colleges; faculty members received release time to manage different honors programs in their own departments, which were generally tailored to the departments themselves. He noted that in 2000, former President Goldfarb decided to create an Honors College under Dean Rick Hardy, and honors enrollment increased rather significantly. Interim Provost Mossman said Dr. Hardy moved out of that position, and honors experienced a decline in enrollment beginning in 2017. He said that now the honors enrollment is pretty small, so there was a need to figure out how the Honors College was working with basically an emptied-out staff. He thought there was an opportunity to move back to the original model because the Honors College Dean was the only employee left, so the decision was made to transition honors back to a program run primarily by the departments and colleges. He thinks the strength of this model is that it will hopefully provide more access for certain disciplines to engage in honors conversations. He related that one example of this is a conversation the Provost's office had with Biology professor Jeff Engel earlier this week about how honors could work in that program; the change will hopefully give that program more flexibility on how they can construct an honors curriculum. Interim Provost Mossman observed that, typically, programs that are very prescriptive, such as Nursing and Education, might have an occasional honors student, but it is much more difficult to get students into the Honors College when every course is prescriptive and there is also a General Honors curriculum. He hopes that by putting the honors program back into colleges and departments there will be more flexibility and an increase in departmental participation. Interim Provost Mossman apologized for the lack of communication but explained that the change was very rapid and occurred during the last week of the fall semester.

Senator Melkumian asked if this means there is no more Honors College -- it is gone, and there are now just honors programs attached to the different colleges. Interim Provost Mossman confirmed this is correct. He added that spring semester will be a transition semester, so current Honors College Dean Lorette Oden will continue in that position this semester to help with that transition. He said after this semester, Dean Oden will transition out of the Honors Dean office, there will no longer be an Honors College Dean, and the program will just go to the various colleges, but it takes some time to facilitate that. Interim Provost Mossman added that there are still plans to hold Undergraduate Research Day, the Pre-Med Symposium, and all of the extra residence hall and social events that are held for honors students.

C. Student Government Association Report

Mr. Bradsher informed senators that SGA recently elected a new President, McKenna Martin. He read a statement from the new SGA President to senators:

"I want to express my appreciation for your work in shaping our students' academic experience. Your dedication to education, mentorship, and innovation is what makes our university a place of growth and opportunity.

SGA is currently restructuring our committees. Over time, SGA has taken on various responsibilities, but our committee structure hasn't always allowed us to address student concerns most effectively. Some committees have been too narrow in focus, while others have lacked the flexibility to adapt to emerging needs. Our goal with this restructuring is to create broader, more action-oriented committees that move beyond event planning and into real advocacy and systematic change.

I invite you all to continue open communication with SGA. We want to serve as a bridge between students and faculty, ensuring that concerns and ideas flow in both directions. I am eager to work alongside you to build a campus that reflects the needs and aspirations of our students and faculty alike. You can email me at mj-martin2@wiu.edu.”

Mr. Bradsher reported that SGA's Director of Technology, Stephen Druse, is still working on his University Codex on Artificial Intelligence, which is basically trying to eliminate AI usage from the university. Mr. Bradsher met with Mr. Druse and Chair Robinett on this topic and felt like they made a lot of progress. Mr. Druse sent an email out to faculty and asks that anyone who has not received it please let him know at sj-druse@wiu.edu.

Mr. Bradsher reported that SGA will be meeting with staff members soon to figure out a budget and deadlines for the University Writing Center restoration project. Mr. Druse is also working to update the SGA website.

Mr. Bradsher is working on a mental health event for faculty. He hopes to have more information about that for the next Senate meeting.

D. Faculty Senate Chair's Report

Chair Robinett expressed thanks to faculty for completing Title IV attendance verification reporting. He informed senators that 57.1 percent of classes reported this fall, which is higher than last fall but still well short of the 80 percent the university needs to have reported. He reminded everyone that the university receives a large amount of federal dollars through Title IV allocations. He explained that the attendance verification reports are directly linked to this funding, based on when students receive their grants and, thus, the university receives its payments. He stressed that completing the attendance verification reports is vitally important because it saves work for the Financial Aid office and helps Student Services. Chair Robinett noted that if the university were to get above the 80 percent reporting mark, faculty would not have to verify at the end of the semester whether students attended and participated, so it would ultimately save them work. He commended faculty for increasing the participation rate and would like to see everyone encouraging their colleagues to complete this step.

Senator Hunter expressed his thanks to Financial Aid for extending the deadline to accommodate the day the university was closed due to the weather because he had a student contact him just before the deadline, and he was not sure if he would be able to login. He was glad Financial Aid extended the deadline, even though they did not notify faculty.

Chair Robinett thanked Senator Hunter for bringing this up. He explained that if faculty do not submit the attendance verification, Financial Aid and Student Services employees have to contact all those students to determine if they were or were not in class. He noted that even if faculty are only able to verify two-thirds of the students in their class, they are still eliminating work from the desks of their Financial Aid and Student Services colleagues who have a lot that they are doing. He explained that if a professor inputs “did not begin” as a student's status, those offices follow up with students to encourage them to drop if they are not going to come to WIU at all or to reach out to their professors. Chair Robinett understands that there has been some fear among faculty that indicating “did not begin” will in some way negatively impact students, but colleagues across campus are doing great work to minimize that.

Senator Gravitt understands that the Provost's office does not want to be draconian and impose penalties on faculty who do not report, even though she thinks that ethically they should, but she

wonders if there could be some kind of incentive program that might be used to increase participation for faculty who respond more to carrots than to sticks. Interim Provost Mossman replied that anything that requires additional funding, such as a \$500 lottery for those faculty who submit the attendance verification form, would be hard to do at this time.

Interim Provost Mossman worked with attendance verification directly when he was in the associate provost role, and he agrees with Chair Robinett that this needs to be a university-wide effort. He pointed out that the university achieved its best results so far this fall; he thinks the College of Fine Arts and Communication did reach 80 percent participation, primarily by working with deans and chairs, which Interim Provost Mossman thinks is the best way to encourage participation. Interim Provost Mossman thinks that he, Financial Aid Director Bobbi Smith, Interim Associate Provost Christopher Pynes, and Chair Robinett have been very clear that completing the attendance verification forms is a compliance issue. He noted that the administration were scared last week that federal aid such as Title IV would be eliminated, and the university relies on those funds, so compliance from the faculty is vital. Interim Provost Mossman would prefer that everyone realize that and just complete the form; he believes that 80 percent of WIU's faculty will complete it if they realize its significance. He has faith that eight out of ten faculty members will recognize this is something they have to do, it is part of their job, and they will just do it. He noted that it is a university-wide commitment, so the university needs to figure this out, just as it figured out how to get compliance on other kinds of requirements.

Senator Wipperling noted that there may be some special circumstances, such as her private voice lessons, which do not meet the first week of the semester; if a student meets with her on Friday of the second week, the deadline has already passed. Interim Provost Mossman said this is an example of an individual case that would need to be accommodated. Senator Wipperling said she did not fill out the paperwork because she had not met with all of her students yet. Interim Provost Mossman recommended the way to handle a case like this is simply to tell someone that the faculty member cannot complete the verification because the class has not yet met, and for that information to get back to Financial Aid. Senator Wipperling remarked it would be good to know who to contact; Interim Provost Mossman suggested reporting the information to the chair/director or dean.

Chair Robinett expressed thanks to UPI and the Illinois Federation of Teachers for hosting ANEW WIU and those who attended the event. He noted that the Multicultural Center and others across campus are doing a lot to support faculty, staff, and students who are being affected by changing federal policies. He would like everyone to acknowledge that they are doing a lot of emotional and physical labor in order to support some of WIU's faculty, staff, and students.

Chair Robinett recognized that Financial Aid and Administrative Information Management Services (AIMS) are doing a lot to navigate the financial aid implementation, which went much smoother this spring than last fall. While they are still working to clean up a few issues, Chair Robinett has been having daily text messages and phone calls with individuals in these offices, and they are working very hard.

Chair Robinett told senators that he and Interim Provost Mossman have had lots of conversations about artificial intelligence (AI), and there is a lot of work being done on this at the university that he does not think everyone is aware of. He complimented SGA representatives Zaire Bradsher and Stephen Druse for meeting with him about the ways that SGA and Faculty Senate can work together on this initiative. He explained that the codex Mr. Druse is compiling is a collection of all the syllabi statements across the university; he is compiling these into one document so that instead of guessing what is being done across campus, there can be a snapshot. He thinks it is wonderful that students are leading the charge to do this work and encourages faculty to supply Mr. Druse with their syllabi.

Chair Robinett stated that the Senate Council for Instructional Technology (CIT) has an Online Teaching and Learning Subcouncil that is working with Dawn Sweet and Ian Szechowycz from University Technology on some WesternOnline issues. He said the subcouncil is meeting at 8 a.m. on multiple mornings in order to speed up the process, which Chair Robinett appreciates.

Chair Robinett told senators that CIT's AI Subcouncil is looking at issues related to artificial intelligence, as is the WID Council, which is planning a roundtable conversation about AI, specifically in regard to writing. He said that the CIT subcouncils will be bringing recommendations forward to Faculty Senate at a later date. He reiterated that faculty, staff, and students are doing an incredible amount of work on a lot of topics that people may not know about.

Chair Robinett expressed his thanks to Senator Walker, Chair of the Senate's Budget Transparency Committee. He said the committee met recently to discuss summer school, overload, and adjunct funding with Interim Provost Mossman and Interim Associate Provosts Christopher Pynes and Holly Nikels. He related that the committee learned there is basically one account into which a lot of money goes, and there is a byzantine system for determining how funding is actually allocated. He said this particular fund account took a big hit going into this year because of the budget cuts, so there will be very limited adjuncts, overload, or summer school spending this year.

Chair Robinett announced that a WIU presentation on Advocacy for the Equitable Funding Model will occur on February 20, and Lobbying Day for Higher Education for all universities will occur on March 18 in Springfield. Chair Robinett will meet with Interim Provost Mossman and several others this week to look at possible talking points; he thought it would be incredibly helpful if there was a concise list of things that would enable everyone to be educated on what to talk about when visiting with legislators in Springfield.

Chair Robinett said he wants to stress at every meeting so that it does not come as a shock to anyone that the university has much more space than it can effectively use. He said that in the long term this means there will be some spaces that will no longer be utilized. He said that "it's still at the 30,000 foot discussion" of how this will work, with building audits and a variety of other things taking place, but "as the plane begins to go from 30,000 feet, out of the ether to more specific details," the Senate Council on Campus Planning and Usage and other groups will become more involved and there will be more to discuss at Faculty Senate.

Chair Robinett also wants senators to be aware that reorganization conversations are also occurring, although he thinks those discussions are "more at the 50,000-foot level." He said that a committee has been formed, and he anticipates that they will have a lot of questions as they seek guidance and have conversations.

Chair Robinett announced that Senator McArthur will have a solo exhibit called "Works of Paper" at the WIU Art Gallery between now and February 14.

Mr. Bradsher asked if students are allowed to attend Lobbying Day in Springfield. Interim Provost Mossman responded that the administration is coordinating the trip with UPI; members of his office will be here, as they were last year, but he does not recall any students being present. Interim Associate Provost Nikels said she and Political Science Chair Greg Baldi attended from the administrative side last year, and there were no students there.

E. Other Announcements

1. First-Year Advising and Student Learning Center
(Miguel Huerta, Director, University Advising and Academic Services, and Lisa Melz-Jennings, Academic Success Coach, Student Learning Center)

Dr. Huerta said he wants to focus on the Student Learning Center and emphasize the academic support available for students. He noted that faculty typically receive a progress report request and expressed his thanks to those who have taken the time to complete these over the years. He said the reports, which affect all students participating in the academic success coaching program or REACH program within the First-Year Advising Center, are very helpful to them. He acknowledged that they do receive early warning reports, but the progress reports provide a lot more information that advisors can use to work with students.

Dr. Huerta introduced Ms. Melz-Jennings, who is both an academic success coach and coordinates the tutoring program. She clarified that Athletics does their own progress reports, which may have caused some confusion in the past. Ms. Melz-Jennings tries to look at the progress reports within 24 hours of receiving them. She said the academic success coach is really an accountability partner; if a student has not turned in some assignments, the academic success coach can acknowledge that and hold them accountable.

Ms. Melz-Jennings said that she and Andrea Reibling, a former advisor in the College of Business and Technology, are the current academic success coaches through the Student Learning Center. She pointed out that the Student Learning Center website (wiu.edu/slc) includes in the navigation bar a link for Faculty/Staff ASC Referrals that can be used if faculty think a student would benefit from success coaching. Ms. Melz-Jennings said that if the student is a REACH student, she will take care of the referral; if it is for a student-athlete, she will work with Ries Wynn-Foster, who oversees that; and if it is for a first-year student, she will work with the first-year advisors, who are housed in the Student Learning Center. She can also reach out to advisors who work with Hope Scholars.

Ms. Melz-Jennings told senators she received some concerning referrals today, even though the semester is only in week 4. She noted that faculty can also leave positive comments in the referral link, such as “good attendance” or “student is doing just fine.” Ms. Melz-Jennings shares these positive comments with the students because seeing that faculty recognize that they are doing good work helps to motivate them to continue to do well. Ms. Melz-Jennings remarked that she recognizes the names and faces of many in attendance and expressed her thanks because academic success coaches and REACH advisors take the progress reports very seriously as tools to help them do everything they can to retain students. She also expressed her thanks for what faculty are doing in the classroom because she wants to support that.

Dr. Huerta realizes that many faculty have academic tutoring through their own academic departments but pointed out that the Student Learning Center also offers academic tutoring. He said they focus on lower division coursework because they have some graduate assistants who serve as tutors, but they are also able to support some upper division courses. Dr. Huerta related that last semester was the first time the Student Learning Center worked with the Writing Center to use a program to schedule tutoring appointments, and their numbers increased dramatically; just last semester, the number of students requesting tutoring surpassed the numbers of the last two years combined. He thinks students appreciate the way that tutoring is being offered; even though funding decreased for tutoring, a lot is being done.

Dr. Huerta stated that as the Student Learning Center deals with the current financial situation, it has had to rethink how they offer services, and they are working to make sure that tutoring is not only available to Macomb students but also to students on the Quad Cities campus and online. He added that this semester the Student Learning Center is partnering with Athletics again to expand tutoring services, and thanked Chair Robinett for that initiative, which he facilitated in his role as NCAA Faculty Athletics Representative. Dr. Huerta stated that, on the front end, students will see that tutoring offerings have expanded; on the back end, different departments are paying for the tutoring while the Student Learning Center is working to ensure that students have a positive experience and are not being impacted. He added that the Student Learning Center is doing a lot of the back end work to support faculty and students and encouraged faculty to reach out for any support that they need.

Ms. Melz-Jennings added that the Rocky’s Resources terminology is no longer being used; instead, this is referred to as the Student Learning Center. Chair Robinett asked what the process is like when a student utilizes a tutor. Ms. Melz-Jennings pointed out that the Student Learning Center website includes a link for SLC Tutoring in the navigation bar which provides step-by-step instructions about how this works. She explained that students must first set up an account, which only takes a couple of minutes; besides name and ID, students are asked if they are a REACH student, an athlete, or in a fraternity or sorority. She said the Writing Center has used this program for over ten years and encouraged the Student Learning Center to use it as

well. She noted that students can also walk into the Center if they prefer, but they will still need to create an account; Tutor Greeters will help them do this very quickly.

Ms. Melz-Jennings said that students can see what times are available to meet with academic success coaches, advisors, student-athlete tutors, or tutors in the library. She noted that since tutors are now available in the library, hours have been expanded for tutors to meet with students in the mornings and from 11-1 on Sundays; formerly, tutor hours were limited to late afternoons and evenings. Ms. Melz-Jennings pointed out that students can also access Departmental Tutoring from the navigation bar on the Student Learning Center website; by clicking this link, students can access the various departments that offer tutoring and Knack, which is available through the College of Business and Technology. She pointed out that tutoring is available free to every student, so even though they may not think they need it now, students are still encouraged to go ahead and set up an account in case they may need tutoring in the future.

Senator Hunter asked if the Student Learning Center plans to solicit external volunteer tutors. Ms. Melz-Jennings responded that she took over coordinating the tutoring program last year, and they had historically used graduate students as tutors. She said that while the Student Learning Center still uses some graduate students, they have begun using more undergraduates, similar to what Ms. Melz-Jennings did when she worked as the academic success coach in Athletics. She has not, however, run across people reaching out to her to say they want to volunteer as a tutor. Senator Hunter did not know if there were retirees from Western who might want to volunteer their time for a day. Dr. Huerta remarked he would have to look into what that might look like legally and go through proper protocols, such as vetting volunteers, but as of now there have not been any requests from community members.

Dr. Huerta said the Student Learning Center would really like to partner with departments to use the same scheduling system they do. He said they purchased a university-wide license and would like all academic departments to use it because it is giving the Student Learning Center good data; for example, they were able to determine that sophomores use tutoring the most. He said the Student Learning Center is also starting to use data a little more effectively to figure out the best times for tutoring and what subjects are being used the most, so that, based on where they are financially, the Center can make the more strategic hires.

Senator Brewer asked if the Student Learning Center is able to determine which classes students fail the most. He is on the appeals committee for Law Enforcement and Justice Administration and has noted that students either understand statistics or they don't. He asked if there is data indicating that certain classes should be targeted for tutoring. Dr. Huerta replied that he has not looked at that data yet due to having to wear multiple hats, but he definitely plans to. He also wants to look into which gateway courses usually prevent students from progressing in their majors. He knows the university should have that data; he just hasn't had time to look at it yet. Dr. Huerta added that the Student Learning Center just came under his purview last year, four months after he was hired at WIU, so there has really been a lot done in that short time. He wants to make sure that tutoring and academic support in general gets the respect it deserves because it was a program that was previously moved around to different departments, and the Student Learning Center is trying to put a lot of time and energy into this initiative. Dr. Huerta stated that although he oversees two areas, he is trying to be very strategic and treat them separately; he wants to give the Student Learning Center just as much of his time as the First-Year Advising Center so that students can benefit the most from both.

Ms. Melz-Jennings told senators that questions or comments can be emailed to slc@wiu.edu. She is the one who usually responds to emails and will route them appropriately.

2. Amy Carr, WIU Representative to the Illinois Board of Higher Education Faculty Advisory Council

Dr. Carr first provided a legislative update. She noted that the current funding formula bills, SB13 and HB1581, are very similar to what was put forward last year. She said there is a community college funding bill working group, but they may not put out any legislation this year. Dr. Carr stated that HB2378 concerns the State University Retirement System (SURS) self-managed plan. She explained that right now, retirees of community colleges and universities are not technically considered to be retired unless they take 50 percent of their retirement in an annuity; this bill is attempting to change this so that former employees would count as retired even if they chose not to use the annuity. She added that because people in the self-managed plan are just starting to retire, this has become an issue.

Dr. Carr related that at the Faculty Advisory Council's December meeting, WIU Sociology and Anthropology professor Heather McIlvaine-Newsad gave a wonderful presentation on Rebuilding Institutions of Higher Education: Lessons from a Disaster Researcher. Dr. Carr said she will not relate much about this presentation since she is aware that Dr. McIlvaine-Newsad will be speaking at a future Faculty Senate meeting, but she suggested senators may want to read the Q&A in the December minutes from her presentation.

Dr. Carr told senators the December meeting also included a presentation from Jose Garcia from the Illinois Board of Higher Education talking about some of their marketing campaigns for the Early Childhood Consortium for Equity, Access, Persistence, and Completion and for the development of their interactive missions campaigns. Dr. Carr related that the public university caucus, the private community college caucus, and the Higher Education Technology Working Group were all talking about AI at the December meeting. She sent a 77-page Generative AI and Natural Language Processing legislative task force report to Chair Robinett for distribution and would appreciate discussing it with anyone who cares to read it. She understands that the report predicts that generative AI will be provided to all university students and that the state will fund campus experts who have ongoing training with it. Chair Robinett told senators this report will be in their Senate folders for the next meeting.

Dr. Carr told senators that another theme that came up in January was that under new Illinois Articulation Agreement (IAI) regulations, 60 percent of math tests must be proctored in person because of concerns about academic integrity.

Dr. Carr said that the IBHE FAC December meeting was held via Zoom, but the January meeting was held at Olney Central College, which is famous for its white squirrels. They heard presentations from Olney Central College President Chris Simpson and from Ryan Gower, Chancellor of the four eastern Illinois community colleges (Lincoln Trail College in Robinson, Olney Central College-Frontier, and Fairfield and Wabash Community Colleges in Mount Carmel). Dr. Carr related that these community colleges are undergoing a five- to six-year restructuring process; enrollment at the four dropped 44 percent between 2010 and 2025, so they are beginning to move their functions across the various colleges. She said that if anyone is interested in doing a deeper dive into this, details can be found in the IBHE FAC January minutes. She was struck that there has been a decline in CTE programs and enrollment; these are types of applied technology programs, and there are challenges with buying expensive technology equipment.

Dr. Carr anticipates there will be another bill filed, although it has not been yet, to be able to offer bachelor's degree programs at community colleges. She has found out that community college faculty in the IBHE FAC do not support this, but there are leaders of some community colleges who do. She thinks some of the pressure for this might be that sometimes the community college partnerships with four-year institutions are not always available; the Illinois Valley Community College representative related that when they tried to arrange partnerships for nursing, they did not get a response from four-year institutions.

Dr. Carr related that the Early College Working Group that she serves on met on Zoom during the meeting with the National Alliance of Concurrent Enrollment Partnerships (NACEP). She said they are focused on high school teachers and the quality of their courses when they are

working with community colleges. She noted that academic freedom is an issue in some courses, especially when the person teaching the course is from a high school. She said that while NACEP pushes hard for community colleges to have authority, there is still a lot of pressure from high schools who try to argue that the students are minors, and content should be taught without including certain information. Dr. Carr thinks there needs to be much more of a coordinated effort to push back against this, but she does not know whether there is much will, even among national organizations, to do much about it. She thinks it is a larger question.

Dr. Carr related that Jill Gebke, IBHE staff liaison to the IBHE who also served on the state's AI task force, reported to the FAC on IBHE's proposed budget for higher education. She said interested individuals can go to the IBHE website to see their recommendations for the budget next year, which includes a 4 percent increase for higher education funding overall. Interim Provost Mossman added that the recommendation for WIU is 2.1 percent, but a couple of other schools have 4 percent recommendations.

Interim Provost Mossman remarked that just south of Chicago there are community colleges that can afford to offer four-year baccalaureate programs for nursing or teacher education. He said the pressure that is coming from the collar counties for this change parallels the pressure for dual credit classes. He noted that when community colleges have resources, they try to be rational actors in a chaotic environment and get as many students as they can; this is not necessarily to help all community colleges in the state but to help specific ones, such as Harper College, Elgin Community College, and those that are in densely populated areas that have the resources and the tax base to afford to do this. Dr. Carr remarked there are two FAC members from Elgin Community College; Elgin is one of the few community colleges in the state accredited by NACEP for their dual credit courses, so they have much stricter dual credit requirements. She said Elgin representatives have complained that high schools will try to shop around to find a community college that will let them do what they want with their dual credit classes, but Elgin will not because they have higher standards. She also observed that the more courses are turned over to high school teachers, the fewer faculty are needed to teach these courses – not just at four-year institutions but also at community colleges. She related that Lakeland College has had to enact huge cuts in their faculty in English and other areas. She added that foreign languages is another area that has reported experiencing cuts due to dual credit.

Dr. Carr reported that the FAC heard a major presentation from the Illinois Coalition for Higher Education in Prisons (IL-CHEP), which might be really interesting to read about in the January FAC minutes. She related that one IL-CHEP spokesperson, Rakeem Atterbury, who had been in prison 20 years, spoke about the need for partnerships with prisons in the areas of liberal arts and humanities. She said Mr. Atterbury praised a close reading of texts as a basic life skill, which was inspiring to hear. She added that prisoners are not eligible to take classes until they are closer to their release date, but courses on reading as a skill for college are more often available to prisoners even when they are too far from their release date to enroll in a college course.

Dr. Carr remarked that during the public caucus meetings there was discussion of ICE policies, so if anyone wants to hear what other institutions are doing, they should email her. She added that the FAC technology group is working on website ADA compliance, which is due by April and which she will share with Faculty Senate when she knows more. Chair Robinett thanked Dr. Carr for all the work that she does, which is impressive.

III. Reports of Committees and Councils

A. Council on Admission, Graduation, and Academic Standards (CAGAS) (Rich Filipink, Chair)

1. CAGAS Response to Request to End Y Graduation Requirement

Chair Robinett announced that, in order to accommodate the CAGAS Chair and in conversation with the Interim Provost, the CAGAS report is being pulled from the agenda for this week and will return in two weeks.

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

1. Curricular Requests from the School of Nursing

a. Requests for New Courses

- i. NURS 301, Nursing Communication and Medical Calculation, 2 s.h.
- ii. NURS 304, Introduction to Professional Nursing, 2 s.h.
- iii. NURS 306, Foundations in Nursing Care: Individual,gr Population Health and Health Promotion, 3 s.h.
- iv. NURS 307, Nursing Clinical, Simulation and Lab, 3 s.h.
- v. NURS 321, Interprofessional Nursing Practice, 2 s.h.
- vi. NURS 416, Quality Improvement and Informatics of Health Systems, 2 s.h.
- vii. NURS 435, LGBTQIA+ Health, 2 s.h.
- viii. NURS 441, Critical Care Nursing, 2 s.h.
- ix. NURS 442, Integrative Care, 2 s.h.

Senator Hunter observed that there were supporting emails for NURS 435 but not for any of the other courses. Chair Burke explained that these were included in order to make sure that other programs across the campus with classes that might be geared toward this subject did not see any overlap. She added that the inclusion of these emails of support was a request from CCPI.

NEW COURSES APPROVED

b. Request for Change of Major

i. Nursing

Senator Gravitt remarked she understands the logistics behind adding these new courses to the major based on outside pressures, but she is concerned that the school is getting rid of a couple of courses but adding many more courses. She pointed out that even if the major is reducing total credit hours, that is still greatly increasing the number of courses during the university's current climate of limited faculty. She added that the existing program will also have to be continued for existing students, and the changes do not become effective until Fall 2025 with some courses not being phased in for a few years in order to allow faculty to adjust.

Nursing Director Patty Eathington explained that some of these courses are electives which are only offered every other year and will be phased in. She said that when the new group of students starts nursing school, they will follow the new curriculum for accreditation. She noted that if some students are out of sequence, the School of Nursing will work with them on a case-by-case basis, but she anticipates that they will be able to adjust to the new curriculum. Senator Gravitt asked if this means that even though the university has to offer these courses, students do not have to take them because they are electives. Dr. Eathington responded that students have to choose at least one Nursing elective course. She added that students who are out of sequence will most likely take additional electives so that they can stay full-time and because they like to stay within the major.

Dr. Eathington is not worried about the elective courses because the core clinical courses, the “meats and potatoes of the program,” have not changed. She pointed out that some courses, such as NURS 305, the 3 s.h. Introduction to Professional Nursing, are going away to be replaced by a 2 s.h. course. She noted that the 7 s.h. Fundamentals of Nursing course is being broken down into three different courses, which Dr. Eathington anticipates will work better for faculty workload because many courses are 2 s.h. and clinicals are 4.5 to 9.5 s.h. She stated that since most Nursing instructors are Unit B, this will enable them to fulfill their workload of 24 ACEs. Interim Provost Mossman remarked this was the exact question that his office had, but the reduction in hours is pretty significant so the schedule should work hyper-efficiently.

CHANGE OF MAJOR APPROVED

2. Curricular Requests from the Department of Political Science

a. Requests for New Courses

i. POLS 380, Writing in Political Science, 3 s.h.

Chair Burke pointed out that POLS 380 will be the new WID course for the major, contingent upon approval.

ii. POLS 495, Professional Development in Political Science, 1 s.h.

NEW COURSES APPROVED

b. Request for Change of Major

i. Political Science

CHANGE OF MAJOR APPROVED PENDING POLS 380 APPROVAL AS THE NEW WID COURSE

c. Requests for Changes of Options

i. Political Science, General

ii. Pre-Law

CHANGES OF OPTIONS APPROVED

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

1. Request for WID Designation

a. POLS 380, Writing in Political Science, 3 s.h.

Craig Tollini, representing the WID Council since the Chair had to leave for a class, said the council had no questions about and praised the request from Political Science. Senator Gravitt remarked that she really liked the format of the syllabus, which was prepared by Political Science professor Erin Taylor.

WID DESIGNATION APPROVED

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

1. Request for Inclusion in General Education

- a. ENG-BCJ 290, Introduction to Film, 3 s.h.

INCLUSION IN GENERAL EDUCATION APPROVED

E. Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance (CPPP)
(Julia Albarracin, Chair)

1. Request to Change Gender Question on Provost Survey

In the absence of the Chair, Senator Melkumian, who serves on CPPP, explained that the only change the committee recommended from the previous provost survey was to make the gender question identically worded to the more recent presidential survey in order to make it more inclusive. Chair Robinett explained that any changes made to the provost or presidential surveys must come to Faculty Senate for approval before distribution.

NO OBJECTIONS

IV. Old Business - None

V. New Business

A. Creation of New Ad Hoc Committee on Responses to Federal Transition

Chair Robinett told senators the motion to create this committee was made, seconded, and approved at the Executive Committee meeting, so senators can move immediately to discussion. Chair Robinett handed Senate Chair duties to Vice Chair Brewer so that he could speak freely about this item. Dr. Robinett told senators this proposal emerged from a conversation he had with President Mindrup and Interim Provost Mossman relating to the university needing to be quick in responding to transitions that are occurring at the federal level. He related that the number of emails, text messages, and hallway conversations that took place last week related to the potential loss of Title IX funding was evidence for him of why this committee is so important to potentially respond to and communicate these types of occurrences to the campus community. He added that the proposed committee membership includes a variety of expertise.

Senator Gravitt asked if other universities are also talking about this, especially in light of the new administration's push to dismantle the Department of Education, which would scramble what states are doing. She asked if there are discussions occurring statewide as well as internally. Dr. Robinett responded that other universities are forming groups like this. He believes that once the committee is assembled, subcommittees of the group can be pulled together rapidly in order to address quickly emerging issues.

Interim Provost Mossman thinks this type of work is going on at every level of the institutions in the state of Illinois. He agrees with Dr. Robinett about the importance of speed. He noted that there has been a new challenge every day for the past two and a half weeks; there was the ICE announcement, the announcement about the Department of Education, and the concern about Title IX funding being frozen. He thinks creating this committee would be a good thing, both in terms of thinking about how these things impact the institution and by helping with communication in different ways. Interim Provost Mossman noted that the presidents and chancellors of state institutions meet regularly, and last Tuesday when they thought the Pell grants would be cancelled, they coordinated with Deputy Governor Torres, so there is pretty good communication there. He added that the President's Cabinet meets regularly as well, so if this new committee were to also meet there would be good communication flowing into the institution. He believes it is important to think broader than just taking care of issues internally by being open to guidance on different ways to respond as one of the 12 public

universities in the state. He thinks it is important to recognize that different institutions are in different areas of the state, so Northeastern Illinois University will have a different kind of response to ICE issues, since it is a Hispanic-serving institution, than another school might. He hopes that WIU will get guidance from these other institutions on how to respond to these issues since that is the kind of climate everyone is in right now. He reiterated that speed and clarity in communication are really important. Interim Provost Mossman told senators that last Tuesday was a difficult morning on a lot of levels because there was a lot of uncertainty; he was looking at his phone during meetings to see what news sources were saying about the situation so that everyone could get on the same page.

Dr. Robinett thinks that this new committee would allow for what Interim Provost Mossman is describing. He noted that there are a group of provosts who regularly interact, and there is a group of faculty senate chairs statewide who communicate frequently with each other, so input from those types of groups could be brought together through this committee.

Senator Hunter remarked that he is the Chair of the DEI Committee for the College of Business and Technology and wonders if they should continue to meet until they receive further instructions; Interim Provost Mossman said that they should. He pointed out that the first six pages of the university's strategic plan concerns initiatives on inclusion, so this is a core value of WIU.

CREATION OF NEW COMMITTEE APPROVED 18 YES (15 in-person, 3 zoom) – 1 NO (1 in-person) – 0 ABSTENTIONS

Chair Robinett took back the gavel and asked if any senators wanted to volunteer to serve on the committee. Senator Brewer volunteered. Senator Hunter asked if interested senators could deliver a platform of how they would see themselves serving as the Senate representative to this committee. Senator Brewer stated that while he tries to stay pretty involved in the university, he is also a political person; he frequently meets with state representatives on various issues and tries to stay connected. He thinks it is important to be involved and be present, and he is willing to do both of those things on this committee. Senator Brewer describes himself as a “news nerd” who listens to politics every day and has no problem picking up the phone and asking questions or asking for money. He also needs service at the university level, is interested in this committee, and would be happy to be a part of it.

There were no further nominations, and Senator Brewer was elected by acclamation.

Chair Robinett explained that while there is only one senator who will serve on the committee, the Senate Nominating Committee will be looking for one faculty representative from each academic college, so there are additional opportunities to serve in that way; interested senators can contact SNC Chair Julia Albarracin.

B. For the Good of the Body

Senator Gravitt announced that the Illinois Science Olympiad will be held in Horrabin Hall on the WIU campus from 8-4 on Saturday, February 15. She said they still need volunteers to help with some of the competitions, such as the egg scramble and the electric car. She suggested that students could use this for service hours. Senator Gravitt added that volunteers are required to complete a ten-minute online training exercise since they will be working with minors; both junior high and high school students will participate in the events. Senator Hunter said he has volunteered for the event for about 30 years, and it is a wonderful experience. He said volunteers need not commit for the entire day; they can volunteer only during the morning or afternoon if they prefer. He added that graduate students or others who volunteer receive a certificate acknowledging their time. People interested in volunteering can let Senators Gravitt or Hunter know.

Senator Wipperling announced that the Department of Theatre and Dance will hold this semester's musical, “The Mad Ones,” this coming weekend, February 13, 14, and 15 in Simpkins Hall Theatre.

Motion: To adjourn (Wipperling)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary