

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Regular Meeting, 10 March 2026, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom and Union Capitol Rooms

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT IN PERSON: D. Allwardt, E. Asare, S. Chakravorti, H. Elbe, N. Gillotti, D. Gravitt, H. Mason, D. McArthur, J. McKenzie, A. Melkumian, J. Robinett, F. Tasdan, S. Turkelli, J. Walker, L. Wipperling, E. Woell

SENATORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: P. Cole, E. Hamner, R. Kelly, R. Sharma

SENATORS ABSENT: R. DiCarmine, A. Frederick, M. Hoge

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

GUESTS: David Banash, Dan Barclay, Amy Carr, Merrill Cole, Katrina Daytner, Dennis DeVolder, Patty Eathington, Tara Feld, Anita Hardeman, Rick Kurasz, Jessica Lin, Kyle Mayborn, Lorette Oden, Renee Polubinsky, Tim Roberts, Eric Sheffield, Sebastian Szyjka, Kaitlynn Tutt, Riley Zanger

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. February 24, 2025

MINUTES APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Approvals from the President and Provost

A. Approvals from the President

1. Policy on Grade Appeals

B. Approvals from the Provost

1. Request for New Course

a. CHEM 459, Professional Practice in Forensic Science, 3 s.h.

2. Request for Change of Major

a. Forensic Chemistry

III. Announcements

A. Provost's Report

Provost Mossman appreciated the support of the WIU community he experienced last month while he was absent with numerous illnesses. He expressed congratulations to the WIU women's basketball team for making it into the NCAA tournament, which is a very good thing for their team individually but also for the university.

Provost Mossman announced that Art and Design professor Sherry Lindquist will present the Distinguished University Professor lecture on March 25 at 7:00 p.m. in the COFAC Recital Hall. Her lecture is entitled "Art, Horror, Humor, and Empathy: The Creatures of Hieronymus Bosch."

Provost Mossman noted that on March 2, the university hosted various educational leaders from across the region, including several superintendents, principals, the mayor, and other elected officials. He said discussion centered on a career and educational center that McDonough County is developing. He said that WIU is definitely a part of this effort, which will provide larger growth potential for the institution.

Provost Mossman told senators he announced to the faculty that, after the conclusion of the search for the Dean of the College of Humanities, Arts, Sciences, and Education (CHASE), Dr. Kyle Mayborn accepted an interim appointment, and a national search for the dean position will be held in the fall. He thinks that ads for the associate dean positions have been posted, and screening will start on March 23. He noted that now the university is moving into the period of the Rebuild which involves staffing of a number of associate deans as well as school directors.

Provost Mossman remarked that this is the time of year when universities pursue various levels of funding from the state, as well as federal dollars that are possible through earmarks. Provost Mossman or someone from his office has met with legislators, trying to get federal earmarked dollars for everything from nursing equipment to the Garwood Hall elevator. He said they are working very hard to push forward requests to the state as well as exploring federal possibilities.

Senator Wipperling asked when those who had volunteered to serve on associate dean searches would be hearing more about that. Provost Mossman responded that he thinks the Senate volunteer process is being coordinated through Chair Robinett, although there will also be representation across the board. He thinks Associate Provost Jessica Lin is populating the search committee membership. He added that there will be faculty and staff representation as well as administrators on those committees. Chair Robinett confirmed that he checked before the Senate meeting and those position announcements have been posted.

Senator Gravitt asked if there is any update on the two faculty searches for the School of Engineering and Technology. She said the director is unsure if these have been reopened yet. Provost Mossman responded that he does not know the answer, but that Associate Provost Lin can email the answer to Senator Gravitt and the school Director, Rafael Obregon.

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

Ms. Zanger reported that elections for SGA President and student representative to the Board of Trustees are going well. She noted that all of the candidates gave a speech to the entire SGA last Wednesday, March 4, and voting ends tomorrow at noon. She added a link to the voting to today's Faculty Senate agenda in the Google Drive so that senators can share it with their students and encourage them to vote. She thinks it is important for students to have a say in their university.

Ms. Zanger reported that SGA has been having some attendance issues with their senators, which she has heard from one person is mostly due to the restructuring and students not knowing what college their school falls under. She does not know if this reason is completely accurate, so she asked senators to let her know if they hear anything about this or are able to talk to any students involved with SGA.

Ms. Zanger reported that SGA passed a bill at its last meeting involving faculty dissemination of syllabi. She explained that the bill, which was co-sponsored by SGA Vice President Kaitlynn Tutt and LGBTQA+ Resource Center Senator Anya Adkins, asks faculty to disseminate their syllabi two weeks before the start of the semester. Ms. Zanger explained that SGA thinks this would be beneficial for students because it would allow them to better plan for their semester. She said SGA is aware that faculty contracts typically do not begin until Thursday before the start of the semester, but this bill is more of a request to faculty than a requirement. She said the bill passed unanimously.

Senator Gravitt wonders if the bill is asking for faculty to send syllabi out via email to students in their classes or to post it on WesternOnline. Ms. Zanger replied the bill indicates the communication could be either via email or WesternOnline because SGA wanted to keep that a little bit ambiguous in case it takes more time and effort to do this on WesternOnline. She said their intention is just for faculty to provide a way for students to have the syllabus prior to the semester so they can plan for their courses

Senator Gravitt recalled what she read on the bill was about required or recommended textbooks, but faculty already have to report that to the University Bookstore; faculty are already reporting that information to the Bookstore for this fall semester, so students would only have to login to that website and pull up their course schedule to see what books will be required and recommended. She noted that even if faculty are assigned to teach a course, it will not show up on WesternOnline until a certain date, and faculty will not have access to their students' emails until a certain date as well. She stressed, though, that if faculty know they are being assigned to teach a certain course six months in advance, the Bookstore will have their required and recommended book list.

Chair Robinett clarified that this was a respectful request that SGA brought forward. He thanked Ms. Tutt for spending time in his office explaining the bill and noted that the Executive Committee discussed it as well. He complimented SGA for their knowledge of the realities that faculty face as their classes change, sometimes even after the first week. He explained that what SGA is looking for is just general information so that they can know what the major assignments will be and prioritize which books to purchase. He said students are hoping that when faculty say a textbook is required, they really need for students to purchase that book. He noted that students are not expecting faculty to provide a day-to-day, week-to-week schedules but to indicate that in their class students will be expected to write a 25-page paper or do a certain kind of presentation; students are looking for a synopsis of the assignments and requirements so that they can plan effectively.

Chair Robinett was very impressed that when Ms. Tutt met with him that she spoke about adult learners who are trying to balance families and schedules. He said they also discussed the needs of military service students who may be making decisions based on when they are at training or doing other things. He pointed out the reality is that many students work, so SGA is trying to help them figure out how to achieve some of the things they have been asking for. He stressed that this request is not that faculty provide a full syllabus two weeks in advance. Chair Robinett thanked Provost Mossman who in the Executive Committee meeting acknowledged that the university does have scheduling issues. He noted that part of the Rebuild is working to fix those scheduling issues so that faculty can potentially know more in advance what some things will be.

Senator Chakravorti noted that when WesternOnline is updated so that the course becomes active, faculty can actually change the access dates for students so that they can access their courses early.

Senator Wipperling is concerned that students are still signing up for classes during the first week of the semester; she often has two or three students signed up for a class in advance, then has 15 students signed up on the first day. She does not think that sending out information two weeks in advance will catch a lot of students, but for those who want to pre-plan she respects wanting to offer that option. She thinks the information should be made available on WesternOnline but agrees that faculty should have a synopsis available for students much sooner.

Senator Asare pointed out that students can look at past courses with sample syllabi and sample questions to get a good idea of what a course will be about. He would not want to have to make final decisions about his class two weeks in advance because he would like to have the room to change things and not have to do things a certain way because he decided something two weeks ago. He wants to have the flexibility to make basic changes but thinks that sample syllabi might be one way to achieve what students want. Chair Robinett related that he also discussed past courses with sample syllabi with Ms. Tutt and advised her that this is one way faculty may wish to respond to SGA's request. He thinks SGA's bill is not trying to lock faculty in but, rather, to facilitate communication.

Senator Gravitt observed that the School of Engineering and Technology posts all of their syllabi on their website, but she is not sure if every school and department does this. She is also unsure if students can access past folders but agrees that might be an option in terms of looking at what a course was like the previous year in terms of work, as long as the same faculty member is assigned to teach it this year. Senator Gravitt specifies whether a book is recommended or required, and when a book is required, her understanding is that students do need to buy it. She related that students, nevertheless, still ask her if they really need the book and tell her that is why they did not buy it until coming to class the first day.

Ms. Zanger related that students have purchased books that faculty said were required, but when they get into the class the book is not required whatsoever. She said on other occasions the readings are required, but the faculty member posts readings from the textbook, so it would not really have needed to be purchased. She has purchased things before going to a class that were later unneeded, such as an access code that was unused and unopened by the end of the semester, so she thinks there are a lot of cases where students purchase required materials that they actually did not need to buy. She appreciates Senator Gravitt making sure that the textbooks she says are required are actually needed, but she suspects that may not be the case for all faculty.

Senator Allwardt pointed out that some faculty put reserved copies in the library for students. She agrees that if a textbook says it is required, that still does not tell students that they absolutely need to purchase it, so she thinks Ms. Zanger has a good point. She thinks it would be nice for students to have some indication from the professor whether their only option is to purchase the book or if the professor will provide the material in some other way, such as putting a version online. Senator Allwardt suggested that if faculty hesitate to provide a syllabus or summary early, they can put a “Draft” watermark on it to indicate that the document is not final and only indicates where the faculty member is with it right now. She thinks this would give the faculty member plenty of latitude and should not cause an expectation in the student that this is exactly how the final version will be.

Senator Cole appreciates why students want to have their syllabi in advance and thinks that is a great idea. He emphasized, though, that this should not be posted in any public place because there are organizations with no connection to our university and who do not live in our state who are looking to attack professors because what they teach may be critical of U.S. policies. He noted that this is a huge issue for those, like Senator Cole, who teach U.S. or African American history. Senator Cole has a friend who was fired in Texas despite having tenure as a state university professor because of a video someone recorded. He said that while this is not the same thing as posting a syllabus, Florida and Alabama, for example, are requiring syllabi be posted and are scrubbing them. He thinks that providing students with syllabi in advance is a great idea as long as they do not go beyond our university. Chair Robinett thanked Senator Cole for sharing those concerns. He also thanked SGA representatives for bringing this bill to Faculty Senate so that senators could have the opportunity to discuss it.

C. Faculty Senate Chair’s Report

Chair Robinett expressed thanks to the many faculty who have participated in the recent surveys sent out by Faculty Senate. He empathizes with faculty because there have been a lot, but he stressed that shared governance only works when there is communication and sharing of information so that there can be better understanding of different individuals’ positions on various issues. He really appreciates all the mental, physical, and emotional labor that people are doing in expressing their vision for what they would like WIU to be as the university gets ready to move forward.

Chair Robinett announced that the graduate commencement ceremony will be held on Friday, May 15 for all programs, with the undergraduate ceremony on May 16. He is grateful to whoever made that change and wanted to make sure everyone was aware of it.

Chair Robinett expressed his thanks to the Provost’s Office and especially to Associate Provost Lin for meeting with and following up on questions brought to their attention by civil service staff. He noted that they worked with civil service staff to create a Committee on Operations and Staff that

Chair Robinett thinks will assist in helping the university to be far more thoughtful and efficient when moving into Phase 3. He noted that it is important for shared governance that everyone have a seat at the table as some of these things are discussed.

Chair Robinett noted that UPI President Merrill Cole shared a QR code and information about Higher Education Advocacy Day. Chair Robinett communicated that to Ms. Zanger so that she could share it with students. He said the link includes a way for faculty, staff, and students to register for transportation; UPI has asked that this be completed by April 2.

Chair Robinett noted that Assistant Vice President Rich Toomey sent out an announcement about the first candidate for the Director of International Admissions: the open session will take place on Friday, March 13 from 10:20-11:00 a.m. in the Union Capitol Rooms. Chair Robinett added that, given the importance of this role, he would strongly encourage as many faculty as possible to attend.

Chair Robinett observed that faculty are engaging with the Faculty Senate's constitutional amendments; as of this morning, 48 percent of faculty have cast a ballot, and they are all overwhelmingly passing at this time. He hopes to have the proposed bylaw amendments to the ad hoc Faculty Governance Committee this week for review. He is sharing a portion of those with the chairs of Senate committees and councils in advance to verify their recommendations, which have been communicated in a variety of ways. He stated that because some of their bylaws will shape the way business is done for committees and councils, he wants to make sure that the people doing that business have a say in what that is looking like. He noted that the goal is to bring the Bylaws to Faculty Senate for a vote on March 31 and encouraged senators to attend. [Correction: The Bylaws will not be voted on at the March 31 meeting; that is the date for the first reading. The vote on the Bylaws will occur on April 14.]

Chair Robinett told senators that March 31 is also the meeting where President Mindrup and Vice President Ketra Roselieb will share information about budgets, budget priorities, and what has been happening legislatively.

Chair Robinett announced that there is a Board of Trustees meeting this Thursday, March 13. He said there is no closed door session, so this meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. He added that the Board book is now available. Chair Robinett remarked some things that stuck out to him from the Board book are that WIU is contracting for a webpage redesign, and the Board will consider recommendations for housing and dining and student health insurance fees. He added there will also be the regular report from the Foundation and Sponsored Projects. Chair Robinett told senators it is really beneficial to look at the Board Book to see what is moving forward; it provides a glimpse into what WIU's administration is prioritizing. Chair Robinett intends to share information at that meeting about the creation of the schools, faculty governance, and the recent resolution supporting the equitable funding model. He also plans to remind the Board to be mindful of the amount of physical and emotional labor that faculty and staff continue to do in relation to the compensation they receive. Chair Robinett recognizes that there are an incredible number of individuals at the university who are going above and beyond in regard to "other duties as assigned" and thinks it is important for the Board to recognize the effect that can have on retention and morale, so he plans to continue to bring this up to them.

E. Other Announcements

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

Dr. Carr reported that state Senator Christina Castro was scheduled to meet with the FAC during their zoom meeting on February 20 because the council had concerns about a bill she brought forward on Common Core numbering; however, Senator Castro was pulled into a meeting with the Governor and had to cancel. Dr. Carr said that instead the council ended up having a sort of caucus of the whole and discussed various things.

Dr. Carr shared a document with senators listing some bills that are being discussed right now in Springfield. She said the listing was provided by Mike Phillips, FAC representative from Illinois Valley Community College, who acts as an informal legislative liaison for the group. She said he mentioned in his report to the council that 18-24 year olds do not tend to vote as often, which is one reason why legislators find it easier to cut higher education funding. She said he thinks that voters in the 18-24 range might be able to flip elections if they become more involved. Dr. Carr thinks the April 16 Teach-In in Springfield offers one opportunity to get them involved.

Dr Carr related that Nkechi Onwuameze, one of the IBHE staff members who attends FAC meetings, informed them that an interagency work group has been established to talk about short-term Pell grants targeting high-quality job training. Dr. Carr said Dr. Onwuameze also spoke about the Diversifying Faculty Initiative; information about applying to be on this board was shared in the Senate Google Drive. Dr. Carr said this is now only available to public universities, and there is new language that does not target minorities. She said that a public university must have at least 35 percent Pell-eligible students in order to apply; there was some question about how this is decided, and the FAC was told it is based on interagency work, including the Attorney General's Office, that aligns with federal guidelines.

Dr. Carr announced that the IBHE and the Illinois Community College Board will host the 2026 House Summit (<https://icsps.forms-db.com/view.php?id=274420>) on May 21. Links were provided to senators in case they know of someone interested in attending. Dr. Carr said the Summit will provide insight into supporting individuals experiencing homelessness and students with experiences in foster care. She noted that the IBHE is trying to organize more around addressing student needs. She noted there is also a Higher Learning Commission conference on March 21-24 on creating reduced credit bachelor's degree programs.

Dr. Carr reported that Sue Wiediger from Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville spoke to the public university caucus about a podcast or other event she attended on the history of tenure. She noted that the original interest in proposals for tenure was not necessarily about academic freedom; they were more about having faculty be able to make a long-term investment to an institution, which is necessary for making institutional, curricular, and program changes. She said Juan Martinez from Governor's State related that when he worked at National Lewis University it was really hard for them to make curricular changes because they had so many adjunct faculty who did not want to put the time into doing this.

Dr. Carr told senators that the major presentation at the February 20 meeting concerned a National Academies Consensus Study report, "Transforming Undergraduate STEM Education: Supporting Equitable and Effective Teaching" (<https://www.nationalacademies.org/publications/28268>). She said the presentation was given by Ann Egger, who teaches geological sciences at Central Washington University; Archie Holmes, a professor of electrical and computer engineering at the University of Texas-Austin; and Kerry Brenner, Study Director for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. She related that they shared highlights from the report and stressed that these principles apply to non-STEM disciplines, too. She said they believe that professional learning development is an ongoing process, not something that can be done in 30-minute workshops. Dr. Carr asked how much of this concerns broader liberal arts and sciences training – beyond coursework in a STEM major. She said Dr. Holmes responded that the broader foundation is needed to prepare for future jobs that do not yet exist but might be available 20 years from now. She noted that the report acknowledges that faculty need to spend time redeveloping teaching in an ongoing way throughout their careers, which means that higher education institutions and their administrations need to support professional learning over time. She said Dr. Holmes suggested that one step into the project they are working on is for faculty to consider how to make their learning goals a little clearer for students.

Dr. Carr explained that the report talks about how to foster systemic change using systems models; it used one set of models to provide conceptual grounding and another set targeted at different institutional leaders, including administrators, academic unit leaders, and centers for teaching and learning. She said that other models are being developed for student affairs, graduate students, and a variety of other areas. She said the document asserts that the systems approach can lead to student-ready institutions; it featured one module on using a systems view to improve undergraduate STEM education by understanding the interconnectedness of various elements within the educational ecosystem to drive meaningful change. Dr. Carr related that the report stresses that creating system change requires understanding and mapping the ecosystem and finding strategic partners, both within and external to one's institution; this can include paying attention to things like community college transfers. She said the FAC found this interesting because the council includes representatives from community colleges as well as private and public universities, and the report really thinks about higher education as broader system beyond any one institution.

Dr. Carr mentioned two other items that were not discussed at the IBHE FAC meeting but came up today. She said one was an email from Quality Matters (QM) that she shared with FAC colleagues and which some WIU faculty may have received as well. She related the email outlines what can be financially at stake for institutions with Title II violations and details how QM can help them. She said the email signaled that a single accessibility complaint can trigger costs and consequences that can escalate quickly, including OCR80 settlements ranging from \$50,000 to \$250,000. Dr. Carr was intrigued by this because it is so close to the April deadline and said that her colleagues shared some interesting comments, such as that QM's approach seems to be to offer help while simultaneously trying to scare institutions. She also noted that it is unclear whether QM's offer was extended to institutions or to faculty, as it is \$1,200 to \$1,500 for each of these courses. She said that Mike Phillips thinks one big concern is those people who troll websites looking for violations; institutions will often settle for a relatively small dollar amount because they know legal defense will likely cost more, and smaller institutions will probably follow the lower cost route. She thinks April 26 is the date that institutions are supposed to be in compliance with ADA guidelines for online information.

Dr. Carr announced that Mike Phillips shared information on three bills, two of which will be considered at the state Senate Higher Education Committee meeting tomorrow. She explained that SB3314, the higher education credit hour report, which "amends the Board of Higher Education Act, provides that the Board of Higher Education shall compile and make available to the public a report that contains the following information for all institutions of higher learning: 1) the number of credit hours taught by full-time faculty, organized by institution, tenure status, degree, and certificate program, and 2) the number of credit hours taught by part-time faculty, organized by institution, degree, and certificate program." Dr. Carr told senators that another bill coming up tomorrow, SB3467, aims to prevent sexual violence in higher education. She explained that one key component of this bill seems to be providing a confidential advisor, which is separate from a complaint advisor, unless the complainant chooses to have them be the same person.

Dr. Carr related that SB2202, on Academic Freedom of Expression, was discussed today; it actually comes from the Executive rather than from the Higher Education Committee, which she finds interesting. She said that it ensures or prohibits a public or private institution of higher education from making or enforcing a rule subjecting a student to disciplinary sanctions solely on the basis of speech or other communication that, when engaged in outside of the facility or institution, would be protected from governmental restriction by the First Amendment. She said a good portion of this bill seems to be concerned with private institutions and supporting the Illinois Community College Board in developing academic freedom of speech policies, which could be an issue for dual credit courses as well, although that is not specifically mentioned.

Senator Tasdan asked what the reasoning is behind the first bill, about credit hours. Dr. Carr responded she is not sure if it is partly aimed at determining how many adjuncts there are, although she thought the Higher Learning Commission was already mindful of that. She noted that it will be another layer of reporting.

Chair Robinett noted that a group of faculty are currently beta testing Panorama, which links to WesternOnline to assist with addressing some accessibility issues. Chair Robinett as well as some senators have chosen to participate in this. He noted that it has been possible to understand how to do a variety of things. He related that Senator McArthur and some faculty in other areas asked a number of good questions when they met with the agent about how some of the services provided by Panorama actually run counter to what students may be asked to do on assignments. Chair Robinett thought that navigating .pdfs would be an issue but has actually found that it was easy to resolve; he uses a lot of .pdfs in his courses, and being able to use the software to make them more accessible became far easier as he practiced going through it. He added that the only problem he ran into was that the software is very picky about font colors on backgrounds and does not like the gray shading on many journals, from an accessibility standpoint. He said the university is taking steps to use the software to address this rather than having it be something everyone would have to address individually.

Dr. Carr said she was struck by questions about such things as interpreting a piece of art; she wonders how a course can be made compliant when the intention is to have a student interpret a piece of art and not provide an AI summary of it. She said similar questions remain regarding music, so there are clearly limits as to what Panorama will be able to address. Chair Robinett thinks this is similar to what happens when legislators pass laws without talking to faculty about what is being done in their classrooms or in a different environment; what may make sense from legislators' perspectives may not mirror what is pedagogically necessary for students.

Senator McKenzie thinks it is also important to understand what the actual law says must be made accessible, and the word "reasonable" is always included. She pointed out that an online art class cannot be made accessible for a blind student if the whole point of the class is for students to be able to see and interpret the art. She thinks such an example would not be appropriate and reasonable, so some of the questions raised about art and music are not applicable. She pointed out that accessibility is important in reading materials, but not every course is going to be accessible to every student, nor does it have to be. Dr. Carr remarked that it would be good to hear this from administrators and ADA compliance officers because Senator McKenzie is the first person she has heard say this. Chair Robinett remarked this illustrates why it would be wonderful for legislators to talk to faculty with expertise in given areas as they construct laws and statutes.

III. Reports of Committees and Council

A. Council on Curricular Programs and Instruction (CCPI) (Bob Intriери, Chair)

1. Curricular Requests from the Department of History

a. Request for New Course

i. HIST 390, Introduction to Public and Digital History, 3 s.h.

Senator Gravitt remarked that she did not know what public history is or that there is a category called "digital history"; she did not know if this course involves using digital tools to evaluate public history or the study of digital history, databases, and the internet. She stated that, as a person who

is not from the field of history, she did not necessarily understand the references to concepts of various historical topics. She thought the justification on the last page began to make more sense as it spoke about digital tools offering new ways for historians to present research, but she was confused about using digital tools to evaluate history versus digital history and is unsure of the intent of the course.

Tim Roberts, Chair of the History Department, explained that the department offers a public history course at the 400-level, but they do not have any lower courses that would allow students to engage with the topic. He said they also wanted to bring digital history into the course in addition to public history. He explained that the proposed course is knowledge-based in terms of teaching students the concepts of what public history and digital history are, which involves looking at readings and sources that illustrate both good and bad public history and digital history. He explained that HIST 390 will be a course in which students also produce public history and digital history, such as making a rudimentary history website and using digital tools to study historical sources. Dr. Roberts plans in his course to teach students to create a history-themed video game, which will involve knowledge acquisition in addition to hands-on training on what public and digital history are.

Senator Chakravorti asked if the terms public and digital history are common ones used in the discipline which students taking the course would immediately understand. He does not understand the terms but wonders if they are discipline specific. Dr. Roberts responded that while it is assumed that students know what American or world history area, faculty sometimes learn when they start teaching these topics that students actually do not know what is meant by these terms; he assumes the same would probably occur with public and digital history. He added that the course has to be named something, and those terms are well-recognized and widely used among practitioners of public history.

Dr. Roberts explained that public history, briefly, is history outside the academic setting; it can be practiced by individuals working in museums, giving historical tours, or making documentaries; the Ken Burns series on the American Revolution is a kind of public history. He noted that public history can also be online history in which knowledge is produced through podcasts and other kinds of technology. He explained that digital history is wedded to public history and builds on it but is not the same; digital history uses personal digital tools to study historical records in a new way, such as text mining, which is used by various disciplines and not limited to the study of historical records. He said this type of hands-on digital history will be taught to students after they enroll in the course. Dr. Roberts said that while students may not know on the first day of class what these terms mean, it is the objective of the course that they can speak articulately about what public and digital history are and what they have studied. He said the department hopes to equip students with all kinds of good career tools in order to articulate what they have done after they leave Western and are talking to an employer at a museum or other historically based place. He noted that the department is increasingly seeing students who are not interested in being history teachers after graduation, which is a shift in their major constituency, and this course is in response to that.

Senator Cole, a professor in the History Department, told senators that when he speaks about public history as a public historian, he explains it as history beyond formal educational settings such as high schools and universities. He

noted that there is a huge interest in history right now, with millions of people watching historical documentaries and going on historical tours; although Senator Cole is a historian, he also took a historical tour recently, and while there were many other attendees, he was the only academic. He agrees with Dr. Roberts that there are many students who might pursue careers in public history because there is so much interest in it, such as offering historical interpretations at parks. Senator Cole agrees with Senator Gravitt that digital history is more complicated, but it can involve GIS, databases, text mining, or creating websites. He noted that digital history can be considered sort of a subfield of digital humanities. He explained that while the department has one course on the topic of public history, they want to offer two in order to do better by their students as they pursue these sorts of potential occupations in future.

Senator Gravitt suggested that the course description be changed to make it more approachable because the way it is currently phrased the students who the department is trying to speak to will not necessarily know what the course is about. She thinks some of the phrasing from the back page should be moved into the course description to better explain what the course is because that might be all that students see. She does not think that students will have any informed way of determining whether it is a course they would like to take.

Chair Robinett asked if Senator Gravitt wants to object to the course or if she is just suggesting that the department consider revising its course description. Senator Gravitt responded that she is objecting to the course because she does not think it is in the best interest of the department to pass it in its current form. She added that there is still time for the department to fix this before it goes into the undergraduate catalog.

SENATOR GRAVITT OBJECTED TO THE COURSE

Chair Robinett explained that since the course has been objected to, that automatically tables it and, based upon Senator Gravitt's statement, it would come back at the next meeting. He stated that if any senator would like to counter this course being objected to until that meeting, it would take a two-thirds vote to bring it back to the agenda.

Motion: To bring the course request back to the agenda (Cole/Tasdan)

Senator Asare asked, if the course returns to the agenda for today's meeting, whether the proposed amendments would be considered at that time or never come back. Chair Robinett responded that if the course request returns to the agenda today, a senator could propose an amendment, but it would ultimately be up to the department whether they would accept the suggestion. He stated that if the request is returned to the agenda, senators would vote on whether they want to approve the course, regardless of the objection.

Senator Allwardt asked if one of the history faculty could speak about the catalog description because she would like to hear their thoughts on that. Chair Robinett stated that while Faculty Senate can certainly ask this, he would, from a parliamentary standpoint, hate to see the Senate get involved in rewriting catalog descriptions on the Senate floor. He noted this is why Faculty Senate has its councils and committees.

Chair Robinett pointed out that there is a motion and a second to bring the request back to the current agenda. Senator Melkumian asked if the course would be brought to the agenda in order to vote on it, not to table. Chair Robinett replied that is correct. Senator Melkumian remarked she would vote against that because she would prefer in that case to table it. Chair Robinett pointed out that because a senator has objected to the course, it is already tabled because senators were not able to, by unanimous consent, accept it. He added that if senators want to bring the course back in order to vote, it would go back on the agenda under New Business, after which there could be additional discussion and a vote on it as is. Senator Chakravorti asked if senators should vote “yes” if they want this to happen and “no” if they want the course to stay tabled. Chair Robinett confirmed that if senators want to vote on the course today, they should vote “yes,” and if they want it to be tabled until the next meeting, they should vote “no.”

Senator Tasdan asked if the objection can be clarified exactly and the kind of changes that are requested be specified. Senator Gravitt responded that if the course goes forward as is, she does not think that students will understand what it is all about when they look up the course description, and if they do not understand the course description they will not want to take it. She recognizes that the course sounds like it would appeal to students who are interested in non-teaching-based history, which is amazing because lots of people do watch digital history, but this does not come across in the course description. She had no clue what the course was about and does not think that students will be informed enough to understand if it is a course they would like to take because of the way the course description is currently phrased. She said her objection is based on trying to make the course as appealing as possible up front rather than putting a roadblock in students’ way and revising the course later on after the department does not get the enrollment they are looking for.

Chair Robinett pointed out that there is a motion and a second on the floor, but parliamentary procedure should not be used as a block to conversation. He respectfully disagrees with Senator Gravitt based on the fact that the course has three different prerequisites; students would have to go through two previous history courses or consent of the instructor before taking this course. He pointed out that by the time a student takes a 300-level course, they will have met with academic advisors who would be able to provide guidance on it. He believes that students would have a knowledge of these topics after having gone through a variety of introductory history courses before taking HIST 390. He asked senators to be mindful of the work that CCPI and college councils do and the amount of work that has gone into courses that come before Faculty Senate.

Senator Wipperling expressed agreement with Chair Robinett and disagreement with Senator Gravitt. She noted that if students are taking History degrees without wanting to go into teaching and preferring to do other things with their degrees, there will be more interest for a course like this, and professors will recommend it to their students.

Chair Robinett pointed out that there has been an objection, a motion, and a second. Senator Chakravorti asked if there could be more discussion. He asked if students who register for this course, given the prerequisites, would have some idea what public and digital history are and will have an inkling of what they involve generally even if they do not understand them technically. Dr. Roberts responded that digital history is usually used in the survey courses, which are the prerequisites, depending upon the instructor,

and it will be incumbent upon the department to be more intentional in encouraging faculty to articulate to students what kind of historical course 390 is. He anticipates that public and digital history will be discussed with students in advising; also, a lot of History's extracurricular activities involve public and digital history. Dr. Roberts noted that public and digital history will have been talked about in HIST 201, the required methodology course, although it is not the focus of that course; he hopes that non-History majors, who are not familiar with these terms, might also take this course because he thinks the nuance of public and digital history will be exciting for them, and they will quickly learn what these terms mean. Dr. Roberts said the department will think about what they assume students know when they look through the catalog, but he does think the lion's share of students will know what these terms mean.

Dr. Roberts asked, for point of order, if the course would need to come back to the Senate if the department decides to change the title. Chair Robinett responded that if the department decides to change the title of the course, they would need to take it back through the curricular processes. He explained that if the Senate were to approve the course as is, the department would be able to use a shorter process for changes, allowing the department to submit a multipurpose course change form to CCPI and, ultimately, to the Provost's Office; it would not need to come back to Faculty Senate since this is considered a minor change. Dr. Roberts thinks this would be a viable option for the department to undertake if it is the will of the Senate.

Senator Gravitt thinks this course would appeal to a lot of people who are not necessarily History majors, especially considering the university is trying to appeal to all kinds of learners, such as adult learners. She thinks her mother would probably have no clue what public and digital history are either, so she thinks that if History wants to appeal to the broadest possible audience they should broaden their course description so that they are not only trying to target those students who already know these terms but are also trying to reach those students who do not know them.

Senator Wipperling remarked that Chair Robinett talked about two processes, of which the second process would not bring the request back to Senate. She asked if that second option could happen if senators vote to bring the request back on the agenda. Chair Robinett responded that if senators vote to bring the request back on the agenda, they will vote on the request as written; then, if Provost Mossman approves it, the department could bring forward, even this year, a CCPI multipurpose form to make changes to the approved course. He said that if senators do not vote to bring the request back onto the agenda for today, it will come back to Faculty Senate on March 31 as it is, and senators would then discuss and vote on it.

Senator Hamner expressed his concern that Faculty Senate may be applying a standard that could create a difficult precedent. He suspects that many senators would struggle to define the terms involved in this Mathematics course description: "Vectors, three-dimensional analytic geometry, partial differentiation, and multiple integration." He thinks senators should keep this in mind and would like to see them enable their colleagues in History to move forward at this stage, however they feel is the wisest way, in light of this conversation.

SENATOR GRAVITT WITHDREW HER OBJECTION

Chair Robinett reiterated that he has, throughout the year, tried to use parliamentary procedure as a guide rather than a cudgel. He thinks that, in order to be efficient with time and not overuse anyone's emotional and physical labor, it will be best not to complicate this situation more than it needs to be. He stated that, in light of Senator Gravitt's withdrawal of her objection, he would ask if there are any objections to HIST 390 being approved; there were none.

NEW COURSE APPROVED

2. Curricular Requests from the Department of English

a. Request for Change of Major

i. English

Chair Robinett told senators he spoke with David Banash, who is bringing the requests forward on behalf of English, before the meeting to ask that some issues with the form be updated before the request moves forward to Provost Mossman. He explained, for example, that he asked Dr. Banash to replace "eliminate" throughout the form with the more standard CCPI wording of "delete."

Senator Wipperling observed that creative writing and professional writing have been eliminated in a lot of the categories, but she wants to make sure that creative writing is an option for this major somewhere, such as in increased directed electives. Dr. Banash responded that the department has a dedicated creative writing faculty, and creative writing will remain and continue to be taught. He noted that English has a Creative Writing Minor that many students take, and new requirements are being added so that all English majors will have to take some creative writing courses. He pointed out the only thing that is being eliminated is the full Creative Writing Option; the major formerly had four options but is going back to only offering two. Dr. Banash explained that as the university experiences a smaller student population, the Department of English anticipates 30-35 full-time English majors; they cannot run four options with all of their many different requirements because not all of the courses can make with the smaller number of students majoring in English. He said that while all the areas of English will remain, and the department is not taking anything off the table in terms of what students will be able to study, they will have to do these things within two options rather than four, as well as using the many minors within the department.

CHANGE OF MAJOR APPROVED WITH CORRECTIONS

b. Request for Change of Option

i. Literature and Language

Chair Robinett noted that there are some editorial changes that he will pursue with Dr. Banash before the request goes forward to the Provost's Office; for instance, adding to the list of actions in the Summary of Changes to make it clearer what is being done. Senator Gravitt pointed out that 388 and 480 on page 5 need to have the prefix ENG in front of them, and ENG 376 needs to specify that it is 3 s.h.

CHANGE OF OPTION APPROVED WITH CORRECTIONS

IV. Old Business - None

V. New Business – None

A. For the Good of the Body

Senator Mason announced that a Name That Tune music trivia fundraiser will be held on April 10 from 6-8:30 p.m. at The Penny to help Education students get to Washington, D.C. to advocate for special education legislation. She said this has been held for a couple of years and is a great opportunity for the students. She added that individuals can also sponsor a student to participate in the trivia event for \$10 so that the student can attend for free.

Senator McKenzie remarked that of the four books she ordered from the University Bookstore for the fall semester, she has been told they are unable to get three. She has students who need to buy their books through the Bookstore in order to use their financial aid package, but the Bookstore cannot get the books they need. She has never heard of this happening before; she noted that the books are from a major publisher and are new editions, not off-brand, older books.

Senator Mason has experienced this, as well, with newer edition books from Pearson, but there are not a lot of older editions available either. Senator McKenzie thinks this issue is problematic. She suggested that if the Bookstore would provide faculty with a list of books that they should try to avoid using because they are difficult to get, it would help, but faculty do not find out the book is unavailable until they submit their request. She has been using two older editions to try to save students money, but the Bookstore said they could no longer provide those editions, so she changed to the newest editions, and the Bookstore cannot get those editions either.

Provost Mossman asked that anyone having this problem send him an email, and he will be happy to investigate and try to solve this issue.

Senator Woell was told by his chair that the proposed equitable funding bill is unlikely to pass this year. He wonders, if that is the case, why the university is trying so hard to get students to Springfield on April 16. He asked if it would not make more sense to try to get them there at a time when the bill actually has a chance to pass. Provost Mossman acknowledged that there can be a negative mood surrounding any appropriations from the state, but he does not think that should lead the university to abandon advocacy and attempts to get legislation passed, even if it is compromised in some way. He noted that higher education funding is desperately needed in the state, so he thinks it is worth the effort. He applauds UPI for organizing these types of activities and actually getting students involved in them. He personally thinks it is worth it, even though this is a gloomy time for higher education in the country and, certainly, in the state of Illinois.

UPI President Cole remarked that Provost Mossman put the situation very well. Dr. Cole noted that right now there is a tornado watch for Macomb, and he could simply decide that since it could hit anywhere he should just stand in front of the window and hope for the best, but he would prefer to instead make plans for himself and his family, which is the way he feels about the equitable funding bill. He does not know if the bill will pass this session, but if there is no attempt to encourage support for it the chance of it passing is zero. He believes pressure needs to be kept on Springfield to get something done. He noted that while the university may not get everything it wants this year, in the meantime WIU faculty and their students can be empowered to try to do something.

Senator Gravitt thinks if there is a good turnout, the equitable funding bill will get in the news more often. She tried to explain its importance to people in her dentist office, and they did not understand what it was all about. She thinks while the message is understood by the university, it needs to get out to more people beyond WIU because they have no clue what it really means, and the more the story is shared, the better. Dr. Cole spoke to Darcy Shinberger today, and she is preparing a story for the *Community News Brief*. He offered to speak to any group, on or off campus, about the equitable funding bill. Senator Gravitt suggested that it be put on social media because that is how some

people get their news. Dr. Cole responded that UPI does not have that kind of social media reach due to problems with their Facebook page; he is trying to fix that problem himself but has so far been unable to.

Chair Robinett asked Senator Woell what his concern is as far as people actively promoting or engaging in things related to the equitable funding bill. Senator Woell responded that he thinks if a lot of energy is going to be put into getting students down to Springfield, it should be done at a very strategic time. He acknowledges that advocacy could be effective even if it is clear that the bill will not pass, but in order to be more strategic this should be done at a time when the bill will actually come up and have a more decent chance of passing.

Motion: To adjourn (Mason)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm
Faculty Senate Office Manager and Recording Secretary