

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Regular Meeting, 26 March 2024, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom and in Union Capitol Rooms

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT IN PERSON: J. Albarracin, D. Atherton, B. Bellott, D. Brown, G. Cabedo-Timmons, C. Chadwell, H. Elbe, D. Gravitt, D. Hunter, A. Lewis, K. Perone, B. Petracovici, Y. Tang, S. Turkelli, L. Wipperling

SENATORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: S. Bailey, L. Ebert Wallace, E. Hamner, J. Land, M. Shamsuddoha, K. Wiseley

SENATORS ABSENT: D. Barr, S. Ko, J. Sarra

EX-OFFICIO: Ilon Lauer, Acting Parliamentarian; Interim Provost Mark Mossman

GUESTS: Amy Burke, Billy Clow, Craig Conrad, Mick Cumbie, Dennis DeVolder, Peter Gloviczki, Jason Hawkins, Pete Jorgensen, Jeffrey Keith, Sarah Lawson, Renee Polubinsky, Linda Prosisie, Alonzo Ruffin, Jr.

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. March 5, 2024

APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Provost's Report

Interim Provost Mossman observed the university has a very active calendar with many events planned while moving forward toward the end of the semester. He recognized two of those events: the Hallwas lecture and the Ferguson lecture. The Ferguson lecture, sponsored by the College of Business and Technology, will feature Amanda Gore. Interim Provost Mossman said there are many great music events scheduled and several speakers planned to visit the campus, so there is something to go to almost every night.

B. Student Government Association (SGA) Report
(Jeffrey Keith, SGA Director of Academic Affairs)

SGA will hold a formal town hall tomorrow. At the last SGA assembly, Kelly Severs, Interim Director of the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, discussed _____ and the SGA representative to the Board of Trustees, Cody Cornell, discussed enrollment and some of the things the BOT talked about at their meeting on Friday, March 22.

C. Other Announcements

1. Progress of Center for the Performing Arts
(Billy Clow, Dean, College of Fine Arts and Communication; Mick Cumbie, Development Director, College of Fine Arts and Communication; Ted Renner, Interim Director, Facilities Management)

Dean Clow showed a PowerPoint to senators on the ongoing construction of the Center for the Performing Arts. The slideshow began with a single-shot timelapse video showing the

progress from when construction began in September 22 to the present day. Dean Clow said Jeremy Merritt, University Technology Director of Web Services, created the video by taking a photo at the same time and place every day for the past 18 months, which he will continue to do until opening day.

The Center for the Performing Arts will have 875 seats. It will have an adjustable proscenium that can go from 70 feet wide down to about 28 feet, depending on the performance and what size of group is attending; for a big symphony concert, it may be extended to its full 70 feet, but that may not be desired for smaller performances. It will have full broadcasting and recording capabilities, a hydraulic orchestra pit, and an acoustic concert shell.

Dean Clow explained the studio theatre will be a flexible space that, depending upon configuration, can seat 100-200 people. He stated that the set up for each performance will likely be somewhat different for each. Additional facilities include two dance studios with fully-equipped sprung dance floors, a jazz performance studio, a theatre rehearsal studio, and a number of classrooms and seminar rooms, along with the University Box Office and concession stands.

Dean Clow told senators that Ken and Lorraine Epperson graciously offered to name the Gallery, a long cylinder that runs the width of the building from one side to the other. He said the Reception Room will be named after Melissa Inman, the wife of Mayor Inman who passed away in 2018 and was very influential to the arts and community of Macomb. Money is being raised to name the Reception Room after her.

Dean Clow said the \$119 million building will be 100,000 square feet. A second crane had to be brought in last week to install the roof trusses, which comprise over 135 tons of steel in the Great Hall alone. Dean Clow stated that the main curved orchestra beam, that no one will see once the building is finished, is 80 feet long, 50 inches tall, and made of a continuous piece of steel. He said this beam weighs 40,000 pounds, but it took the construction workers seconds to put it into place exactly as it was supposed to fit. He added the Center is a LEED-certified silver building.

Dean Clow said the theatre will seat about 500 on the floor and about 300 in the balconies. He said that the lights in the balconies can be left off for smaller shows or lectures so that they are basically invisible and the space will seem more intimate. He related there are weekly construction meetings involving everyone working on the project from the university-side along with the architects, consultants, engineers, and everyone working on the project from outside the university, and there is really amazing coordination and collaboration that happens to make a project this complicated come to fruition.

Dean Clow said the Center will not be completely finished until Fall 2025, but it will be substantially completed in June of that year so that faculty can put books on their office shelves and begin to occupy the space. He said there is a massive team of architects and designers working on this project, and River City Construction from Peoria has been the greatest partner that WIU could have asked for. Dean Clow said River City has been reactive, easy to work with, happy to have input, and has involved COFAC in the process. He added River City is a pleasure to work with, really on top of their game, and very professional, so WIU was very lucky to get them for this project.

Chair Albarracin asked what the plan is to manage competing requests if there is high demand for the space. Dean Clow replied there are efforts to try to get a director in place. He said once the director is hired, they will begin creating a lot of these systems, policies, and procedures to make everything happen. He said COFAC wants bodies in the space and will make every effort to make the Center usable for everybody that wants access to it. Dean Clow thinks it would be better to bring someone in first who will be part of that process.

Chair Albarracin asked if the space will be big enough to host graduation, but Mr. Renner replied that it is not; no theatre of this type would ever be that big. Mr. Renner related that benchmarking was done with similar facilities around the state; WIU's theatre could hold 875, and most others are the same or within 100 of that number, but the capacity of Western Hall for students and parents attending graduation ceremonies is 5,000.

Senator Hunter asked if Mr. Renner could expand on the LEED concept. Mr. Renner responded that LEED stands for leadership, energy, and environmental design. He explained the U.S. Green Building Council, which sets these standards, breaks the certification into several different classifications that are reached by achieving certain criteria. He said the system WIU is in goes up to 79 points and is broken into LEED, LEED silver, LEED gold, and LEED platinum. Mr. Renner said the highest level, LEED platinum, would require such things as the building treating its own wastewater on site and generating its own power, but WIU is not trying to achieve that level. He said that while it would be nice to be able to do some of the higher-level things, it is exponentially more expensive; obtaining LEED and LEED silver designation, a goal that was set when President Goldfarb was at WIU, is pretty tenable. Mr. Renner said LEED silver is anywhere from 50-59, and with the criteria that has been established, WIU will get about 55 points. He said one criterion that the Center will meet is "reduction of the urban heat island" by using a lighter-colored roof. He stated that in order to meet the criterion to "optimize energy performance," everything in the building will need to meet the American Society of Heating and Refrigeration standards. In order to meet the "enhanced refrigeration management" criterion, the building cannot use CFC-depleting materials. Mr. Renner stated that, in addition, the building will need to use low-VOC paints, no urea formaldehyde glue, and separate the waste coming out of the building. He added that reaching LEED silver certification will reduce maintenance costs and increase life cycle costs throughout the building.

Senator Tang noted that parking in the vicinity of the new building has become very crowded because of the construction. He asked if this will become better once the building is completed. He also wonders if the Center will have its own parking lot. Mr. Cumbie said he hosts a lot of people that want to learn more about the Center for the Performing Arts, and usually by the third question someone asks about parking. He said the simple answer to the question is that WIU has enough existing parking spaces available to handle whatever it wants to do in the new building; if 875 people drive 875 cars to a performance, there are currently enough spaces to accommodate them. Mr. Cumbie said the issue is that the previous parking lot was right next to the building, and everyone enjoyed that immediately adjacent lot. He said that once a director is on-site and the parking plan is developed, one idea might be to use the upper lot at Corbin and Olson. Other lots which will be used for parking include Simpkins, the circle drive at Sherman Hall, the entire Seal Hall parking lot, and the upper lot at the University Union. He added that one of these lots, or at least a portion of one of them, will be reserved for preferred parking for donors.

Dean Clow related that the upper Corbin-Olson lot was built in 2014-15 as a spot-for-spot replacement for the Browne Hall lot so that when the new building opened there would be the same amount of parking as before. He said that since the Center for the Performing Arts took so long to begin construction, the university let Corbin-Olson students park in that lot in the interim rather than leave it standing empty. COFAC representatives met with SGA this year because the current SGA members had no idea that lot was originally built for the use of Browne and Memorial Hall employees and the Center for the Performing Arts. Dean Clow said his office will work out some way to allow students access to parking. He noted that the Office of Public Safety conducted a parking lot study last fall, and this lot is not being used to capacity at the moment. He said although students may be able to use part of the lot during the day, they would have to move their vehicles during large performances, but this will be worked out when work begins on the policies and procedures. Dean Clow added that there will be a pull-in area off of University Avenue where cars can drop off performance attendees with mobility issues and then go to park.

Senator Wipperling asked if there have already been discussions about the maintenance and janitorial needs of the new building. Dean Clow responded that discussions have begun, but it is unknown yet how many building service workers the Center for the Performing Arts will need. He hopes the building will be very busy, so there may be a need for several BSWs. He said one of the reasons the LEED process is being followed is to help reduce future maintenance costs so that things last longer. Dean Clow said the Center for the Performing Arts has also received the promise of a bequest that will be specifically earmarked for maintenance on the building, which he said is virtually unheard of and which is a really great bonus for the facility. He added that down the road it will be really important that this was established early on.

Mr. Renner stated that while engaging in the long and arduous process of sitting at the table with the architects, engineers, construction crew, Dean Clow, and COFAC staff, discussing their wants and needs for the building in order to be able to teach and utilize the space for performances, there were also members of Facilities Management at the table discussing what the plumbers, electricians, and mechanical maintenance employees who deal with heating and cooling would like to see in the building set-up. Mr. Renner assured senators that these employees have also thoroughly vetted the building and provided input from the maintenance side of things, giving them the ability to say what things are easier or more difficult for them to maintain. He said this will give Facilities Management a little bit of a head start once the contractors turn the building over to them to maintain. He said that by letting them know what kind of electrical panel Facilities Management electricians prefer to use, for example, it will make it an easier transition. Mr. Renner said that Facilities Management has been spending a lot of time recently, primarily because of the staffing limitations throughout campus, saying that if something is X number of square feet, then Y number of people are needed to be able to maintain things to a proper standard.

Senator Hunter asked what percentage of the building will go toward direct teaching. Dean Clow responded he does not know that he can answer percentage-wise, but all of the space gets utilized for educational purposes at some point – whether it is direct classroom space or space in which students are performing in concerts or theatrical productions or doing recitals for theatre or dance. He said all of this will depend on the schedules that are set, but there will be something happening in which students are engaged at most times of the day. Dean Clow noted that the building will house classrooms, performance spaces, rehearsal spaces, and a jazz studio. He said the building will have one-foot thick soundproof walls so that the jazz band can play and not interrupt everyone else, unlike their current location for practices. He noted that all the dance courses and a number of music and theatre performance courses will be taught in the new facility, so there will be a substantial amount of academics, and the building will be used an immense amount. Mr. Renner added that when the university had to go through a downsize exercise for the facility a few years ago and cut 30,000 square feet of space from the building, what was primarily cut was office space rather than classrooms or performance space.

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

1. Curricular Requests from the School of Music

- a. Requests for Changes of Minors
 - i. Music Business
 - ii. Jazz Studies
 - iii. Music (Liberal Arts)

NO OBJECTIONS

b. Requests for Changes of Options

- i. Applied Music
- ii. Music Business

NO OBJECTIONS

2. Curricular Request from the Department of Communication and the Department of Broadcasting and Journalism

a. Request for New Major

i. Public Relations

Senator Petracovici noted that two courses in the core, BC&J 345 and 346, require BC&J 100 as a prerequisite, but this is not explicitly listed as a core course. He asked if this is a hidden 3 s.h. prerequisite. Communication Chair Peter Jorgensen and Broadcasting and Journalism Chair Peter Gloviczki both responded that this prerequisite will be waived for those two courses. Senator Petracovici asked why the courses are listed as having this prerequisite if it will be waived. Dr. Jorgensen responded that the two courses are still required for other majors within the Department of Broadcasting and Journalism; the prerequisite will only be waived for Public Relations students but will still be required for Broadcasting and Journalism students taking other majors.

Senator Tang recalled that a similar major was proposed when Journalism was still housed in the Department of English, before he came to WIU, but it went nowhere. He is very impressed that this major was able to be created in such a timely manner and expressed his thanks, both as a Faculty Senator and as a Broadcasting and Journalism faculty member, to those who made this proposal possible. Senator Tang noted that on the last page of the request, it says that “assessment data does not provide any insight into the need for this major.” He asked what “assessment data” refers to in this statement. Dr. Jorgensen replied that the departments have not asked questions or measured any data that suggests that there is a need for this major, but anecdotally there are a number of students who have expressed an interest in pursuing a Public Relations major. He noted that the Department of Communication Transfer Day was held on Friday, March 22, and students visited primarily from Sauk Valley and John Wood Community Colleges. He said many John Wood students are currently taking public relations classes, and when Dr. Jorgensen told them about the Public Relations major they said they were now considering WIU whereas they had not before because they couldn’t major in Public Relations. Dr. Jorgensen stated that while there is no assessment data, per se, that builds any kind of long history or provides a background for developing the major, there is anecdotal data to suggest that this is the time for this major to appear. Ms. Burke added that this was discussed at the CCPI meeting, too, and at that time Dr. Jorgensen stated that he was just trying to answer the question on the form as it was worded. Senator Gravitt observed that the statement that there is no assessment data is not relevant because there is no verification, so she would recommend removing that sentence entirely. Chair Albarracin added that the response could be reworded indicating that the departments have qualitative data indicating interest on the part of students. Dr. Jorgensen pointed out that all this information was in the feasibility study that was attached to the request, but he is happen to remove that sentence if needed.

Senator Tang observed that this may be one of the first joint majors created at WIU and assumes it will be managed by both departments. He asked what kinds of administrative challenges this might create and how the departments will address those challenges. Dr. Jorgensen responded that the new major will be administered with an abundance of mutual respect and admiration. Dr. Gloviczki added that, building on the good things Dr. Jorgensen has said, the chairs believe this is an opportunity for the two departments to be bold and to do what is best for their students. He added that both chairs are excited for that opportunity to provide something to WIU students that they have not had yet. Dr. Jorgensen does not know if there has historically been another joint major offered at WIU. He suspects Senator Tang's question of administrative challenges might have some interesting responses later on as there will undoubtedly be some bumps in the road. He recalled that at CCPI the question was raised as to which department would claim the Public Relations majors, and for now those will be counted under Broadcasting and Journalism. Dr. Jorgensen announced that Faculty Senate will receive a proposal from Communication, Broadcasting and Journalism, and the College of Fine Arts and Communication in a couple of weeks that may resolve these issues and circumvent any concerns senators may have about two independent departments jointly managing this degree program. Dean Clow observed that the Musical Theatre program is housed in the Department of Theatre and Dance; they share teaching assignments with the School of Music, and there are no issues. He added that the School of Music provides musical direction and private lessons, and the collaboration works well.

Senator Hunter asked where the students will go for advising. Dr. Jorgensen responded that Communication and Broadcasting and Journalism share the same academic advisor, so students will remain with Jennifer Grimm.

Senator Tang remarked that, as a joint major, students should benefit from both departments, and the curriculum proposal shows that the core course design is proportional and similar between the two departments. He pointed out, though, that there is a huge gap in the number of courses offered by Communication and by Broadcasting and Journalism when it comes to directed electives; there are 12 directed electives from Communication and only six from BC&J. He asked what the rationale is for such a gap. Dr. Jorgensen responded that in Communication, COMM 400 and 401 are thesis classes; they were included so that if an honors student wants to do an honors thesis in the area of public relations, this can be counted toward their degree. He noted that Broadcasting and Journalism does not have thesis courses. The proposal additionally includes an independent study course and an internship course that are only offered through Communication. He stated that the intention was not to overcompensate in favor of Communication courses; students may choose not to take any COMM directed electives and take all 6 s.h. of BC&J courses instead, especially if students really want to concentrate on sports or international public relations. Dr. Jorgensen explained that during the development of the proposal, both departments looked through their curriculum and tried to decide which courses might appeal to Public Relations majors. He also noted that Communication has a larger course catalog than Broadcasting and Journalism, so there were more elective courses to choose from.

Senator Gravitt asked if there is sufficient faculty in the two departments that no new faculty will need to be hired to support the new major. Dr. Jorgensen responded that is one of the reasons why the two departments are coordinating on the major. He noted that there is one faculty member who is

a public relations specialist, but one faculty member logistically cannot offer an entire major. He said Communication decided there were a number of courses they could offer toward a PR major in terms of risk and crisis communication, persuasion, and organizational communication that would help to complement the skill sets and knowledge that Dr. Eun Go, the PR specialist in Broadcasting and Journalism, would be able to offer. He stated that by combining the departments to jointly offer this major, there are now the faculty resources so that students can get the full range of experience.

NO OBJECTIONS

C. Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)
(Katherine Perone, Chair)

1. Faculty Nominations

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Steering Committee

Julia Albarracin, Political Science

Faculty Senate

Rashmi Sharma, Education

Senate Council for Instructional Technology

There were no further nominations, and the nominees were declared elected.

IV. Old Business – None

V. New Business

A. For the Good of the Body

Chair Albarracin expressed her thanks and appreciation to those senators making the effort to attend in person. She said it is good not to have to wonder until the last minute whether there will be a quorum.

Senator Hunter announced that the Ferguson Lecture speaker being brought in by the College of Business and Technology, Amanda Gore, will give her presentation, “Discover the Power of Joy,” at 2:00 on April 2 in the Union Grand Ballroom.

Chair Albarracin announced that Professor Abram X. Kendi will come to campus on April 11 at 7 p.m. in the Heritage Room. She stated that there will be limited seating, so she recommends registering early, particularly if professors plan to bring their classes. She thanked the College of Fine Arts and Communication, which was kind enough to help set up a ticket system for Professor Kendi’s visit.

Motion: To adjourn (Wipperling)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary