

**WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**

**FACULTY SENATE**

**Regular Meeting, 7 March 2023, 4:00 p.m.**

**Via Zoom**

**ACTION MINUTES**

**SENATORS PRESENT:** J. Albarracin, D. Atherton, S. Bailey, D. Banash, B. Bellott, M. Bernards, D. Brown, G. Cabedo-Timmons, A. Carr, C. Chadwell, P. Eathington, L. Ebert Wallace, D. Hunter, J. Land, T. Lough, S. Macchi, K. Perone, B. Petrocovic, M. Shamsuddoha, E. Shupe, Y. Tang, B. Thompson J. Wroblewski

**Ex-officio:** Craig Whetten, Parliamentarian; Provost Manoochehr Zoghi

**SENATORS ABSENT:** D. Barr

**GUESTS:** Mari Aanenson, Julie Cox, Dennis DeVolder, Doug Freed, Niall Hartnett, Guiyou Huong, Angela Kline, Sarah Lawson, Tonya Little, Sue Martinelli-Fernandez, Patty Mason, Kristi Mindrup, Russ Morgan, Mark Mossman, Lorette Oden, Renee Polubinsky, Linda Prosis, Jim Sarra, Rashmi Sharma, Sebastian Szjyka

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. February 21, 2023

**APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED**

II. Announcements

A. Provost's Report – None

B. Student Government Association (SGA) Report  
(Joe Cantu, SGA Director of Academic Affairs)

Mr. Cantu prior to the meeting provided a copy of SGA's Bill of Resolution regarding mental health days and similar legislation from Illinois State and Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville, but he was unable to be present to discuss the bill with senators. Chair Thompson noted that the document which SGA will be sending to the President and the Board of Trustees is slightly different than what he saw earlier, and he thinks SGA listened to some of Faculty Senate's concerns.

C. Other Announcements

1. What Advisors Want Faculty To Know  
(Niall Hartnett, Academic Advisor, Psychology/Sociology/Anthropology)

Mr. Hartnett said that when he was approached by Chair Thompson and Senator Carr about speaking to Faculty Senate, he reached out to all of his constituent groups. Mr. Hartnett is the Chair of the Council of Academic Advisors (COAA), the first time an advisor has actually chaired this council. He said that historically the chair has always been the Director for Undergraduate Advising, but many advisors had requested a change to an elected system to determine the chair. The bylaws for the Council of Academic Advisors were changed more than a year ago to accommodate that, and Mr. Hartnett was subsequently elected chair. He said that now, if the chair is a departmental advisor, the vice chair would be a freshman advisor (currently

Tim Johnson), and the secretary will ideally be an advisor from the Quad Cities campus (currently Kim Moreno). Mr. Hartnett said the council includes an Advisory Relationship Team, which talks about ideas for guests, the summer workshop, and what should be on the agenda.

Mr. Hartnett related that COAA also now has a Supervisor Group, which was established because of changes made to the reporting lines. Every department advisor formerly reported to a department chair but now reports to a dean or director. He said the supervisor group fields questions and provides information to advisors. A Life Cycle Group was formed under the Provost; it looks at swim lanes, the life cycle, and how everyone can work together, such as those advisors who are primarily freshmen advisors and those who are primarily departmental. Mr. Hartnett stated that academic coaches and others impacted by COAA can also attend the meetings. He reached out to each of these groups to see what they would like for him to highlight in today's presentation and came away with a huge amount of information.

Mr. Hartnett informed senators that advisors are currently in the middle of a registration period, and this is when they typically encounter technical issues. He said registration begins before advisors have entirely recovered from the previous registration, and they have found that there is some confusion about who does what – in particular, who adds students to courses or loads permissions. He said that, ideally, advisors would like for students to add themselves to classes, although advisors will add them if students encounter problems because even though advisors find the STAR system elementary, students sometimes do not. Departmental advisors typically load the permissions for classes in their departments. Mr. Hartnett noted that if a professor gives a student special permission to take their course and tells the student to inform the advisor of this, a departmental advisor cannot give permission for a student to register for a course in another department that they do not advise. He said this situation occurs a lot during restricted registration periods or the first two weeks of classes and can cause a lot of confusion about who students are supposed to talk to in order to get into a course. He noted that if a professor tells a student to “Talk to your advisor to get the permission,” that may not be correct because it must always be the advisor for the department offering the course, who may not be the student's advisor. He added that sometimes a department chair or office manager can also load permissions, which can occur in parallel and can also be confusing. He thinks faculty should try to make a point to know who in their departments can load permissions for students.

Mr. Hartnett noted that students can add themselves to classes during open registration, assuming there are no permissions involved and that they meet the prerequisites. This open period is followed by restricted registration during the second week of classes. During restricted registration, students can only add a class if the instructor has granted permission and that permission has been loaded by the appropriate advisor. Mr. Hartnett observed that, due to the recognition of Martin Luther King's birthday, the second week goes through the following Monday, although both students and faculty often assume it ends on a Friday. It is also commonly assumed that restricted registration ends at 5:00 p.m. when permissions can actually be loaded until 11:59 a.m. of that last day. Mr. Hartnett said that he usually works until midnight on this last day in case he gets a last-minute permission from an instructor so that the student can be added without going through an appeal; the Registrar's office may be closed, but the system will still allow the registration. He added that some courses go into restricted registration the first week of classes, which confuses students who think this is open range week. Examples of this include English, math, and some courses with enforced prerequisites to prevent re-enrollment of students.

Mr. Hartnett noted that students can be added late to a 16-week class by appealing to CAGAS. He said this is commonly seen by students who may have missed the registration deadline by just one day, by athletes arriving late, or by students who pay their bill late and must wait until that clears before registering. Mr. Hartnett related that if the faculty member believes the student can catch up in the class, the student can write an appeal to CAGAS, which is generally approved. Mr. Hartnett noted that second 8-week classes are few and are usually Gen Ed; registration for them continues until the first day of classes. He stated that these courses usually fill up before that point and often go into overload.

Mr. Hartnett related that advisors want faculty to be aware that students who are added on MVS or STARS will not appear on Western Online for 24-48 hours after they have been registered. For this reason, advisors ask faculty to use the rosters on WIUP rather than those on Western Online. Mr. Hartnett pointed out that many faculty are unaware that they can add students manually to Western Online so that students can begin interacting faster with that system. Similarly, if a student drops a class through STARS, the SAS system will update automatically but Western Online will not; faculty should type RSTR in WIUP to get the real-time roster. Mr. Hartnett has had instructors contact him to ask where a student is who is registered for their class but not interacting with it on Western Online only to find that the student dropped the course, but it did not show up on that platform. Mr. Hartnett said that in some extreme cases a student can go through an entire semester without having enrolled in a course at all and no one catching it; a professor had added her to Western Online manually and was not aware that she had never formally enrolled in the course. Mr. Hartnett related that advisors have been informing him of random strange occurrences on Western Online, such as a student showing as enrolled for a course they never registered for and had no interest in; a student showing up as enrolled in a class they dropped two years ago; and two different iterations of a Biology course showing up on Western Online and a student doing her work on the wrong iteration. He said Western Online seems to be showing increasingly aberrant behavior and faculty should be careful of entirely trusting it.

Mr. Hartnett stressed the importance of early warning grades to advisors; they aid in retention by helping advisors to provide good advice to students who are on probation or warning so that these students can make the right decisions about dropping courses. Mr. Hartnett noted that the difference between a C and a B- for a particular student might mean the difference between staying at WIU or being suspended or dismissed. He said advisors see a fair number of NA (not reported) grades or I (incomplete) grades on the early warning reports, but more accuracy of grade reporting would allow students to make good decisions. This is especially important for first year students or those taking Gen Ed courses who might be able to change course while there is still time to improve a grade. Mr. Hartnett said that while advisors do not like to see students drop courses, sometimes it is necessary for their survival in school – just getting to the next semester or maybe even forever. When he sees that a faculty member has not submitted early warning grades, Mr. Hartnett advises students to go ask them because the faculty member might be able to estimate.

Mr. Hartnett told senators that these points summarize what he learned from talking to different groups of advisors as they address getting students into classes and keeping them in classes, which is really advisors' main goal. He said there may be things he could discuss which would be more policy-related, but this diffuses the main points.

Senator Tang asked if it is possible for Western Online to have real-time numbers just like WIUP or if that is something inherent to Western Online. Mr. Hartnett replied that ever since he has worked here there is a lag, and Western Online had to update the information at least overnight, probably just due to the age of the system in general. He hopes that when WIU gets its new ERP system, this lag may no longer be an issue. He added that the lag has been discussed for years among advisors but no solution is possible with the university's current technological resources.

Senator Carr noted that senators will be asked to consider today a proposal to accept AA and AS degrees from other states, as the university is already forced to do through the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI). She asked what the challenges are for advisors in regard to 2+2 agreements with community colleges. She has heard that there can be issues when a student must complete a sequence of courses and an advisor puts that student into two of those courses in the same semester because of the pressure to graduate in two years. Mr. Hartnett responded that there are questions between what WIU advisors understand is needed at this university and what advisors at other universities understand is needed. He related that there is an annual transfer conference at which advisors are expected to explain updates or concerns, yet he sees the same things occurring repeatedly despite these conversations. He stated that many students arrive thinking they should only need the university level of General Education and come to WIU with their associate's degrees completed only to find out there are a few General Education courses they need to complete, which can pretty commonly cause frustration in students. He said while most students can be pretty good about this, it can come as a surprise to them, even though WIU advisors try to tell every community college representative they see at the conference to watch for this and alert their students.

Mr. Hartnett noted that he also commonly sees that students are arriving at WIU with too many credits. He said students arriving with 90 credits think they are almost done and will graduate quickly, but they do not realize that WIU requires 60 credits be taken here. Mr. Hartnett wonders why these students are not advised about this because it can be another frustration for them. He said many of these students are those who are taking classes part-time while working and thinking that the more they can take before transferring, the better.

Mr. Hartnett said transfer students can also be surprised by courses that must be taken in sequence after arriving at WIU; for instance, students majoring in psychology must take 16 hours of natural sciences, one lab, and two courses that are considered a sequence. He said while the degree plan shows the sequence, this is not evident in the undergraduate catalog, which shows only that students must complete a sequence but does not list the sequence courses. Mr. Hartnett gives that list of sequence courses to community college advisors, but he is not sure why it cannot be listed in WIU's undergraduate catalog. He believes that everything WIU offers should be in the undergraduate catalog, and it is a mystery to him why this is not possible. Registrar Sarah Lawson suggested perhaps the information is intentionally vague so that if courses change from year to year no one has to remember to go in and change them. She added that department chairs are given the opportunity to edit their portions of the undergraduate catalog every year and recommended that Mr. Hartnett talk to his department chair. Associate Provost Mark Mossman stated that Linda Prorise in the Provost's office is responsible for the undergraduate catalog, and he does not think she would object to any kind of change. He thinks if there is intentional vagueness it is to give students more flexibility in their degree programs and advisors more flexibility as well. Mr. Hartnett related that when he began as a psychology advisor, there were 22 course options in the degree plan, many of which had not been offered for 30 years. He worked with College of Arts and Sciences Associate Dean Jim Schmidt to reduce the list to 15.

Associate Provost Mossman stated that departments have the opportunity to essentially write their portion of the undergraduate catalog, and it is the responsibility of the Provost's office to edit those submissions and get them into printable or online format. Mr. Hartnett asked if he could propose changes to Associate Provost Mossman, who replied that they could be sent to him or to Ms. Prorise Mr. Hartnett thinks some changes would be helpful because some transfer students feel blindsided.

2. President Guiyou Huang

President Huang provided updates recently during town halls with the four academic colleges and on the Quad Cities campus, and tomorrow he will be meeting with civil service employees. He will also be holding a town hall meeting with Athletics for the first time. During the town halls he has discussed recruitment/enrollment/retention, institutional distinctiveness, the Governor's proposed budget, the Campaign for the W, and senior leadership team building. President Huang stated that recruitment/retention/enrollment remains the biggest priority. He said while it is too soon to tell what fall enrollment numbers will look like, information about enrollment will come out throughout the spring semester. He noted that several years ago the university set a goal of 9,000 headcount by Fall 2027, and retention is key to achieving that goal. President Huang stated that WIU has put significant resources into the work of the retention office, and he hopes to see some movement in that area. He has asked faculty, staff, advisors, and the administration to pay a great deal of attention to retention work, and now the university needs to move the needle. The President believes that student success depends on, in many ways, the university's retention and graduation rates.

President Huang noted that over the past decade, WIU became a lot more dependent on and driven by tuition. He related that at the weekly meeting of state university presidents and chancellors that he attended today, they talked about the Governor's proposed increase of seven percent, which will hopefully be approved by the state legislature in mid-May. The deputy governor told President Huang that in Illinois the Governor's budget is the anchor for negotiations with the legislature, and in the two years that President Huang has been at WIU the budget proposals by the Governor have been adopted. The state presidents and chancellors plan to draft a statement in support of the Governor's budget proposal, publish an editorial, and, on President Huang's suggestion, circulate those documents to legislators.

President Huang has been asked how WIU plans to spend the increase if the Governor's proposal is adopted. The President informed senators the increase would amount to approximately \$3.78 million; by comparison, the five percent net increase last year came to \$2.46 million. He recalled that last year the university ended with a modest deficit, and this year might be similar. He explained that the deficit is a result of more money being spent than is brought in by almost every unit at the university. President Huang stated that when bills came in near the end of the fiscal year last spring, it was very surprising to him that the reminders sent out from him and from Interim Vice President for Finance and Administration Shannon Sutton asking employees to conserve spending did not have the desired effect.

The President stated that the university has had a very problematic scholarship policy in place for the past several years. A new policy was crafted in September 2022, but its effect will not be felt until the next fiscal year. He stated that the previous policy had increased scholarship amounts for students who were not high academic performers and who did not retain well, and he hopes to see results with that policy replaced. President Huang stated that his job is not only to protect but also to enhance the financial integrity of the institution. He said that steps in this direction

also include uploading only 75 percent of unit budgets in an effort to conserve dollars. He said some employees have asked what they can do to work with the administration and the new Vice President for Finance and Administration to generate more revenue for the university. He looks forward to the arrival of the new VPFA, Paul Edwards, in a few months, adding that he has a lot of experience in budget planning, business practices, facilities management, human resources, and technology, and he should help enhance WIU's financial condition.

President Huang has served on the Illinois Public University Equity Funding Commission for the past one and a half years. He told senators the Commission is supposed to wrap up its very important work by the end of the summer. He stated that the Technical Group of the commission is very important as it is charged to come up with a model for the funding formula. President Huang stated that WIU was asked to serve on the Resources Group but was not asked to serve on the Technical Group. The President was not pleased with this and stressed to the Deputy Governor and IBHE that WIU, as well as other downstate universities, needs to be represented on this group. He said that they listened to him and granted WIU a seat on the Technical Group. WIU and the downstate universities will be represented by Jeanette Malafa, WIU's Director of Governmental Relations. President Huang said this is important because the mission of the Funding Commission is three-pronged – to fund public universities adequately, stably, and equitably – and it is hard to define what is adequate, stable, and equitable funding. He stated that in terms of equity, there will be some attention paid to universities with diverse populations of students. The President pointed out that African American and Latinx are WIU's largest groups of minority students, in addition to a small number of Asian students, while the University of Illinois, Northern, and Illinois State have larger proportions of other minority groups. President Huang is happy about this focus because the new strategic plan for Illinois, drafted by the IBHE, has as its sole emphasis the importance of equity. The President stated that currently about 60 percent of WIU's students are from the mainstream population; 39-40 percent are minority students. WIU's primarily African American and Latinx minority population of about 40 percent will qualify the university for any gain on the equity front while at the same time the Funding Commission agreed that the state should hold other universities harmless. He explained that means that what WIU is currently receiving it would still get, but the equity piece of the funding formula might provide WIU with a few more dollars. He said the Technical Group has cancelled two meetings, so no new movement has been made, but the formula has been established.

Chair Thompson asked if the university's discount rate has been modified yet. President Huang replied that it has not; only the scholarship policy has been modified, but its effects will not be felt until FY 2024.

Senator Albarracin asked why WIU is agreeing to the Governor's budget proposal and not asking that it be increased. She has seen lobbying occur in the non-profit arena to get a larger share of a proposed budget. She also wonders where the increase will be spent once WIU receives it and hopes that some of it goes to the university's hardworking faculty and not all on the structural deficit. President Huang replied that there have been discussions about increasing both negotiated and non-negotiated faculty and staff salaries when the university is able to do so, and he realizes that these groups have gone for many years without an increase. President Huang has not taken an increase in his salary since his arrival because he makes more than other WIU employees and does not think it would be right for him to do so when the university cannot afford increases for other employees. The President has asked for a salary study, which is going on right now; he expects to see results from the organization working on this toward the end of this semester. President Huang said the analysis will tell whether WIU is comparable to peer

institutions in terms of salaries and may provide a blueprint of what the university should do to move forward.

At the same time, the President has asked for a study of WIU's tuition structure. He admits that these types of studies cost money, but not doing them means WIU leadership would have to guess what a good structure is or whether things could be improved by following certain recommendations. President Huang said the administration will continue to have conversations between now and the end of the semester, and faculty/staff compensation is on the top of his list. He stated that as president and chancellor at previous positions, he has always made salary increases happen when the resources were available, but at WIU the resources have not been sufficient since President Huang arrived, although he keeps trying very hard to make this happen. He added that the structural deficit is not caused by one individual. Chair Thompson asked who is conducting the salary study. President Huang replied he does not have the name available right now, but it was his idea, he gave approval for the study, it is happening now, and the results should be available in a few months. He added that Noel-Levitz is conducting the tuition analysis.

Senator Macchi asked if it would be possible for the President to have a conversation with Amtrak because students are increasingly asking to get assignments early and to be excused from classes because they cannot get trains home and back to Macomb. She had several students tell her that must leave tomorrow for spring break because they could not get a ticket for Thursday, Friday, or Saturday. She even had students leave her class today. Senator Macchi noted that in the past Amtrak has added cars to accommodate time periods when extra student travel is expected, such as before or after breaks. President Huang said today is the first he has heard of this issue; it was mentioned in the COFAC town hall, and he is now hearing the same concern three hours later. When train service to Macomb was cut last semester, the President was very mad and contacted both the current and former Macomb Mayors to help him convince Amtrak to restore service, which they did. President Huang said he is willing to have a similar conversation with them about this issue. He will try to learn 1) if additional trains can be made available during times of increased service, and 2) if a bus can be made available to travel to Chicago on Fridays or Saturdays. He suggested that students also be nicely reminded that their primary responsibility is to be good academics, and to achieve that they need to attend classes, participate, and take quizzes. The President said he will talk to Amtrak, and he hopes the faculty will talk to their students about managing their time. Senator Macchi informed the President that many years ago Peoria Charter buses ran a regular Thursday/Friday route from WIU to ISU and Chicago.

President Huang told senators the Campaign for the W is currently ongoing as scheduled. Interim Vice President for Advancement, Alumni Relations, and Athletics Brad Bainter is coordinating the campaign with the President, which as of today has raised \$46 million. President Huang stated that an additional \$55 million needs to be raised over the next four and one-half years to reach the \$100 million goal. He has been traveling quite a bit in this effort and encourages faculty to also think about participating in this campaign for our institution.

President Huang said the senior leadership is a lot more stable and coherent than a year ago. He recalled that almost every cabinet position was interim when he arrived at WIU two years ago and now most are permanent, including the Provost and the Vice Presidents for Enrollment Management, for Quad Cities, and for Finance and Administration. He stated that a search has been launched for a permanent Vice President for Advancement, Alumni Relations, and

Athletics and interviews will be scheduled soon. A search is also underway for a Director for Institutional Research and Planning; Alicia Western is filling in on a part-time basis until that position is filled, and the President hopes to see results of that search in a month or so. A search committee is being formed for a Human Resources Director, a critical position; once a dean representative is named to the committee it will get underway. Provost Zoghi stated that two candidates visited campus during the last couple of weeks to interview for the position of Dean of the College of Education and Human Services. The Provost just received the recommendation from the search committee, and he anticipates that a decision will be made and an offer tendered in the next couple of weeks. The Provost added that one other search was recently finalized; the Director for Assessment, Accreditation, and Planning will begin at WIU on June 1.

Senator Carr observed that senators are being asked to approve a proposal to accept transfer students with AA/AS degrees from any state across the country, yet one of WIU's institutional marks of distinctiveness is the way the institution structures its General Education. She asked if the President or Provost would like to reflect on what it means that the students coming to WIU without associate degrees will have a multicultural General Education requirement while others will not. Senator Carr feels that recruitment and retention are becoming WIU's bottom line rather than the values the institution espouses for higher education. She asked how the President and Provost feel about WIU having a two-tier system for its students. President Huang responded he does not have an opinion about the multicultural component of Gen Ed, but he does have an opinion on the value of an associate degree. The President believes that if a student has an AA or AS degree and wants to attend a four-year university, WIU or any other university should accept that as meeting the requirements of Gen Ed. He observed that no two people have the exact same knowledge structure of General Education, even if a Gen Ed course is taught by the same professor at the same university. The President pointed out that many institutions already do this, and it is becoming a barrier to WIU's recruitment of domestic and international students. He does not know enough about what is special about the multicultural component of WIU's Gen Ed requirements.

Chair Thompson noted that suppressing the multicultural component of WIU's Gen Ed takes away some of the institutional distinctiveness of the university's General Education program. President Huang explained that his definition of institutional distinctiveness is not about one individual program. He noted that General Education by definition is not distinctive; it is general, or generic. He suggested, though, that Chair Thompson or Senator Carr might be able to fashion a model for WIU's General Education that is attractive, distinctive, and unique in the United States; the President would like to see that, but he does not want to micromanage it.

President Huang would like for people to look at WIU and immediately identify the university's iconic structures and programs – either ones that no one else has or that no one has as good as those at WIU. He noted that WIU has a beautiful and safe campus, which is an aspect of institutional distinctiveness. The President suggested that WIU's Religious Studies program can be considered distinctive because it is different and attractive to students. He added that distinctiveness can occur due to a program's curriculum, the delivery modality, or the faculty teaching the courses. The President would like to encourage distinctiveness at every level – individuals, faculty, deans, programs. He noted that the Illinois Institute for Rural Affairs is distinctive because WIU is the only university in the state that has this, it is closely tied to the Deputy Governor's office, and it increases WIU's visibility. Provost Zoghi remarked that his office has embarked on developing a strategic plan for Academic Affairs, and Chair Thompson



serves on that committee. He thinks some of the issues Senator Carr raised could be part of that conversation moving forward.

### III. Reports of Committees and Councils

#### A. Council on Admission, Graduation, and Academic Standards (CAGAS) and Council on General Education (CGE) (Julie Cox, Chair, CAGAS, and Tonya Little, Chair, CGE)

##### 1. Reports on Revised AA-AS Transfer Proposal

Dr. Cox told senators that this proposal is not new to Faculty Senate because it was considered before but came back to CAGAS with revisions. CAGAS approved the revised proposal on November 3 by a vote of 5 yes – 2 no – 1 abstention. Dr. Cox said that CAGAS insisted on the caveat that if one or more General Education courses were required for a major, they would not be considered to be waived by this policy; those courses would still be applicable and must be taken by students in those majors.

Ms. Little reported that CGE looked at the proposal from a recruitment viewpoint and saw a lot of positive in it. She explained that many of the current members of the council are from a community college background and felt that students would not consider WIU as a transfer school if they did not think their credits would transfer to fulfill WIU's General Education requirement. She related there were some questions raised about how the proposal would affect WIU's Gen Ed, but CGE noted that it matched what the university already offered to in-state students, so they approved the proposal unanimously with one abstention.

Ms. Little related that CGE was asked by the Senate Executive Committee to obtain more exact numbers about how the proposal might affect WIU's General Education. CGE checked with a lot of people but was unable to find the data that was requested. Ms. Little explained that WIU uses an older system which was just not conducive to being able to determine the information requested by ExCo. She said CGE does not have an answer as to how this proposal will affect Gen Ed because they do not know how many students are missing the 6-9 s.h. that CGE was told is typically the difference between students transferring in an AA or AS and what is required by WIU. She added that it was important to CGE that if a department has specific General Education requirements, those would continue with the new proposal just as they do for students transferring from within the state with their General Education requirements met.

Chair Thompson asked Admissions Director Doug Freed and Admissions Processing Coordinator Patty Mason to explain the chart they provided. Ms. Mason explained the chart shows transfer students from Fall 2018 to Fall 2022. It shows the number of prospective transfer students in the pool, the number of inquiries, the number who actually apply, the number who submit everything required and are accepted, the number who were still enrolled in Fall 2022, the number who graduated, and the number who withdrew. Chair Thompson asked what conclusion the Admissions representatives derive from the chart. Mr. Freed replied that, as has been stated by others, Admissions thinks that students with an AA or AS degree are not even looking at WIU. He said that if they do transfer, as Mr. Hartnett also said, students often have too many credits, sometimes 80 or 90 credit hours. He thinks it would be much simpler if Admissions was just able to tell transfer students to get their Associates of Arts or Sciences degree from a community college and then come to WIU. Mr. Freed thinks this would be cleaner and easier than the current situation, which is complicated to explain to students and sometimes causes them to run out of financial aid because they can only have it for a certain number of semesters.

He said this can cause transfer students to fail to graduate, which does not help the institution's graduation numbers, so Admissions thinks WIU would have more students graduate if this proposal is adopted.

Chair Thompson asked how Mr. Freed determined this information. Mr. Freed replied that it is derived not just from this chart, which was specifically requested, but also from other information Admissions has looked at. He said Admissions has been looking at a lot of different factors and having conversations with students, advisors, community college personnel, WIU's recruitment office, and others. He said these issues are raised by students when discussing why they did not graduate, so those conversations – besides the information in the chart – is behind Mr. Freed's statement. Chair Thompson asked if what Mr. Freed is saying is that this chart reflects the current status quo, but Admissions thinks the numbers would be higher if this proposal is passed; Mr. Freed concurred. Mr. Freed believes the university would see more graduate students if transfers were retained as a result of this proposal, and they would graduate quicker. He pointed out that nothing in the proposal prevents any school or college from having their own General Education requirements.

Mr. Freed stated that, as an observation from working in other places, he would recommend that WIU stop referring to school or college General Education and just refer to school or college requirements. He said there would then be three levels: university General Education, school or college requirements, and program requirements, which would be much simpler for Admissions to explain to students and for students to understand.

Senator Albarracin asked why there is such a big jump on the chart for prospects in Fall 2021 and why that did not materialize into more transfer applications. Mr. Freed responded that Admissions did a large name purchase of transfer students that year from an outside company to see if it would help with enrollment, but Admissions did not see a big jump in applications or acceptances so did not do it again the following year.

Parliamentarian Whetten and Chair Thompson explained that if the reports are not objected to, they and the proposal they support will be adopted, but if a senator wants to bring the question to a vote they can object and then vote to bring the item back to the floor for further discussion.

## **NO OBJECTIONS**

IV. Old Business – None

V. New Business

A. For the Good of the Body

Chair Thompson told senators he believes the university needs some kind of bullying or mobbing policy. He explained that mobbing in academia is when faculty or staff bully other faculty or staff, and this is unfortunately a live issue at WIU. Chair Thompson recalled that Faculty Senate discussed bullying four or five years ago but did not do anything about it then, and it continues. He thinks there needs to be an institutional policy to stop the bullying when it occurs. Chair Thompson offered for any of the zoom attendees who feel they have been bullied by another faculty or staff member or by a supervisor and who might feel comfortable discussing it with him or another Executive Committee member, to do so because it would be very helpful for future discussions.

Senator Albarracin pointed out that if the person who feels bullied is in a protected class, that would be covered by existing policy. Chair Thompson responded that actually bullying can fall through the cracks

of these policies. He added that there is nothing illegal about bullying, and WIU has rather a high tolerance for it; people can make others miserable, and there's nothing that really covers that. He added that if it is done explicitly it might fall under one of the protected categories, but it is often difficult to make that case.

Senator Tang asked how the term "bully" is defined. Chair Thompson replied he defines it as purposely singling someone out and making their life so bad that they are crying and cannot come to work. He stated that this discussion would continue in the next Executive Committee meeting, and if anyone wants to share their experiences, they will be kept confidential. He believes it is time for WIU to take a position on bullying or mobbing, which is not an unusual occurrence at universities and in the corporate world.

Senator Albarracin noted that the travel assistance offered by the Provost's office does not cover all of the expenses for a faculty member to attend a conference in Chicago and covers even less for those faculty who need to attend conferences abroad. She stated that it is important for her to attend a conference in Canada for the Latin American Science Association, but the ticket alone is now \$1,600, so the \$600 stipend would not go far toward hotels and other expenses. Senator Albarracin cannot imagine the situation facing junior faculty members who need to attend international conferences. She wonders if thought can be given to providing a stipend when faculty are hired for those who need to travel to other countries to maintain their professional reputations, similar to the stipend that might be given to a new faculty member to set up a lab.

Provost Zoghi recognizes that everything has become outrageously expensive post-Covid, especially flights. He stated that, because of this, the Provost's Travel Award allocation was increased from \$500 to \$600 to try to stretch it a little farther. He agrees that ways have to be found to support faculty travel, domestically and internationally. He noted that his office has teamed with departments to cost share for some trips. He recognizes this is not the level that Senator Albarracin is referring to and agrees that this needs to be addressed in the future. Chair Thompson observed that WIU will have \$3,700,000 coming from the Governor and could take \$100,000 from that. Provost Zoghi asked faculty to think of the opportunities when applying for grants to include presenting at conferences as an integral part of the request. Senator Albarracin stated that she does not have a grant that provides that kind of support. She also thinks there will be a lot of faculty members in her situation. She thinks the Provost's Travel Award in the past used to only be given for bigger trips and was a larger amount. Chair Thompson stated that when he came to WIU each college was allotted \$30,000 and the dean decided how to parcel it out; former Provost Rallo took that away, and then the amount shrank. Provost Zoghi hopes that someday the university will be able to afford to give \$1,500 for professional development to be used however faculty wish. He thinks professional development is an area that WIU needs to revisit because the Center for Innovation and Research used to be very active, and some of the things it formerly did have faded away. He said the Center is doing well now, and conversations are occurring about these issues.

**Motion:** To adjourn (Banash)

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

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Recording Secretary