

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Regular Meeting, 16 September 2025, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom and in the Union Capitol Rooms

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT IN PERSON: D. Allwardt, S. Chakravorti, P. Cole, R. Di Carmine, H. Elbe, A. Frederick, 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: E. Asare, E. Hamner

SENATORS ABSENT: M. Hoge, R. Sharma

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

GUESTS: Lori Baker-Sperry, Dan Barclay, Brian Bellott, Tom Blackford, Amy Carr, Marsha Dace, Patty Eathington, Anita Hardemann, Lorri Kanauss, Sarah Lawson, Jessica Lin, Sherry Lindquist, Lorette Oden, Holly Nikels, Renee Polubinsky, Eric Sheffield, Sebastian Szyjka, Keela Trennepohl, Ripley Zander

Chair Robinett asked those attending via Zoom to turn their cameras on and to use the react feature on the Zoom toolbar if they wished to comment or ask a question rather than sending it via the chat feature.

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. May 13, 2025

MINUTES APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Provost's Report

Interim Provost Mossman related that this past week he attended the Veterans' Meet and Greet held at the Veterans Resource Center. He noted that not every institution has a veterans' resource center, so WIU is very lucky that we do. The event was also attended by state Senator Mike Halpin and state Representative Dan Swanson.

Interim Provost Mossman noted that the home football game this past weekend was preceded by a donor dinner on Friday, September 12. Saturday, September 13 was Family Day and featured a barbeque contest during tailgating before the game, which WIU won.

Interim Provost Mossman stated that the coming week will include Constitution Day, which will see Representative Swanson visiting the campus again for a question and answer session in the Brattain Lounge, which will feature poster presentations from WIU students. He noted that Thursday, September 18 will be the Mary Olive Woods Lecture; Dean Zimmerman from Rutgers University will present at 7:00 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom. Interim Provost Mossman said that Dr. Zimmerman's presentation is titled "Why Would Anyone Be a Dualist: Souls, Bodies, and the Afterlife," and will explore how philosophical reflection on the nature of consciousness and the vagueness of ordinary material objects may support the Christian view of an afterlife and the dualism of persons. Interim Provost Mossman noted that in October there will be something going on almost every night, and he encourages everyone to get out and attend events.

Interim Provost Mossman provided an update on the academic affairs Rebuild effort. He related the Rebuild committees continue meeting and working on their specific charges, and Interim Provost

Mossman continues to meet individually with Chair Robinett to try to frame the next steps toward moving forward. Interim Provost Mossman saw a draft of a communications plan from the Rebuild Communication Committee this morning which he thought was quite impressive, so he thinks that excellent work is being done in those groups. He stated that as the university moves into the fall semester, the committees' work will become increasingly available to the entire WIU community.

Senator Gravitt asked if there are more specifics on enrollment numbers because she is hearing differing opinions on whether WIU is in a good or a bad position. She has heard enrollment numbers, but last year there was a lot of emphasis on full-time equivalent numbers, so she is not certain where the university stands this year. Interim Provost Mossman agreed it is very complicated. He stated that the university headcount is about 5,370, which is ahead of what was anticipated and budgeted for, so that is positive. He noted, however, that only about 600 of that number are new freshmen, which is not a good number and something the university needs to work on. He added that the university "held its own" on number of transfer students, which is positive. Interim Provost Mossman explained that graduate student enrollment tends to cost institutions more, so the decline in graduate student enrollment may not necessarily mean a decline in revenue. He added that tenth-day census is just completed, so all of this is being calculated now.

Senator Tasdan related that some comments on a Tri-State Public Radio news article indicated that some people who live in Chicago neighborhoods did not receive any information about WIU while others had not heard of WIU at all, so it seems that the university's marketing is not reaching some Chicago communities. Interim Provost Mossman responded that WIU has increased its enrollment from that region every year for the past several years. He noted that a lot of anecdotal comments get blown out of proportion but admitted this still needs to be addressed. He pointed out that the university has hired a new Associate Vice President for Student Success who will be working on enrollment management; Interim Provost Mossman thinks this would be an excellent question to ask that person when he comes to Faculty Senate. Interim Provost Mossman noted that the problem with recruiting in WIU's backyards is that the number of people there is declining, and the demographic cliff also has an effect. He pointed out that Western has historically gotten a lot of its students along the Amtrak line, from Princeton to Quincy, and those rural communities are experiencing increasingly lower populations, which means that WIU needs to expand its efforts beyond its immediate area.

Senator Chakravorti read an article a couple of days ago about enrollment at the University of Illinois; they have reached 68,000, which is a record for them. He noted the article mentions something that may not bode well for WIU: a majority of their new students are from Illinois, and they have seen significant increases in first-generation students. Interim Provost Mossman acknowledged they are capturing more of these students because the University of Illinois is seen as a prestige institution, even though WIU is the number one institution in the state when it comes to first-generation students, according to the Carnegie Institute. He noted that if a first-generation, Pell-funded student graduates from WIU, they will make more money eight years after graduation than a graduate from the University of Illinois. He thinks WIU needs to lean into this in terms of messaging.

Senator Gillotti remarked that comparing WIU to the University of Illinois is like comparing apples to oranges. She stated that students are not coming to WIU because they want a massive school experience but because they want to connect to faculty; they enjoy being able to connect with faculty on a more personal level and explore a career that is tailored to them. She noted that students go to the University of Illinois because they want that big school feel, but students come to WIU because they want the experience that Western can offer.

Senator Tasdan visited the University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign campus recently with friends of his sons and saw evidence that they are physically exceeding their limits. He noted that the Uof I is still accepting students even though it does not have dormitory capacity, enough facilities, or even enough food to feed everyone lunch. He related that during their visit there was not a single seat available in their campus union to sit and eat something. Senator Tasdan observed that the Uof I can accept as many students as they want, but he wonders if the Illinois Board of Higher Education or some other entity should be involved in setting some sort of limitations as to how many students state institutions can accept. He heard last year on the news that the University of Illinois was offering

monetary incentives to students to move out of the residence halls to private housing in order to free up room for incoming freshmen.

Chair Robinett stated that Faculty Senate can have these sorts of conversations, but this might be better to bring up during the For the Good of the Body portion of the agenda. He hopes that Dr. Carr will speak more about what she is hearing from the IBHE about a number of things during her report.

Interim Provost Mossman remarked that everyone should support the equitable funding formula which offers one remedy to this issue.

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

Ms. Zanger reported that SGA had its first meeting of the semester last Wednesday, September 10 and will have its next meeting tomorrow. She noted that several senatorial positions remain unfilled and asked senators to spread the word to their colleagues and speak to their students to help SGA get those positions filled. Ms. Zanger told senators SGA's mission this year is to become better known around campus because many students do not know about SGA as a resource. She asked senators who have students coming to them with problems that SGA might be able to help with to send them to SGA in order to help the organization grow across WIU and hopefully bring students together. Chair Robinett thanked Ms. Zanger for attending and said that Faculty Senate looks forward to working with her.

C. Faculty Senate Chair's Report

Chair Robinett explained the purpose of the Chair's Report is to share information about meetings he has attended since the last Senate meeting. He said the intent is to make more people aware of the conversations that are happening around the university in order to assist in open communication and transparency so that everyone knows what is happening in different spaces.

Chair Robinett welcomed new Senators Samit Chakravorti and Mark Hoge, who could not be present for today's meeting. He noted that there are still vacant seats for a Senator At-Large from the Macomb Campus and one from the Quad Cities Campus.

Chair Robinett related that several faculty members have asked him about the Provost Candidate Evaluation survey distributed by UPI and have wondered if Faculty Senate was involved in that. Chair Robinett does not know if any individual senators participated but clarified that the survey was not an action of this body. He explained that UPI and Faculty Senate are collaborative representative bodies that each express views and opinions to the administration in fulfillment of the authorities delegated to them by the Board of Trustees. He stated that according to these procedures, faculty's role is to participate in appropriate and duly constituted committees of faculty government and in the decision-making processes of the university, except as limited by the scope of collective bargaining negotiations, which are the domain of UPI and other collective bargaining units on campus. Chair Robinett said he meets regularly with UPI President Merrill Cole to talk about issues, and the two of them were very intentional in working with Interim Provost Mossman to make sure that the Rebuild committees brought together people from different aspects and governing bodies on campus. He stressed that Faculty Senate, UPI, the other representative bodies, and the administration play important roles at the university; whenever Chair Robinett is questioned about whose role it is to do something, he refers to the Board procedures, the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws, and the UPI contract. He encouraged senators to do the same so that there is a good understanding of what is within each group's area. Chair Robinett noted that, as the representative body for the faculty, Faculty Senate can talk about whatever senators wish to talk about; the Senate is able to provide guidance and make suggestions while understanding that it is an advisory body to other existing groups. He added that UPI has invited their members to their executive committee meeting tomorrow, September 17, at 4:00 p.m.

Chair Robinett was asked by the Offices of Financial Aid, Student Success, and others to express their appreciation to the faculty who took the time to participate in the Title IV financial aid verifications and to the chairs, directors, and deans who encouraged their faculty to do so. He noted that senators will see in the Faculty Senate shared Google Drive breakdowns by college and what their growth has

been toward this effort. He noted that overall 82.9 percent of classes were reported as compared with 42.5 percent last fall, a record percentage for WIU. Chair Robinett reported that some systemic issues were discovered which efforts will be made to correct by the spring verification period, so that percentage may have even been higher at some points throughout the process.

Chair Robinett appreciates the faculty who took the time to complete the recent survey exploring communication preferences, noting that there were wonderful comments given about ways to be more effective in communication at WIU. He stated that of the 315 respondents who indicated their employee classification, 116 were instructional faculty, 92 were tenured/tenure track, and ten were adjunct. He added the Rebuild Communication Committee is working to present its initial report by October 1, then do some focus groups to delve even deeper into what the university community wants communicated and how.

Chair Robinett has had the opportunity to sit in at several meetings dealing with facilities. He related that Buildings A and B on the Quad Cities campus will be leased to the Moline-Coal Valley Schools for a 15-month period. He related that the Rebuild committee focusing on the academic use of space saw a presentation from Chad Sperry that he will present to Faculty Senate on October 14. Chair Robinette thinks this will enable senators to begin to develop an understanding not only of how space is being used but also of how often it is actually being used on the Macomb campus.

Chair Robinett attended a meeting yesterday with Mary Pat Wohlford, Interim Director of Sponsored Projects. He said she has a wealth of experience helping institutions understand how they are using artificial intelligence and ways that they could potentially facilitate or restrict its use. He said some surveys are being developed to understand the sentiment regarding AI on campus and how it is being used. Chair Robinett added that Dr. Wohlford has already sent him four different grants that she thinks the university could apply for to drive this effort.

Chair Robinett expressed thanks to Jessica Lin, Interim Associate Dean for the College of Business and Technology, who has been working with him to develop a project management tool to assist in communication and transparency about the Rebuild and Senate actions. He explained the system would allow chairs of councils and committees to complete a Google App that will populate into a Google Sheet to show what they are working on, their deadlines, the type of data they are using, and the type of data they need for their tasks. He said this would enable people to look at this spreadsheet in real time to see what groups are working on across the campus and the types of data that are influencing their decisions.

Chair Robinett announced that the Board of Trustees meets on September 26 in the Union Capitol Rooms, and their Board Book should post early next week. He will send a link to senators as soon as it is available. He encouraged senators to look at the Board Book because it provides a lens into what the Board desires to see, what is happening at the university, and how a variety of things are being prioritized.

Chair Robinett stated that while he does not know what kind of decision President Mindrup will make regarding the Provost position, he would like for Faculty Senate to be prepared in case search committees are formed for positions in the Provost's Office. He said Faculty Senate will be asked to provide representatives to the Associate Vice President searches, and if Dr. Mossman is appointed as Provost, Chair Robinett thinks he would want to move quickly to get these positions filled. He stated that in order for Faculty Senate not to be behind in having representation on what will be very important search committees, he would like for senators to raise their hands if they willing to serve on one of them. Senator Mason asked how many volunteers are needed. Chair Robinett responded that however many senators wish to volunteer may do so, then schedules will be balanced to determine who will potentially serve. Senators Mason, Gravitt, Melkumian, Wipperling, and Walker volunteered.

E. Other Announcements

1. Marsha Dace, Clinical Lead Counselor, University Counseling Center

Ms. Dace informed senators the Counseling Center is now located on the second floor of Beu Health Center. The office is comprised of three full-time counselors; the other counselor

spends a day and a half in the Alcohol and Other Drug Resource Center in addition to her time at the University Counseling Center. Ms. Dace reported the office was also lucky enough this year to get an intern from WIU's Clinical Mental Health Psychology program, Deoquase Williams. She said Mr. Williams was an assistant complex director prior to coming to the Counseling Center and is doing an outstanding job; the students really love him, and he is getting a caseload up. She added that Colette Willer is the Center's new Health Information Technician; she is the first line of defense, receives all the calls, and assists in many ways.

Ms. Dace stated that the Counseling Center's services are free and confidential; they offer group and individual counseling. She supervises the two graduate assistants in the office, who are both second-year Clinical Mental Health Psychology students and can provide one-on-one skills sessions and one-on-one relaxation skills training. She said there is a six-session limit per semester per student; what the relaxation skills and group therapy can help with is to layer the services the Center is able to provide because they are not able to see students weekly given the Counseling Center's limited staff and number of students requesting their services.

Ms. Dace noted the Counseling Center has contracted with WellTrak Protocol, which offers 24/7 Help Now; if a student calls the Counseling Center and chooses 3, they can speak directly with a licensed clinical counselor. She said this service is typically used after the regular hours of the WIU Counseling Center (after 4:30 and on weekends) so that students always have someone they can speak with. Ms. Dace stated that in addition to 24/7 Help Now, WellTrak offers an app called Boost, which the WIU Counseling Center is encouraging all of its students to download. She related that with the free Boost app, students can login with their WIU ecom username and take various assessments online, engage in different relaxation and coping skills, take surveys, and lots of other things that it could be very beneficial for WIU students to use.

Ms. Dace announced that Fresh Check Day is coming up on Thursday, September 18 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the side lawn of the Multicultural Center. She explained this is a suicide prevention and mental health awareness event that includes music with a positive, uplifting playlist and a party-like atmosphere. She said there will be tents for food and eight tables with different interactive activities to help students learn more about mental health and suicide prevention. She asked senators to pass this information along to their students.

Ms. Dace told senators her office also organizes Wellness Wednesdays. She related that one example is the therapy dogs the Counseling Center brings to Malpass Library once a month. She added the Health and Wellness Team is coordinating to try to do an additional Wellness Wednesday activity every month. Ms. Dace related that Kinder Mondays are also coordinated by the Counseling Center. She said every Monday students can participate in some kind of kindness event, such as offices or student organizations handing out stickers or popsicles on hot days.

Senator Gravitt remarked that her neighbor raises golden retrievers and has puppies that need socialized. She wondered if it would be possible to bring them on the days that dogs are brought to the library. Ms. Dace responded that the dogs brought to the library by the Counseling Center are trained therapy dogs, so she suspects it might be a liability insurance issue to bring other dogs there.

Senator Chakravorti asked if Ms. Dace has seen an increase in students using the services of the Counseling Center; Ms. Dace responded that she has. She said that in her 20 years at the Counseling Center, although WIU's enrollment has dropped, students have increasingly sought out their services. She noted that the Counseling Center is down staff and currently has an opening for a director; Ms. Dace serves as the clinical lead. She added the Counseling Center is hoping that with their location change students will continue to utilize their services because Beu is not as visible as the first floor of Memorial Hall, which students would walk through to get to class. She said the Counseling Center has made the second floor of Beu very warm and inviting for students, and appointments are starting to fill up quickly.

Senator Chakravorti asked if Ms. Dace thinks the app is becoming popular and lots of students are using it. Ms. Dace responded the Counseling Center started using the app last year, and students have been using it. She said the Center was able to contract with WellTrak as a result of their Mental Health Early Action grant money, and they have been pushing that out this semester for students to use. She stated that while every student that comes in as a client is encouraged to utilize WellTrak's services, a student does not have to be a client of the Counseling Center to use it; it is available to any WIU student.

Senator Cole asked approximately how many students are using the University Counseling Center. Ms. Dace thinks that there are currently about 75 students utilizing the Center, but it is early in the semester. She added that she does not have exact numbers as that was something the former director worked on, but she will get them and provide them to Jeremy. [Note: Following the meeting, Ms. Dace emailed Chair Robinett that she has not been able to find exact numbers of new appointments yet; with the previous director and office manager both leaving this summer, some reports weren't completed in the timeline they have in the past. Ms. Dace told Chair Robinett that she has made getting this completed a priority and will share the total number of in-person and telehealth appointments as soon as she has them. She asked Chair Robinett to express her apologies that she does not have the information right now.]

Senator Frederick asked if there is any information on Fresh Check that can be posted or shared with students, such as a flyer. Ms. Dace offered to email the flyer to any senator who wants it. She said they have been posted in all academic buildings, and several were posted in the Union along with small quarter-sheet flyers on the Union dining tables. She added that Fresh Check has also been advertised on the Counseling Center's Instagram and Facebook pages to try to get the word out.

Ms. Dace said Fresh Check has also been advertised through Leatherneck Link, a new program where students can earn purple and gold points for attending different activities. She noted that the individuals who manage Leatherneck Link have tried to make activities in academic buildings worth relatively higher points than some other activities.

Chair Robinett thanked Ms. Dace for visiting with Faculty Senate. She provided him with some information that senators could pick up, including information on Fresh Check.

2. Amy Carr, WIU Representative to the IBHE Faculty Advisory Council

Dr. Carr explained that the Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) for the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) consists of representatives from each of the 12 public universities in Illinois and a rotating group of representatives from the 12 community colleges and 12 private institutions. She noted that Senator McKenzie serves as an alternate member to the IBHE FAC and will make at least one report to Faculty Senate this year. Dr. Carr is not sure there is anything similar to the IBHE FAC in the U.S., where faculty meet once a month for a full day, ten months out of the year (eight months in person and two months on Zoom), to talk about higher education issues.

Dr. Carr related there might be some tweaking of the IBHE FAC working groups this year, but right now they include ones on early college, which Dr. Carr chairs; on higher education, which has been working on questions of artificial intelligence as well as on the ADA compliance that all faculty will have to apply to their classes next year; on equity; on mental health for both students as well as for faculty; on higher education funding; and on prior learning assessment.

Dr. Carr noted that the IBHE FAC has its own website (<http://facibhe.org/index.php>), which has a lot of information. She said the FAC pays for their website; it is not part of the IBHE's website, which is also worth checking out. She noted that the IBHE has a new public universities faculty representative, Nora Heist, who teaches communication at Eastern Illinois University; the IBHE FAC will meet with her at their meeting this Friday, September 19, at

the University of Illinois-Urbana/Champaign. Dr. Carr noted that the IBHE does not control things like institutional enrollments; it is not a coordinating body, although they do approve programs.

Dr. Carr reported that the May meeting of the IBHE FAC is usually hosted by the Illinois Association of School Boards (IASB). She was among two groups who went to the meeting early in order to meet with legislators, which Dr. Carr said resulted in some very rich conversations. She related that the groups gave legislators a one-page handout of what the IBHE FAC is and what its working groups do. She said the representatives told legislators they do not represent the IBHE or universities, but legislators can reach out to them if they want some faculty perspectives on issues. The legislative handout was provided to senators in their materials for this meeting. Dr. Carr noted that not all IBHE FAC members agree on issues all of the time because they represent so many different kinds of institutions, but they are able to come to a kind of consensus on a lot of issues. She added that the faculty representatives also enjoy talking about their different views.

Dr. Carr stated there is a lot of bipartisan work on the daily, ordinary work of higher education within the state legislature. She related the two FAC groups met with Dan Swanson, who is representative for WIU's region, and talked about the FAC Prior Learning Working Group's idea of establishing a statewide task force on prior learning assessment, similar to what is being done in some other states. She said this would focus on making it easier for certain groups, such as veterans or people returning from time spent in the workforce, to transfer credits to universities. Dr. Carr said that Representative Swanson has already met with Katie Stewart, who serves on the state Higher Education Working Group with Representative Swanson, and they were going to add this to their agenda, so there might be movement on that. Dr. Carr related that IBHE Board Chair Pranav Kothari has said this kind of initiative needs to come from the legislators.

Dr. Carr related that her group mostly met with Republican legislators who told the group they had not really heard any opposition to community colleges offering baccalaureate degrees. She noted that both university presidents and the IBHE FAC oppose this.

Dr. Carr related that at the IBHE FAC meeting the day after meeting with legislators, representatives had a conversation with Dr. Kothari, who told them the IBHE is still working on equity plans and that it is not clear whether Diversifying Faculty Initiative (DFI) funding will be available to fund fellowships this year. Dr. Carr added that an IBHE FAC rep asked twice about this, in May and June, but did not receive an answer.

Dr. Carr noted that the IBHE website (<https://www.ibhe.org/>) includes a workforce dashboard with employment trends. She thinks it would be worth exploring if faculty are interested in higher ed across the state because it has lots of reports and a lot of data.

Dr. Carr related that the IBHE FAC met in June at the University of Illinois-Springfield campus for half the day and spent the other half at the IBHE Board meeting, where the IBHE FAC Chair presented an annual report for the past year. Dr. Carr reported that at their own FAC meeting, Jill Gepke, IBHE Assistant Director for Academic Affairs, spoke on the one-click college admissions program that is in the works. She said Dr. Gepke informed the group that MAP funding, which goes up a little bit every year and funds students directly for their college expenses, is currently at \$721.6 million, but there is a goal to get it funded at \$1 billion. Dr. Carr related that Aim High was also discussed; the IBHE data dashboard has a lot of information about different institutions' progress in meeting state goals, including WIU. She noted that the IBHE primarily oversees the public universities, but they will approve programs at all other institutions of higher education. She added there is a separate process for community colleges.

Dr. Carr related that at the June meeting the FAC also heard a presentation by Jennifer Barnett, Associate Director of Workforce Analytics, who is based in the Quad Cities; she works for the

IBHE, and was part of the Thrive Quad Cities workforce and analysis report, completed in 2024. Dr. Carr said while this was the first such report, the intention is to complete them for each of the ten economic regions of the state. She reported that Ms. Barnett mostly spoke about workforce data and connecting it to higher education, such as the ten in-demand occupations right now; a link to this can be found on the IBHE website within Data and Report/Workforce Insights (<https://www.ibhe.org/WorkforceTop10.html>). She said Ms. Barnett also talked about O*Net (<https://www.onetonline.org/>), which is a resource for students to explore what various jobs require. Dr. Carr said one of the things Ms. Barnett said that really stuck with her was that many entry-level positions require only a bachelor's degree and not a master's degree, which might be a mismatch for some students, reinforcing the importance of digging down into which exact credentials are being referred to. She said Ms. Barnett also mentioned that most engineering jobs require five years of experience, which can be hard to get for recent graduates; this emphasizes the importance of apprenticeships, externships, and internships. Dr. Carr related that what also stood out to her from this presentation is that high school graduation rates are lower in the Quad Cities area than almost any other area in the state, and that criminal justice was the number one degree for unemployment rates. Dr. Carr wonders, however, if the criminal justice statistics may have changed over the summer due to the ICE hires.

Dr. Carr chairs the Public University Caucus and asked senators if there are any issues or questions they would like for her to raise with the Caucus this year. Chair Robinett replied he would appreciate continued discussion about adult learners and what opportunities there are to facilitate better educational experiences for them, particularly if they already have career experience. He wonders if there is a way to award credit or have the career experience meet some degree requirements. Dr. Carr responded that this is exactly what the FAC's Prior Learning Working Group is focused on, but she will bring it up at the Caucus as well.

Chair Robinett thanked Dr. Carr for the incredible amount of work she does, as well as recognizing Senator McKenzie, who will be stepping into some of these day-long, very intense meetings. He appreciates them representing WIU and bringing back information to the Senate.

3. Elections

a. Ad Hoc Faculty Senate Governance Committee (one senator from each college, plus an Executive Committee member)

Chair Robinett said this is the group senators voted to create in order to look at the Senate Constitution and Bylaws and sort of put all of this back together. He anticipates the work will be done throughout the fall semester. He and Ms. Hamm spent a considerable amount of time on this over the summer, going through the documents and synthesizing them into a sort of starting point to help show the committee which direction they might possibly go. Chair Robinett also visited with some past Faculty Senate chairs and included their comments as well.

Senator McArthur expressed a willingness to represent the College of Fine Arts and Communication but did not know if he has the necessary experience or background for this type of review. Chair Robinett explained that as the university moves into the two-college model, a lot of the things build into the Senate's Constitution and Bylaws require a four-college model, so the committee will need to refine and update some of those things. He added that the Senate Chair and Provost will sit on the committee as ex-officio members.

Volunteers for the committee are Senator Wipperling, representing the Executive Committee; Senator McArthur, representing the College of Fine Arts and Communication; Senator Mason, representing the College of Education and Human Services; Senator Gravitt, representing the College of Business and Technology; and Senator Asare, representing the College of Arts and Sciences.

Chair Robinett thanked the volunteers and promised to email them the document soon. He invited senators to make comments and provide feedback as this process moves forward. He reminded senators that Senate councils and committees have been charged to look at their memberships, operating papers, and bylaws this year to bring back recommendations so that everything can be brought into a cohesive unit on the faculty governance side.

III. Reports of Committees and Councils

A. Senate Nominating Committee (SNC) (Denise Gravitt, Chair)

1. Faculty Nominations

SENATE COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

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

Samit Chakravorti, Acct/Bus	replacing	Lu Lu	Fall 25 only	B&T
Monica Rouse, Education	replacing	Karen Zellmann	2027	E&HS

Council on Campus Planning and Usage (CCPU)

Sebastian Szyjka, Education	replacing	Troy Stinson	2027	E&HS
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Council on Curricular Programs and Instruction (CCPI)

Anna Valeva, Acct/Bus Adm	replacing	Manda Tiwari	2027	B&T
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UNIVERSITY COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES:

Provost Awards Committee

Nilanjan Sen, Computer Sci	replacing	Yu-Ping Hsu	2027	B&T
Leigh Ann Fisler, Psychology	replacing	Munia Cabal-Jimenez	2026	A&S

University Committee Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (UCOSOGIE)

Maureen Bezold, Hlth/Wellness	new		2027	E&HS
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AD HOC COMMITTEES:

Faculty Senate Governance Committee

Bill Knox, English	new		AT-LARGE
Dave Hunter, Engineering/Technology	new		AT-LARGE

Chair Robinett drew attention to the two nominations for at-large representatives to the ad hoc Faculty Governance Committee. There were no further nominations, and the slate of candidates was appointed.

IV. Old Business

A. Proposal to Amend Faculty Senate Bylaws

1. Second Reading and Vote

The amendment would add the following section after Membership in Article VII of the Bylaws:

Suspension of Service Rules:

1. The provisions of these Bylaws governing (a) consecutive terms of service, (b) concurrent service on multiple councils, and (c) restrictions on Senators serving on councils, may be

suspended by a two-thirds vote of the total membership of the Faculty Senate for a period not to exceed one academic year. Such suspension shall apply only to the specific circumstances identified in the motion and shall not constitute a precedent for future cases.

Chair Robinett explained that currently the Senate Bylaws prohibit a variety of actions related to service on Senate councils: faculty cannot currently serve more than one consecutive three-year term and would have to take a year off before serving again on that council; faculty can only serve on one Senate council, so it restricts the number of councils that faculty may wish to serve on; and senators are prohibited from serving on Senate councils. He noted that the amendment to add a provision for suspension of service rules would create a way, which is not currently in the Constitution and Bylaws, to suspend these rules by way of a specific motion which would outline which rules should be suspended. He noted that this would only be in effect for one academic term at most but would allow faculty to serve a full term in different positions based on these exceptions. He added that approval of the Bylaws amendment requires a higher threshold than many Senate votes; it requires two-thirds of the total membership for approval.

Chair Robinett pointed out that the motion for approval was already made by him at the Executive Committee meeting. Senator Gravitt then seconded the motion.

Senator Wipperling asked if, after this motion is approved by a two-thirds vote of the total membership, whether a two-thirds vote is required for each motion brought forward requesting an exception. Chair Robinett replied that what is being considered now is just the two-thirds needed for this vote to approve the bylaws change. He expressed thanks to the senators present for the wonderful attendance at today's Senate meeting, which means that the two-thirds of senators required for this vote have been met.

Senator Frederick remarked that, as a new senator, she cannot think of anything that would be negative about this amendment, but she wondered if she was missing anything or if any other senators could think of any reason why this would not be a good change.

Senator Chakravorti asked if the motion includes the three restrictions that Chair Robinett enumerated. Chair Robinett replied that the motion is to include the suspension of service rules in the Senate Bylaws. He clarified that nothing is being motioned today that would allow any faculty member to actually be put into these roles; the Bylaws currently do not allow for any way to move beyond these rules. He reiterated the motion being considered now would add the suspension of service rules to the Bylaws, which would provide a vehicle to potentially suspend them.

In response to Senator Frederick, Chair Robinett responded there are reasons that faculty originally made the decision to include these restrictions in the Bylaws. He said that one reason these restrictions were initially included was a fear that people would attempt to cement power; if a person could serve multiple terms on a council they might, over time, be able to potentially shape it how they wished it to be shaped. He noted there was also a concern regarding promotion and tenure because if a faculty member could get on a Senate council and serve for a long time, it could thereby deprive newer faculty members of service opportunities. He also noted that Faculty Senate, as an advisory committee, votes on many things brought forward by its councils, so having senators serve on those councils or on multiple Senate councils would allow them to vote on many things.

Chair Robinett related that some of the discussion at ExCo focused on the fact that these rules and regulations were established at a time when WIU faculty were significantly higher in number than they are now. Chair Robinett had the privilege of serving as Senate Nominating Committee Chair in the past, and at one point there were 450-500 eligible faculty; however, councils and committees have not shrunk in proportion to the number of faculty the university currently has, as evidenced by the number of vacancies on the Senate Nominating Committee report. He observed that there are some faculty who have a lot of wisdom, and the idea of them

being allowed to serve on Senate councils while the university is going through a rebuilding process was also one of the reasons for bringing this bylaws amendment forward.

Chair Robinett clarified again that what senators are voting on is whether this amendment should be added to the Senate Bylaws to allow for the opportunity of using it in the future, but they are not actually voting today on suspending any of the service rules. Senator Gravitt, who chairs the Senate Nominating Committee, stated that the SNC would still give faculty the opportunity to volunteer to serve on committees according to their own interests first; a suspension of service would only be needed if the SNC does not get enough volunteers that initially want to serve. She stated that faculty will still be allowed to indicate their preferences for service in the survey emailed to them every spring, but if there are still opportunities for service after those preferences are met, this amendment would allow those to be opened up to everybody.

Senator Wipperling pointed out that there would still need to be a motion to move that the rules be suspended, and they would only be suspended for that year. Chair Robinett agreed that the rules would only be suspended for the current academic year, and this amendment does not change things for future Faculty Senates. Chair Robinett thinks it is important for senators to remember that if they table something and do not bring it back to the agenda, it just stays there and does not bind future Faculty Senates.

AMENDMENT APPROVED 19 YES (17 in-person, 2 zoom) – 0 NO – 0 ABSTENTIONS

Chair Robinett stated that the amendment will be added to the Senate Bylaws, and he anticipates something coming forward from Senate Nominating Committee Chair Gravitt at the next Senate meeting.

V. New Business

A. For the Good of the Body

Chair Robinett was asked by Athletics to remind senators that the women's soccer faculty-staff appreciation game will take place on Thursday, September 18 from 4-6 p.m. This is a home game, and faculty and staff in attendance will be recognized.

Chair Robinett announced that Senator Walker has a recital coming up. Senator Walker invited everyone to attend his faculty solo recital in the COFAC Recital Hall on Thursday, September 25 at 7:30 p.m. He will play trombone for the performance, which is called "Songs and Standards."

Motion: To adjourn (Gravitt)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm
Faculty Senate Office Manager and Recording Secretary