

WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Regular Meeting, 2 September 2025, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom and in Stipes Hall 501

ACTION MINUTES

SENATORS PRESENT IN PERSON: D. Allwardt, E. Asare, P. Cole, R. Di Carmine, N. Gillotti, D. Gravitt, H. Mason, D. McArthur, A. Melkumian, J. Robinett, F. Tasdan, S. Turkelli, J. Walker, L. Wipperling, E. Woell

SENATORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: A. Frederick, E. Hamner, J. McKenzie, R. Sharma

SENATORS ABSENT: H. Elbe

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

GUESTS: Julia Albarracin, Marjorie Allison, Andrea Alveshere, Keith Boeckelman, Mary Bourell, Amy Burke, Amy Carr, Dennis DeVolder, Patty Eathington, Tara Feld, Bob Intrieri, Lorri Kanauss, Tahir Khan, Tammy Killian, Sarah Lawson, Jessica Lin, Dan Malachuk, Kyle Mayborn, Heather McIlvaine-Newsad, Nathan Miczo, Kristi Mindrup, Lorette Oden, Renee Polubinsky, Jackie Price, Anjum Razzaque, Tim Roberts, Dan Schmidt, Eric Sheffield, Sebastian Szyjka, Alisha White

Chair Robinett reminded those present that Faculty Senate is the faculty governance council for WIU, similar to other representative bodies such as the Council for Administrative Personnel, the Civil Service Employees' Council, and the Student Government Association. Regarding requests to speak during Faculty Senate meetings, he said deference will be given to senators, faculty, and guests, in that order. He stated that, in order to make it easier to acknowledge when individuals wish to speak, those attending via Zoom are asked to turn their cameras on; those who choose to attend without using their cameras in future meetings will not appear on the screen in the meeting room. He also asked that those attending via Zoom not use the chat feature in the course of the meeting; it is left on only in case senators need to do something quickly. He additionally asked Zoom attendees to raise their hands using the react feature when they wish to speak.

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. May 13, 2025

MINUTES APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Approvals from the Provost

Chair Robinett thanked all of the university, college, and departmental curriculum committees for the incredible amount of work they did last year. He expressed congratulations and appreciation to the many areas that spent a lot of time updating their programs, as reflected in the list of approvals.

1. Requests for New Courses

- a. CS 199, Independent Study, 1-3 s.h., repeatable to 3 s.h.
- b. CSEC 199, Independent Study, 1-3 s.h., repeatable to 3 s.h.
- c. CSEC 376, Windows System Administration, 3 s.h.
- d. EDS 410, Senior Seminar in Education, 0 s.h.
- e. IS 199, Independent Study, 1-3 s.h., repeatable to 3 s.h.
- f. MATH 495, Senior Project in Data Science, 3 s.h., repeatable to 6 s.h.
- g. SPED 407, Law and Special Education, 3 s.h.
- h. SPED 465, Fieldwork in Special Education III, 4 s.h.

2. Requests for Changes of Majors

- a. Biology
- b. Broadcasting and Journalism
- c. Clinical Laboratory Science
- d. Construction and Facilities Management
- e. Computer Science
- f. Cybersecurity
- g. Educational Studies
- h. Elementary Education
- i. Engineering Technology
- j. Exercise Science
- k. General Studies
- l. Geographic Information Science
- m. History
- n. Liberal Arts and Sciences
- o. Mathematics
- p. Mechanical Engineering
- q. Meteorology
- r. Middle Level Education
- s. Physics
- t. Social Work
- u. Special Education

3. Requests for Additional Emphases

- a. Multimedia News
- b. Sports Broadcasting

4. Requests for Changes of Emphases

- a. Cybersecurity
- b. Information Systems

5. Requests for Changes of Minors

- a. Coaching
- b. Educational Studies

6. Requests for Changes of Options

- a. Actuarial Science
- b. African American Studies
- c. Applied Meteorology
- d. Biology – Teacher Education
- e. Data Science and Statistics
- f. Early Childhood Education
- g. Elementary Education
- h. Engineering Physics
- i. English as a Second Language
- j. Environmental Biology
- k. Geoenvironment and Planning
- l. Geospatial Science
- m. History
- n. History – Teacher Education
- o. Mathematics

- p. Mathematics – Teacher Education
- q. Medical Sciences
- r. Microbiology
- s. Multilingual Education
- t. Operational Meteorology
- u. Paired Minors
- v. Physics – Teacher Education
- w. Pre-Law
- x. Standard Physics
- y. Zoology

7. Requests for Inclusion in General Education

- a. ANTH/REL 225, Myth and Ritual, 3 s.h.
- b. MATH 206, Mathematics for Elementary Teaching II, 3 s.h.
- c. MATH 255, Discrete Mathematical Structures for Computer Science, 3 s.h.
- d. REL 111, Introduction to Western Religions, 3 s.h.

8. Request for WID Designation

- a. CS 320, Ethical, Social, and Legal Issues of the Digital World, 3 s.h.

B. Provost's Report

Interim Provost Mossman noted that it was announced over the summer that WIU's ROTC program would be cancelled, but that program has now been reinstated. [This resulted in a round of applause.] He recognized State Representatives Mike Halpin, Eric Sorensen, and Ray LaHood, as well as WIU Director of Government and Public Relations Zach Messersmith, President Mindrup and her team, and Mick Cumbie, former ROTC Commander and retired Development Director for the College of Fine Arts and Communication, as instrumental in this effort. He said this is excellent news for the university and for its students.

Interim Provost Mossman stressed the importance of completing enrollment verification forms. He noted the information is used to assess retention and address absences, but it is also important in order for the university to comply with federal financial aid requirements. He asked that questions be directed to him or to Director of Financial Aid Bobbi Smith.

Interim Provost Mossman announced that the Quad Cities Bilingual Learning Lab is now open and growing. He recognized Eric Sheffield, Interim Dean of the College of Education and Human Services, and a number of others who have worked for years to get this project underway. He added that it looks like this project will be pretty successful.

Interim Provost Mossman related that the seven Rebuild committees are working to implement Phase 2. He said that while the Provost's Office helped to organize their meetings originally, those individuals have now stepped away so that the individual committees can work on the various issues related to the Rebuild effort.

C. Student Government Association (SGA) - None

D. Faculty Senate Chair's Report

Chair Robinett introduced William Gblerkpor, who will serve as Faculty Senate Parliamentarian this year.

1. Motion Regarding Zoom Attendance

Whereas the Western Illinois University Faculty Senate is subject to the requirements of the Illinois Open Meetings Act; and,

Whereas Section 5 ILCS 120/7 outlines the procedures for attendance by means other than physical presence; and,

Whereas, once a quorum of the members is physically present a majority of the body may allow members of the body to attend by other means if they cannot physically attend because of personal illness or disability, employment purposes or the business of the public body, a family or other emergency or unexpected childcare obligations,

Be it resolved that for the 2025-2026 academic year, once a quorum of the members is physically present, senators who have notified the Acting Secretary or Parliamentarian of their wish to attend by other means shall be allowed to attend remotely.

Chair Robinett explained this motion was moved and seconded by the Executive Committee, so senators can now move immediately into discussion. He noted that while most motions typically appear in New Business, this one needed to be considered immediately because it allows senators who join the meeting remotely to be allowed to vote. He added that rather than making a motion at the beginning of every meeting to allow for remote attendance, this will allow remote members to automatically participate throughout the academic year.

Senator Wipperling thinks this is a good idea because it will save time throughout the year. Senator Gravitt asked if there will still need to be an in-person quorum; Chair Robinett confirmed that there will. She asked if senators will be asked to respond in advance as to whether they plan to attend in-person or online, as was done last year. Chair Robinett will speak with the Parliamentarian to determine how he wishes to handle this for the current year.

Senator Tasdan asked how senators attending online will be able to vote secretly. Chair Robinett responded that secret ballots are cast by using Google Forms; senators are emailed the form and will need to be able to access their email on a device during meetings.

MOTION APPROVED 17 YES (15 in-person, 2 zoom) – 0 NO – 0 ABSTENTIONS

Chair Robinett spent a lot of time last year and this past summer reviewing fiscal, physical, and curricular data. He appreciated the Provost's Office providing him with access to much of the information that was requested. He has attended meetings with administrators, UPI, faculty, staff, and students to try to deepen his understanding of campus realities. Based on all of this, Chair Robinett intends to focus on Three P's as Faculty Senate Chair this year: pedagogy, purpose, and pragmatism. He thinks there needs to be a return to having more pedagogical conversations on campus to understand what it is that the university is doing and how they should be doing it. He explained that purpose is important so that everyone can be guided by the intent of what they are trying to do and not get caught in "what was done" rather than "what needs to be done." He plans to look at pragmatism by recognizing that many WIU employees are doing far more than they originally thought they would be doing and by asking what is pragmatically feasible to accomplish while preparing to go through some of the plans for the institution. Chair Robinett thinks the university needs to find ways to work more effectively and efficiently with students, staff, and the physical realities available without losing sight of the pedagogies and purposes that both unite different areas and make their disciplines unique.

Chair Robinett stated that while he does not always agree with the decisions made by the administration, he believes that President Mindrup was correct in highlighting that living in or constantly comparing to the past stymies progress toward navigating the now. He also believes that hoping for the future rather than rolling up our sleeves and working with one another robs us of the opportunity to achieve measurable success. He explained that since consistent, transparent communication will be a vitally necessary part of the Rebuild process, WIU employees will be invited to participate in a survey tomorrow about communication preferences. Faculty will receive an email from Chair Robinett on Monday, September 8, encouraging them to participate in the survey. He

stressed the importance of communicating how individuals want to receive information and what kinds of information they want to receive.

2. Charges to Faculty Senate Councils and Committees

Chair Robinett explained that in order for everyone to recognize certain realities and move forward, specific charges are being given to Faculty Senate councils and committees; they are included in the minutes of the meeting so that everyone can see them:

- All councils and committees are being asked to review their current procedures, bylaws, and operating practices in light of reduced faculty numbers across the university and the Academic Affairs Rebuild. Revisions should be submitted to Faculty Senate by January 20, 2026, for consideration.
- Other charges were based on the council and committee annual reports and conversations between Chair Robinett and incoming/outgoing council/committee chairs; they are also due by January 20 unless otherwise specified. These include:
 - Budget Transparency Committee (due March 24, 2026):
 - assemble a report of financial metrics (salaries, credit hour production, schedule impacts, revenue production) related to instruction by program, department, and college based on the two-college model; and
 - assemble a report outlining how fee- and revenue-supported (local) accounts are utilized in academic colleges and other areas of campus.
 - Council on Admission, Graduation, and Academic Standards:
 - consult with the office of Student Rights and Responsibilities to review the timelines of the Academic Integrity Policy to address concerns that students are being negatively impacted during breaks and over the summer in regard to scholarships and satisfactory academic progress; and
 - review operating procedures to ensure practices are in compliance with the Federal Educational Right to Privacy Act and Title IX guidelines.
 - Council on General Education:
 - work with the Provost's Office to determine if CGE should be responsible for course reviews, approvals, and coordination between WIU and the Illinois Articulation Initiative.
 - Council for Instructional Technology (due March 24, 2026):
 - review artificial intelligence policies and procedures at peer and comparable institutions; and
 - develop a proposed AI Use syllabus statement that reflects and respects the variety of perspectives across campus and provides students with a clear statement of whether AI is permitted, restricted, or prohibited in the course, along with any specific expectations for its use.
 - Council for Intercollegiate Athletics:
 - collect data and prepare a report comparing WIU scheduling practices and absence policies for student-athletes to other Ohio Valley Conference schools.
 - Council for International Education:
 - consider if this council should be renamed the Council for International and Multicultural Perspectives; and
 - work with CGE to provide consistency in how Requests for Multicultural Perspectives courses are submitted, approved, and assessed.

Chair Robinett thanked colleagues serving on these councils and committees who have and continue to put in an incredible amount of work to contribute the faculty part of shared governance.

Chair Robinett noted that Faculty Senate continues to participate in shared governance by participating in activities that support the institution. He did not realize how important Title IV verifications were until he became Senate chair. He told senators that over half of WIU students receive federal aid, and if the institution does not consistently report the numbers needed regarding who is and is not attending classes, that puts this federal aid at risk. He noted that since a significant portion of WIU's income relies on this aid, it is very important that faculty participate in completing this. He understands that some faculty are concerned that by checking "did not begin" this somehow harms the student, but that is not correct. He explained what it does is allow staff in Student Development and other areas to focus their energies on determining why these students have not started attending class. He said they will make sure that students did not accidentally neglect to withdraw or that they have the resources and knowledge they need to participate in their classes.

Senator Gravitt asked what the due date is to submit the verification forms. Interim Provost Mossman replied they are due the eighth day of classes. Chair Robinett added that he will find out the exact day and email that information out. He noted that faculty should have received an email from the Director of Financial Aid which specified the due date. Senator Wipperling asked if the email only pertains to specific students because she did not receive it. Chair Robinett explained that faculty should look up their list of courses on WIUP, pull up the class list, and either indicate that each student has begun participating in the class or that they have not.

Senator Frederick asked if data is kept on which faculty comply with the verification process and which ones do not. Chair Robinett replied that the colleges receive information on their response rates, the institution has not come close to achieving the response rate it would like to see. He noted that if the response rate at the beginning of the semester were to increase enough, perhaps the verifications faculty are asked to do at the end of the semester would not be as important.

Interim Provost Mossman confirmed that Ms. Smith sent out an email on August 26; it included links and information on filling out the verifications.

Senator Frederick asked if senators will see the data on response rates. She wonders if it is by department or by faculty member, if it is aggregated, and who reviews it. Chair Robinett responded that Faculty Senate does not receive the data but does typically receive a report from Financial Aid regarding the college participation rates. Interim Provost Mossman thinks the message is that senators should encourage and prompt constituents in their departments and colleges to be aware of the significance of the verification because of WIU's heavy dependence on federal financial aid. Senator Frederick asked if chairs are notified which faculty have not completed the verifications so that they are able to reach out to them to see if they forgot about it or why they are unable to complete it. She wonders if there is some communication channel to ensure that this process is completed, given its importance. Interim Provost Mossman replied there has been communication from the Provost's Office to the deans every year, in addition to widespread communication from the Financial Aid Office. He added that the Provost's Office does not receive response rates by department but only by college. He reiterated that the message needs to reinforce the significance of this process.

Senator Gravitt remarked the email from Bobbi Smith was a little ambiguous – "submit academic activity information no later than the eighth day of the semester" – which is tomorrow, September 3, but she is unsure whether that means the end of the tomorrow or by midnight tonight. She thinks there will be a lot of people scrambling if it is due by midnight tonight. Interim Provost Mossman suggested that Senator Gravitt contact Ms. Smith directly. Chair Robinett volunteered to reach out to her and send the response to senators.

Chair Robinett announced that University Technology sent an email out today announcing that university employees will receive additional information soon about changes to logging in from an off-campus location. He clarified that starting later this month the university will require multifactor

authentication when logging into email from off campus. He stated that, as an institution, WIU is behind the times in meeting data security standards, and University Technology is trying to catch the university up. He noted that University Technology does not have a large staff to keep up with all the security issues, which is why the university is moving to multifactor authentication.

Chair Robinett thinks it is important to be aware of and support the pedagogical opportunities that colleagues are providing to students and the community. He noted that the Department of Art and Design is starting its First Wednesday events tomorrow night from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

E. Other Announcements

1. President Mindrup

The agenda was reordered to hear from Ms. Price while awaiting the President's arrival.

2. Jackie Price, Director, Student Development and Success Center

Ms. Price told senators that within the Student Development and Success Center (SDSC) office in Memorial Hall 125 there are three basic functional areas: Disability Resources, Health Education, and Student Development. She noted that Disability Resources works with students to remove any barriers to equal access in the classroom or in regard to housing and other areas of campus. She explained that students submit a form, staff in Disability Resources make an appointment to speak with them, staff review paperwork, and then determine what works best. She added that any accommodation that is given by Disability Resources is supported by medical documentation; accommodation is not offered or applied if it is not supported by diagnoses given by a physician. Ms. Price explained that accommodations include extended time – usually about time and a half – on exams and quizzes, semi-private and private rooms, text conversion services, and note taking. She clarified that it is the student's and professor's responsibility to work together to get notes to the student with that accommodation; this, along with any accommodation in a classroom, is non-negotiable and not optional. She stated that the Disability Resources staff can help professors figure out the best way to accommodate note taking because professors cannot ask their class publicly if anyone would be willing to take notes for a student with an accommodation because this is illegal. She said that if a professor wants advice on how to navigate this situation, Disability Resources can explain how this can work in a classroom.

Ms. Price stated that WIU has one Health Educator, a graduate student assigned to the Student Development and Success Center. She said this person collaborates with health education programs on campus, such as Think Before You Drink, Get Yourself Tested, and other events that students take part in. They can provide one-on-one consultations on topics including eating and exercise, stress management, and tobacco cessation.

Ms. Price explained that the functional area of Student Development involves advocacy navigation, such as empowering students to speak up and advocate for themselves, with the help of Student Development staff. She said staff also engage in emergency and crisis follow-up based on care referrals. They also process withdrawals, student absences, including military activations, and OARS reports. Ms. Price told senators that Student Development staff like seeing the OARS reports rather than having students tell their professors directly that they must miss a class because it enables Student Development staff to get an overall picture of the number of combined classes a student might be missing, which might indicate they should reach out to that student. She noted that if a student has five different professors and has missed five classes with each, those individual professors may not think that is too bad, but Student Development staff can see that this student has missed 25 classes this semester, so OARS reports given them a bigger picture.

Ms. Price stated that Leatherneck Care Referrals (www.wiu.edu/wecare) can be submitted by faculty, staff, other students, a community member, or a parent; she has been seeing a large

number submitted by parents recently. She stressed that in an emergency, just call 911, but if there is something the Student Development office can address, a care referral can be submitted. She said staff may reach out through emails, phone calls, personal check-ins, communication with other staff, and meetings with other professionals; this is determined on a case-by-case basis because every person and situation is different. Ms. Price stated that if faculty have a student they are concerned about in any way – academic, behavioral, emotional, physical, or social – or if a student has said or done something concerning – such as not showing up for classes, their work is deteriorating, etc. – and perhaps the instructor is not comfortable talking to the student directly about their concerns, that is where the Leatherneck Care Referral comes in. She added that a lot of referrals come into their office, so if an instructor emails a student in the morning and the student has not responded by that afternoon, the instructor may wish to allow more time before submitting a referral.

Ms. Price explained that the SDSC, if they think a care referral is especially problematic, might consult with the Behavioral Intervention Team, which they meet with weekly. She noted that a multifaceted team may need to be involved in a care referral when a student's needs are more than can be dealt with just through the SDSC office. She said that in cases where "eyes are needed across the campus," the Behavioral Intervention Team will work with the Threat Assessment Team, which meets every two weeks to mitigate community and campus threats.

Ms. Price summarized that the SDSC, when they receive a care referral or email, serves as an emergency and crisis contact for students experiencing immediate health, emergency, or personal situations that may affect academic performance and will interact with students, family members, faculty, or anybody in the academic or local community regarding any situations or concerns expressed in the referral. She said they will provide moral support and resources and act as a source for interaction.

Ms. Price said the most common question she receives is why SDSC does not let the person submitting the referral know what happened with it. She explained that the main reason why they cannot provide this feedback on what was discussed with students and the outcome is because of FERPA restrictions since this is part of the student's record. She related that the SDSC has, however, determined that the new Slate communication system will require them to indicate whether they made contact with the student, so once faculty gets access to that system they will be able to see at least that information.

Ms. Price noted that her office also handles withdrawals, including consultations to make sure that a student has explored all options and is taking the proper steps. They also oversee the Oasis Room, an intentionally built, relaxing room within the SDSC that students can book.

Chair Robinett expressed thanks to Ms. Price for all that she, her team, and all of Student Success are doing to support WIU students, particularly with all of the activities planned to get them engaged, retained, and cared about in the first weeks.

1. President Mindrup (Reordered)

Chair Robinett informed senators that Interim Provost Mossman, who was attending on Zoom, has left the meeting. Chair Robinett will let him know when this portion of the meeting is completed so that he can return.

President Mindrup thanked everyone who advocated for keeping the ROTC at WIU. She noted that legislators' support at the congressional level and within the state helped make that happen so that WIU can continue to be Leathernecks with an ROTC program. She thinks the vibe on campus is really great right now; there are a group of students who seem to be very engaged right out of the gate. She thinks this speaks to WIU's faculty and recruiters and who they are bringing to campus, and it is really great to see the excitement and interest in being involved in campus life. She thanked senators for all they do to give students a wonderful first, or returning, impression of and experience at WIU.

President Mindrup has been thinking about the several interim positions currently at the university and what can be done to position WIU for the best path forward. She has been thinking for several months about the path to determine a new provost for WIU, a position of significant importance for the university during her 28 years at Western. President Mindrup noted that the position has been one of significant instability, particularly for the past ten years, which is not said as a professional critique of past provosts; she thinks the instability was brought about by natural turnovers, leadership changes, and a few other factors.

President Mindrup has served many roles at the university spanning several different areas and levels. Having served as president during a time of both significant change and opportunity, she can confidently say that, in line with the position of president, the provost is one of the most important and influential positions on institutional mission, the health of the university, and innovation. She recalled that WIU faced a \$22 million deficit and cash flow during the last fiscal year, in which the university was positioned to deplete its cash within two months, a moment that called for courage and quick action. President Mindrup observed that no provost seeks to enter a position during a time of fiscal instability unless they are wanting to use it as a springboard to another position or are deeply and personally invested in the institution. She stated that Interim Provost Mossman said “yes” and chose Western during a time when it would have been safer for his career to say “no,” stay safe, and move on to another institution.

President Mindrup told senators that, although some difficult decisions had to be made last summer – some of those unpopular and others from necessity – Interim Provost Mossman at the same time was defending Academic Affairs and programs. She asserted that one of the key strategies by previous administrators who are no longer at WIU was to simply let finances slip and then declare exigency as a way to quickly break contracts and dismiss faculty at will, with no regard for tenure or contractual considerations, but both she and Interim Provost Mossman have been committed from the first to honoring the academic integrity of WIU and its contractual commitments. She believes that without Mark Mossman in the position of interim provost, WIU would not have made it financially if it continued on its previous path. She stated that Interim Provost Mossman “answered the call” and led the effort to stabilize and save WIU from an uncertain, undefined, and potentially catastrophic outcome.

President Mindrup related that acknowledgement of the university’s ability to shift course quickly has come from the Governor’s Office and state legislators, who have noted the significant progress WIU has made, as well as from herself, the Board of Trustees, and Interim Provost Mossman’s closest colleagues. She told senators that other institutions are contacting her and the interim provost seeking strategy and solutions for their academic affairs divisions.

President Mindrup stated that, with 28 years at WIU, she speaks both from the heart and from a place of experience and logic. She understands the importance of transparency, values shared governance, and has participated in it throughout all of the levels and roles she has served in. She thinks shared governance is vital to the life of an institution and believes it is her job to share with stakeholders the risks and benefits of situations, as well as sharing her thinking and hearing others’ perspectives when weighing important decisions together.

President Mindrup told senators that she seeks their support for a process of identifying a permanent provost that acknowledges that Interim Provost Mossman has a deep dedication to WIU, the necessary credentials and experience, a commitment to academic integrity, and a vision for innovation that has carried the university through its most challenging year while also positioning it for a faculty-driven rebuild with implications for strengthening WIU’s institutional identity, enrollment, and collaborative culture. She recognizes that the typical process to fill the provost position is a national search or, at minimum, an internal search, a process which provides opportunities to hear and learn from candidates, both about their qualifications and approaches as well as about their institutions. She acknowledges that a search has the potential to foster campus buy-in and confidence in the ultimately selected candidate. President Mindrup, however, has concerns about the past history of WIU’s provost

search processes and the finalists they yielded, about national instability in higher education, and about the current movement of qualified applicants seeking new positions. She stated that these concerns do not give her hope for a pool that would yield the career accomplishments, institutional knowledge, and deep commitment to WIU and the Macomb community that the current interim provost possesses. She added that past results of provost searches, for various reasons, tend to make her not trust the national search process for provost. She suggested that senators Google the names of recent WIU provosts and see where they are now.

President Mindrup has received input from members of the university community who believe an appointment should be made, while others believe there should be a national search for provost. She has had several discussions with Chair Robinett, faculty, staff, and administrators about this topic. President Mindrup stated that while she typically believes a national search should be the rule for university leadership, there are also times when it is appropriate to consider something different than what has been done in the past in order to achieve a different and better result. President Mindrup offered reasons for an alternate approach that resonates with her and asked senators to consider the benefits of an approach that creates spaces for input, comment, and review, while mitigating risk and vulnerability.

Reason 1: *Proven performance and evidence.* President Mindrup believes that Interim Provost Mossman has demonstrated effectiveness, sound judgment, and the ability to make quick, impactful, yet thoughtful decisions with urgency. She acknowledged that some may differ on how that was accomplished, but there was an insurmountable task in front of the administration at that time. She recalled that, especially after a longer financial runway was established, allowing for more time to make decisions, Interim Provost Mossman demonstrated an increasingly collaborative, capable approach to strategic decision making in concert with faculty. She added that he has also demonstrated this in the past, in his roles as faculty member, department chair, and associate provost, evidence is would not be as apparent with external candidates.

Reason 2: *Continuity and stability.* President Mindrup pointed out that higher education is experiencing a turbulent era of enrollment shifts and budgetary pressures in an unpredictable political climate that presents further risks to WIU. She believes the university needs academic leadership who already understand the nuances of WIU and the challenges and opportunities within the region and state. She noted that Interim Provost Mossman has already established relationships that have generated significant collaboration, and continuity in these areas would allow the university to scaffold, enhance, and strengthen based on already-established momentum.

Reason 3: *Enrollment.* President Mindrup stated that, while the university has moved toward financial sustainability and has acknowledged that it can be excellent and sustainable within its current enrollment, the shift toward strengthening enrollment even further requires experienced, collaborative leaders across Academic Affairs, Student Success, and Finance to work effectively together to address the big picture and the impact of each division on the other to positively influence enrollment. She thinks that this is already in place and that changing the current dynamic would require time to bring a new provost up to speed and establish that level of trust. She noted that a new provost would need time to acclimate, build relationships, and learn to effectively advocate for the Academic Affairs while also contributing to the larger, shared mission. She does not think the university can afford the “honeymoon period” that would be required of an external provost hire at this moment in time.

Reason 4. *Time.* President Mindrup pointed out that initiating and conducting a search is time consuming, costly, and has the potential to pause or quash momentum. She suspects the impact of a search could affect the work of the teams within Academic Affairs as well as internal and external partners. President Mindrup told senators the university is approaching a turning point and needs to maintain momentum by staying on track; the ability to accomplish that work needs to embrace the progress already

made, recognize opportunities to continue with what is already working, and adjust based on what has been learned.

President Mindrup announced that, because of the reasons she outlined and because she values the importance of faculty participation and input, she intends to pursue a step between an appointment and a national search for provost. She acknowledged that she has already made two strategic appointments at the vice-presidential level – one out of urgency for expertise and experience and the second because of experience and the stability of university leadership during a time of administrative transition. She added that changes were made at the top administrative levels, and the overall size of the administration is smaller now. President Mindrup understands that the position of provost is different, so a direct appointment is less appropriate – even though it is within her purview as WIU President. She has discussed the pros and cons of provost searches, appointments, and alternative approaches with a few other university presidents and has researched current trends in hiring of upper administrators in higher education. She found there has been a significant uptick in appointments as well as in alternatives to full searches. President Mindrup proposes a middle ground between an appointment and a full search that would provide opportunities for the kind of input that informs a search process decision, determines the qualifications of WIU's existing interim provost, and shapes the expectations for the permanent provost.

President Mindrup told senators that, given national trends, Interim Provost Mossman's qualifications and experience, and based on input from her impartial colleagues, she thinks it is reasonable to adapt and create an opportunity for Interim Provost Mossman to earn the permanent position through a Provost Candidacy Evaluation. She said this process would be conducted within the next two weeks and would include session interviews that would provide opportunities for questions and response evaluation by faculty, academic administrators, the President's Cabinet, and the university community in an open session. She is also open to ideas on how to further enhance this evaluation process.

President Mindrup thanked Chair Robinett for his ongoing dialogue and senators for listening today and hearing the rationale for a new approach that is intended to create the possibility of yielding better results than past processes. She stated that, as President, it is her responsibility to represent the best interests of WIU while simultaneously ensuring the university is positioned to thrive and fulfill its mission to provide higher education opportunities for students with excellence and integrity. President Mindrup welcomes the opportunity to hear senators' visions for academic leadership at WIU and their perspectives and thoughts on what she shared today.

Chair Robinett told senators he spoke with Interim Provost Mossman about this, and Interim Provost Mossman said he would be happy to serve in whichever capacity moving forward, so it was not a request from him that this action take place. Chair Robinett has also spoken with Interim Provost Mossman about Interim Associate Provost Pynes resigning because this would be the position that Interim Provost Mossman would have returned to if not chosen as permanent provost as it was the position he filled previously. Chair Robinett believes that before meaningful searches can be conducted for the other Provost's Office positions, there really needs to be some decision in regard to the permanent provost position. He has had conversations with President Mindrup and Interim Provost Mossman regarding the ways that the associate provost positions should be searched, and a wider search committee will be created to move that forward.

Chair Robinett asked to go on record as relating that he and President Mindrup met multiple times over the summer to talk about the importance of the provost position and that the person in that position does occupy a very special place at an institution, especially in regard to the role they play with faculty. He said these were meaningful conversations.

Senator Gravitt stated that while she understands the President's position, she also has some concerns. She said that if this was Fall of 2024, she would have given a blanket "no" because

that followed a very chaotic summer, but Interim Provost Mossman has shown growth in his role over this past year, and this past calmer summer has probably helped. Senator Gravitt understands the expediency and reasons, and she thinks the last provost was an abject failure in many ways, but she is also concerned that appointments are starting to become the precedent, and she would not like to see the university continue down that road. She noted there is a reason why universities do external searches to try to bring in life and new ideas. She would not mind this process being used if the appointment was for a definitive short term, followed by a reevaluation, similar to the President's contract, because the provost will be at least partially responsible for making recommendations for the two associate provost positions. Senator Gravitt reiterated her concern that those two appointments be from each of the two new colleges so that equal feedback can be given to the new provost from both perspectives of the university's new arrangement. She thinks it would be nice if faculty had some input into who is hired for those positions because up to now it has been the provost's selection and appointment, adding that many faculty did not know these positions were advertised last year.

President Mindrup recognized that Senator Gravitt has also expressed these concerns with Interim Provost Mossman and assured her that the two associate provost positions will be posted and searched. She said Interim Provost Mossman has assured her that there will also be searches related to the positions associated with the Rebuild process. She said three external searches will soon be posted for positions outside of Academic Affairs, two of which are currently filled by interim individuals while the other is filled by an individual who will be retiring: Audit, Advancement/Alumni, and General Counsel. President Mindrup asked senators to keep in mind when talking about the balance of internal expertise with external expertise that WIU now has an upper administration of four individuals, so the reliance on that hierarchy – that kind of upper middle part of the triangle – will be critical since these are positions that have a lot of impact on shared governance, decision making, planning, and other aspects and provide continuity and succession.

Regarding the term of contract for the provost, President Mindrup clarified that all administrative positions, except for the President, are on year-to-year contracts and serve at the will of the president, based on performance, reviews, etc. She stated that while the university has seen movement in the provost position in the past, before Interim Provost Mossman, if someone in any administrative position is not doing their work it would be the responsibility of the President to address that. President Mindrup added that her record shows she has a history of making sure people are accountable.

Senator Mason asked for additional information about the two-week process. President Mindrup replied that the interview date will be Thursday, September 11; an email will go out to the university community tomorrow outlining the sessions and how to get involved with them. She said the email will also create an opportunity for individuals to submit interview questions which will be reviewed by Chair Robinett, Vice President Schuch, and Vice President Roselieb prior to the meeting. President Mindrup wants to ensure, as with any process, that the candidate – since Interim Provost Mossman would still be considered a candidate – is treated fairly, so the interview questions must be in line with Human Resources expectations. Senator Mason asked if this is so that faculty who might have class during the interview time might be able to contribute questions. President Mindrup replied it is, adding that faculty who teach during their designated session time can attend during the open session as an alternative.

Senator Wipperling asked if any of the sessions will be recorded if faculty are unable to attend. President Mindrup replied they will not; interview sessions are not typically recorded.

Senator Gillotti asked, in the interests of full transparency, what will actually be done with the feedback. President Mindrup responded she will evaluate the feedback to determine the candidate's qualifications. She said the qualification requirements include a vision for the position, vision for academic affairs, approach to leadership, and those types of things which

she will be looking at objectively. She will also consider any red flags and other types of concerns in balance with the other factors; those would be considerations for guidance and improvement of the individual.

President Mindrup recognizes there may concerns because last fall the administration had to hit the ground running and decisions had to be made quickly out of necessity, rather than the way she would typically have made them, in order to deal with the cash flow situation. She has received a lot of input from Chair Robinett and others, whether on their own part or passing along input from various groups. She said the concerns that were expressed focused on collaboration and making sure there was inclusion in the process; she has had these conversations with other team members as well. She told senators there is a commitment to that, and she wants to make sure, through this process, that there is evidence of this commitment moving forward.

President Mindrup asserted that the decision has not been made, even though she has outlined why she thinks this particular process of choosing a provost is worthwhile because of the interim provost's accomplishments and the position of the university over the past year. She stressed that she will take input seriously, consider it objectively, and make sure that the university is moving forward in a way that positions WIU well while also mitigating any risks.

Senator Woell pointed out, in response to President Mindrup's comments about an evaluation process for Interim Provost Mossman, that the interim provost was already evaluated by faculty this past spring. He asked if the results of that evaluation will be factored in as part of the feedback from faculty. He stated that faculty contributed to that survey in part because they were able to do so anonymously, to the credit of Chair Robinett and others. President Mindrup responded that those evaluation results are certainly context, but what she is talking about is a candidate evaluation, similar to that done in different kinds of search processes. She said that while feedback that was given in the past will be in her mind, at this point she will be looking at the candidate's credentials, the totality of his experiences, and what he brings to the table. She said the Faculty Senate evaluation brings context that she is aware of, and she hopes senators also will bring this context to the interview evaluation process, whether they think there has or has not been progress. She stated that if senators wish to include this information in their comments, she would appreciate that.

Senator Cole expressed agreement with President Mindrup that multiple WIU provosts have been bad at their jobs, but he pointed out that presidents chose all of these provosts. Senator Cole related he has participated in several of these searches, but now President Mindrup is presenting Faculty Senate with basically a fait accompli: the date, the process, and the two-week time limit have all been pre-determined. He said it does not really seem like President Mindrup is asking Faculty Senate to participate but rather to rubber stamp what has already been decided. President Mindrup reiterated that the decision has not been made because feedback is being sought and will be evaluated, but she moves quickly on things, and this is an option that other presidential colleagues have also explored when in similar situations, so there are precursors. She added that if appointment of Interim Provost Mossman makes sense and is justified based on the evaluations, that selection would be her decision, but if significant concerns are expressed, she will consider a more robust search.

Senator MacArthur expressed his support for what President Mindrup has outlined; he is completely on board with her suggestions and thinks this situation is distinct. Senator MacArthur admitted he is not impartial and has worked with Interim Provost Mossman on committees before, which shades his view, but having someone who is invested, has skin in the game, has been at WIU, and has intuitional knowledge makes all the difference. He thinks last year's performance review of Interim Provost Mossman is comparable to a performance review of the Bears head coach after a losing season; it is not going to be good, but the university was in a very tough spot. He thinks President Mindrup's plan is a good one, and he supports it.

Senator Walker said he has discerned a lack of trust and a lack of faith among his colleagues in, particularly, the leadership ability of the current interim provost. He is concerned about the importance of needing a shared buy-in by the full faculty to really do a reorganization effectively. He asked if there has been any thought given to expanding the internal search because he agrees there is insufficient time for a national search and that former ones have not seemed to work. President Mindrup replied she has considered all scenarios and would consider the Provost Candidacy Evaluation process, depending on the outcome, as a precursor to what might be ultimately a decision to conduct a search. She added that a decision would be made at that point as to whether it should be internal or external.

Julia Albarracin, Professor of Political Science, remarked she chaired the Faculty Senate's Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance last year when they conducted an extensive evaluation of Interim Provost Mossman. She thinks the process President Mindrup has proposed dilutes the voice of faculty among a lot of little constituent groups that really have very little at stake when choosing a provost compared to the faculty. She would like to see the faculty have a more central role; the Faculty Senate Chair chairs the Provost Search Committee, and faculty have a lot more representation on it, but in the proposed scheme there are a number of constituent groups. President Mindrup responded there are only four groups, and two of those are academic. She explained that the interview process she has proposed leans more toward the qualitative whereas the content that faculty deliver in the provost evaluation has, presumably, a little more depth and specificity than some of the feedback that may be received from other stakeholder groups. She would like to see what feedback from this alternative process looks like and make a decision based upon it. Dr. Albarracin remarked that the process will be similar to faculty having one voice out of four. She asked if faculty comments could be made to carry a heavier weight. President Mindrup thinks that, by their nature, faculty comments will have more substance to them because of faculty's more direct connection to the work of the provost. She added faculty comments will certainly carry significant weight in evaluating how to proceed.

Chair Robinett noted that the groups would be faculty; academic administrators, which would include chairs, deans, and directors; the Cabinet; and an open session for the university community.

Senator Gravitt commented that another pro for the proposed process is that if a larger search were conducted, the provost who was hired would have to show support for the reorganization efforts that have already been done versus potentially coming in with a whole new vision, which would result in everything done so far having to be scrambled to fit that person's vision. She does not anticipate that the current interim provost would change his mind about the track the university is currently on. President Mindrup related she has had a few of these types of conversations; there is a lot that has gone into how she has considered and weighed this issue over a long period of time. She reiterated that this is not something she decided yesterday but is something she has really thought about and talked through the different scenarios over a period of months. President Mindrup related she considered one scenario originally, then, after the Rebuild process began, she heard feedback from a few people in the academic world who said they hated to see the progress that had been made just get blown up. She clarified this does not mean that the Rebuild is perfect in its present form, and she realizes there is still a lot of work to do; she understands there are some new committees in place, and she thinks part of the role of leadership is stepping back and letting committees do their work, which is the space the university is in right now. She thinks the process she is proposing is an opportunity to see where the university is in this moment and what makes sense, given WIU's current situation.

Chair Robinett told senators there have been multiple conversations about this, including the possibility of a straight appointment, which he was adamantly opposed to because there needs to be opportunities for faculty to be a part of and active in the process. He has appreciated the opportunity to have multiple conversations with President Mindrup about this, and at no point did he feel he was not being listened to as they talked about the very special role a provost has with the faculty on a campus. Both Chair Robinett and President Mindrup spent time

researching and bringing different data into conversations related to what has facilitated success when there have been provosts chosen by an alternate route than a search and what that looks like as things move forward.

Chair Robinett also wants to clarify something he thinks Faculty Senate should spend some time on at some point: understanding Board of Trustees procedures. He thinks oftentimes faculty think of institutional policies and practices as being the end-all and be-all of how the university works when actually Board procedures allow for things to be quite a bit different than the policies that operate day-to-day learning. He said the Board procedures in a situation like this really do empower the WIU President, upon consultation with the Chair of the Board of Trustees, to name who the provost will be.

Chair Robinett thanked Dr. Albarracin for referencing what former search procedures have been. He noted that those were signed by a former WIU President and are more of a guide for how things would go than what Board procedures actually state. Chair Robinett thinks that Faculty Senate should make the most informed decisions possible, which would be helped by going in to see what the Board policies and procedures allow.

Senator Gravitt remarked she assumes that President Mindrup has a good working relationship with the current interim provost or the President would not be proposing this selection process because it would clearly not be good for the two of them to go in two different directions. Senator Gravitt's concern, though, is that Interim Provost Mossman act as an advocate for the faculty and not just a yes man for President Mindrup. President Mindrup confirmed that this is what Interim Provost Mossman brings to the table. Speaking about the dynamic of his leadership team, she has seen a great deal of respect and trust across the three areas, more than she has seen in a very long time; she has not seen such a cohesive team since the time of President Goldfarb. She clarified that this team does not agree with each other all of the time; they argue their positions and make sure that their areas are taken care of.

President Mindrup recalled that Interim Provost Mossman was in his position for about six months when the difficult decisions had to be made. President Mindrup has worked in other roles within Academic Affairs, although not as faculty, and she told senators there was a pending attack on academic affairs prior to her and Interim Provost Mossman stepping into their positions. She recalled that Interim Provost Mossman was very strategic in his thinking, worked with his team, and listened to faculty, but ultimately some decisions have to be made which will be well received by some and not by others.

President Mindrup reiterated that Interim Provost Mossman has been a strong advocate for faculty. She said he brings past union experience and had a role on UPI in the past, so she knows he values that perspective and has been one of the most collaborative provosts with the union, from past president John Miller to current president Merrill Cole. She said Interim Provost Mossman has always tried to be communicative and collaborative with the union, including joining union representatives to advocate for university funding last year in Springfield. She reiterated in answer to Senator Gravitt's question that Interim Provost Mossman is not a yes man; he is an academic who has been a faculty member, a department chair, an associate provost, and is now an interim provost. She stated that Interim Provost Mossman has the lineage and the understanding, and she is seeing an increasingly collaborative spirit as he both gets his footing for the situation the university was in and develops in increasing understanding of what the position requires. She also thinks he has been very receptive to feedback.

President Mindrup pointed out that senators bring perspectives from their own vantage points, and those are valued in this process. She wants senators to be sure to bring those to the table, participate fully, make sure their voices are heard, and participate in creating the questions. She said it is important that the provost answers to the university community because that is what makes this process robust and useful. President Mindrup stressed that if she did not value feedback, she would just make an appointment because she has made appointments before for

various reasons, but she does care about feedback and believes in input from the university community. She recognizes that higher education is in a strange place now and thinks it is worth trying something different while being open to what comes next.

Senator Tasdan asked if President Mindrup will be sending out a survey within two weeks; she confirmed that is correct. He asked if she will read the comments. President Mindrup clarified the survey will ask for interview questions, and there will be an evaluation following the interviews. Chair Robinett explained an email will go out tomorrow inviting individuals to submit questions. He invited senators to submit questions to him, if they prefer, so that he will have those questions when the group sits down to flesh out what some of the initial interview questions will be. He explained that, following the actual sessions, individuals will have the opportunity to complete feedback forms with their thoughts on the process and how well the listening sessions went.

Senator Tasdan asked how any negative feedback will be quantified. President Mindrup replied she is a qualitative researcher, so she will be looking for significant red flags and differentiating between something that is a significant red flag and something that is constructive. She has a sense for what Interim Provost Mossman is capable of adapting to, and if she sees something that does not align with that, she will take it into consideration.

Senator Gravitt suspects there may be concerns about anonymity. She asked if individuals can submit feedback without having their identification tagged to their comments, similar to the Faculty Senate evaluations of the president and provost. She thinks this leads to more honest participation. President Mindrup believes this is technically possible within the forms. Chair Robinett clarified this will depend on the medium that is used, and he is not aware that this has been determined at this point. He will bring up to the committee members that the feedback should be done in this way; President Mindrup is certain that it can be. She suggested there could be a comment on the form stating that individuals' submissions will be anonymous and not shared. Chair Robinett volunteered that the Faculty Senate data collection tool can be used if necessary to assure this. President Mindrup would like to know if the comments come from a faculty or a staff member, but she does not need to know who they are.

Senator Feridun asked if the emergency funding proposal moved forward in the state legislature. Chair Robinett suggested that for this visit senators remain focused on the provost process because President Mindrup will visit with Faculty Senate again later in the semester. President Mindrup responded that the funding proposal has not moved forward but it is not dead either. She said the university did get approval from the state to be able to borrow from the foundation, which will not be signed off on until January, but it has not so far been needed; while money is still tight, the university has not had to access those funds. She added that the Quad Cities \$7 million funding bill is still active and may come up in a veto session, according to Zach Messersmith.

President Mindrup told senators there are changes being made to the Quad Cities campus; the program portfolio has already been changed, and the administration is looking into consolidating into one building and finding a purchaser or someone who would lease and be a strategic partner for the remaining complex buildings, so WIU will be reducing its footprint up there.

President Mindrup thanked senators for their questions and for the opportunity to meet with them. She encouraged them to participate and make sure that their input is part of this process. She said further steps will be determined from there, and she is glad that Faculty Senate will be involved as well. Chair Robinett stated that in addition to the university communication that goes out, he will make sure to communicate directly with faculty.

3. Elections

- a. Committee on Provost and Presidential Performance (four senators from any college, plus an Executive Committee member, for one-year terms)

Chair Robinett explained the workload primarily involves reviewing the survey to understand the types of questions that would be asked. He said the committee prepares an executive summary that is shared with the Senate and online; a full set of comments is delivered to the Executive Committee, as well as to the Provost and President (for the Provost's survey) and the President and Board of Trustees (for the President's survey). Senators Turkelli, Gillotti, Mason, and Walker volunteered to serve; Senator Melkumian will represent ExCo on the committee.

- b. Provost's Advisory Council (three senators for one-year terms)

Chair Robinett stated that the Provost's Advisory Council is called by the Provost in order to provide guidance on whatever issues the Provost's Office would like to confer with faculty about. Senators Gravitt, Di Carmine, and Cole volunteered to serve.

- c. Student Learning Assessment Committee (one senator to serve a one-year term; should have assessment experience or be interested in learning more about assessment)

Senator Allwardt volunteered to serve.

- d. Budget Transparency Committee (one senator from Arts and Sciences for a one-year term, plus an Executive Committee member)

Senator Tasdan volunteered to serve; Chair Robinett will represent ExCo.

- e. WIU Rebuild Constituency Committee (one senator for one-year term)

Chair Robinett explained that this group is involved in overseeing the Rebuild, understanding what the other Rebuild committees are doing, and sort of serving as the steering committee for the process. He shared that he did not feel comfortable last year being the only faculty member serving on this group. He said the Constituency Committee includes representatives from the Civil Service Employees' Council, Council of Administrative Professionals, Chairs' Council, Deans' Council, and Advising who look at the totality of the Rebuild process.

Senator Melkumian asked how often they meet; Chair Robinett responded they meet fairly frequently. He stated that while many of the Rebuild committees have been having frequent 30-minute meetings, now that faculty and others have been empowered to take over these committees he expects the meetings will be longer and less frequent. He expects that this committee will meet, at minimum, once a month.

Senator McKenzie volunteered to serve.

Chair Robinett thanked those senators who volunteered, adding that there will be numerous opportunities throughout the year for senators to be involved in the faculty governance and shared governance processes, including one that will be discussed in New Business.

III. Reports of Committees and Councils

Chair Robinett stated that, since it is the beginning of the year, he wants to make sure everyone is aware of senatorial procedures for council reports. He stressed that parliamentary procedures should not be used as a cudgel in this body but are instead a guiding way to keep meetings efficient and organized; these are outlined in the informal parliamentary procedures which are shared with senators. He explained that, by tradition, Faculty Senate has a presumption of accepting every report; this means that unless a senator objects to a report,

it will be accepted, and whatever recommendations are included inside of that report are then recommendations of the Senate. He noted that a motion is not necessary before going into discussion of a report. Chair Robinett explained that reports cannot be directly amended; if for some reason a senator does not support a recommendation within a report, the senator would need to object to the report, which tables it until the next meeting. He said the report would appear under Old Business at the following Senate meeting at which time a senator could make a motion and a vote would be taken on approving the recommendations within the report. He added that there is also a method to bring back consideration of a report at the same meeting where it is objected to, which requires bringing it back to the agenda with a higher level of vote in order to continue discussing it on that day.

A. Budget Transparency Committee (BTC)
(TBD, Chair, 2025-2026)

1. Annual Report (Jett Walker, Chair, 2024-2025)

The BTC annual report indicates that the committee met in November with Vice President Roselieb and Budget Director Renee Georges who explained assumptions that are used to create budget projections; discussed anticipated budget deficits, revenue, and cash flow; provided an overview of how layoffs and retirements are anticipated to impact FY 25-27; and shared assumptions moving into FY 26 and beyond. The BTC met with Interim Provost Mossman and Interim Associate Provosts Pynes and Nikels in January to learn more about summer school and adjunct funding allocations. There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

B. Council on Admission, Graduation and Academic Standards (CAGAS)
(Dan Malachuk, Chair, 2025-2026)

1. Annual Report (Rich Filipink, Chair, 2024-2025)

The CAGAS annual report included a chart comparing late withdrawals, requests for overload, program changes, substitution waivers, new starts, readmission appeals, appeals of freshmen or transfer admission denials, grade appeals, academic integrity appeals, and disruptive student hearing numbers from 2023-24 to 2024-25. The report also indicated that CAGAS last year approved an update and clean up of language in the Disruptive Student Policy; three admissions policy requests; a change to Nursing admissions requirements; and a blanket waiver for IMSA summer students for this year only. The report also states that CAGAS “rejected a proposal to eliminate FYE as a graduation requirement. The Senate concurred with the Council. At the behest of the Provost’s office the Senate reconsidered the Council’s report at the next Faculty Senate meeting, and this time rejected the Council’s report, eliminating the FYE graduation requirement.” There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

C. Council on Campus Planning and Usage (CCPU)
(Dan Schmidt, Chair, 2025-2026)

1. Annual Report (Dan Schmidt, Chair, 2024-2025)

Their annual report indicates that CCPU met monthly last year as part of its mission to learn about campus projects in order to better prepare the campus community for upcoming changes and to bring questions and proposals for campus improvements to the attention of Facilities Management. There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

D. Council on Curricular Programs and Instruction (CCPI)
(Bob Intrieri, Chair, 2025-2026)

1. Annual Report (Amy Burke, 2024-2025)

The annual report included a chart comparing figures for various kinds of curricular requests from 2009-10 through 2024-25. Last year there were 30 new course requests, 113 changes to existing courses, 40 changes to existing majors, 45 changes to options, six changes to emphases, and five changes to minors. The report indicates that CCPI also reviewed the Course Syllabus Policy and decided not to recommend adding an accreditation statement to it. There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

E. Council on General Education (CGE)
(TBD, Chair, 2025-2026)

1. Annual Report (Alisha White, Chair, 2024-2025)

According to the annual report, “Due to changes the Provost’s Office made to the General Education curriculum, which included eliminating the Multicultural and Human Wellness categories and removing any courses without IAI designation, CGE discussed the impact of these changes and reviewed documents to inform members about IAI (Illinois Articulation Initiative).” The council completed a charge from the Senate to investigate the impact of changes to the Gen Ed curriculum and reported on those in the spring. CGE also considered 17 articulation requests last year. There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

F. Council for Instructional Technology (CIT)
(TBD, Chair, 2025-2026)

1. Annual Report (Andrea Alveshere, Chair, 2024-2025)

CIT’s report relates they approved the creation of an Artificial Intelligence (AI) Subcouncil last year. At the request of the Senate, they also developed recommendations for changes to WIU policies and practices regarding Online Teaching and Learning; to address this charge, CIT created an ad hoc Online Teaching Subcouncil. This subcouncil created and distributed a student survey, the results of which were incorporated into their recommendations. There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

G. Council on Intercollegiate Athletics (CIA)
(Steve Gray, Chair, 2025-2026)

1. Annual Report (Todd Lough, Chair, 2024-2025)

The CIA annual report indicates that the council reviewed WIU’s successful transition into the Ohio Valley Conference; discussed NCAA scheduling changes since 2009, considering their impact on student-athletes’ academic success; and reviewed and approved schedules for various athletic teams, among other business. The council was informed that, on average, teams miss approximately 12 days per year for travel and competitions; CIA will review this more thoroughly in 2025-26 in order to formulate recommendations. There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

H. Council for International Education (CIE)
(TBD, Chair, 2024-2026)

1. Annual Report (Tahir Khan, Chair, 2024-2025)

According to their report, CIE met weekly last spring on charges that included creating a Multicultural Perspectives course request form and reviewing eight years’ worth of Study Abroad data to produce a report presented to the Senate last spring. This year CIE plans to review past enrollment trends in foreign language and Global Issues courses, review and report on enrollment trends at WIU and peer institutions in collaboration with International Admissions; and determine appropriate standards for Multicultural Perspectives graduation

requirements and approval processes. There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

I. Council on Writing Instruction in the Disciplines (WID)
(TBD, Chair, 2025-2026)

1. Annual Report (Nathan Miczo, Chair, 2024-2025)

The WID Council reported they approved four new WID courses last year and successfully reviewed five existing WID courses in the College of Business and Technology and 17 in the College of Arts and Sciences. The annual report notes that “an issue consistently recurring across many WID syllabi is the failure to note ENG 180 as a prerequisite. Though some might argue that ENG 280 (which frequently was listed) presupposes ENG 180, the Council feels this could also be construed as an example of a ‘hidden prerequisite.’” There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

J. Senate Nominating Committee (SNC)
(Denise Gravitt, Chair, 2025-2026)

1. Annual Report (Julia Albarracin, Chair, 2024-2025)

The SNC report indicates the committee presented 81 faculty nominations to Faculty Senate throughout the 2024-25 academic year. In the spring, SNC sent their annual volunteer interest survey to the 342 full-time faculty members eligible to serve on Senate councils and committees, to which 58 faculty members responded. There were no questions from senators and no objections to the report.

Chair Robinett expressed his thanks to the faculty who have chaired and are going to be chairing Senate councils and committees. He recognizes the incredible amount of work they do throughout the year.

IV. Old Business - None

V. New Business

A. Resolution to Create Ad Hoc Faculty Senate Governance Committee

***Whereas**, the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws establish the governing framework for Senate operations and faculty participation as delegated in Board of Trustees Procedures; and*

***Whereas**, the University has experienced decreased faculty numbers and is undergoing the Academic Affairs Rebuild, both of which necessitate a review of governance structures to ensure efficiency and equitable representation;*

***Be it resolved**, that the Faculty Senate establish an Ad Hoc Faculty Senate Governance Committee, whose purpose shall be to act in accordance with the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws to review and propose revisions to the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws, in consultation with the chairs of Faculty Senate Councils and Committees; and,*

***Be it further resolved**, that the Ad Hoc Committee shall consist of a senator from each of our four current academic colleges, two at-large faculty members selected by the Senate Nominating Committee, a representative from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and shall have the Faculty Senate Chair and Provost as ex-officio members*

***Be it further resolved**, that the Committee shall present its findings and recommended revisions to the Faculty Senate no later than January 20, 2026.*

Chair Robinett told senators he motioned this resolution during the Executive Committee meeting but did not ask for a second because he wanted there to be discussion on the Senate floor and, if senators are willing to undertake this, a second coming from among the body of the Senate. He explained that the current Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws are heavily predicated on the current four colleges, with specific opportunities carved out for faculty on the Quad Cities campus and faculty librarians. He thinks these documents need to be modified to better represent what the university's realities will be moving forward. He added that once Faculty Senate approves changes to its Constitution, it has to be ratified by the faculty at-large, then by the President. He thinks this process needs to begin now in order to have all of this in place by next year.

Chair Robinett related that he met regularly with Faculty Senate Office Manager Annette Hamm over the summer, as well as with former chairs to ask for their guidance on a variety of elements. He and Ms. Hamm have worked to turn these recommendations into one document that could then be handed over to this ad hoc committee. He agrees with other ExCo members that this service opportunity should exist not only for senators but also for faculty to participate in the framework for how Faculty Senate governance contributes to shared governance.

Chair Robinett specified that it is not the intention to elect senators to this committee today; if the motion is approved, these would be elected at the next Senate meeting, which would also allow the Senate Nominating Committee time to nominate at-large representatives.

SENATOR GRAVITT SECONDED THE MOTION

MOTION APPROVED 18 YES (15 in-person, 3 zoom) – 0 NO – 0 ABSTENTIONS

B. Resolution to Continue Ad Hoc Committee on Federal Transitions

Whereas, the Ad Hoc Committee on Responses to Federal Transitions was established by the Faculty Senate in 2024 for the following purposes:

- *To assess potential and probable issues and opportunities resulting from the new US presidential administration;*
- *To consult with appropriate state, local, and campus authorities to understand impacts of potential changes;*
- *To facilitate educational programming to inform campus constituencies about legislative and policy changes that may affect university operations;*
- *To explore and develop student-centered policies and practices as needed in response to administrative actions.*

Whereas, the committee's work has not yet been completed and continuation is necessary to fulfill its charge;

***Be it resolved,** that the Faculty Senate continue the Ad Hoc Committee on Responses to Federal Transitions for the 2025-2026 academic year, with the same membership unless vacancies occur, and with the same charge as originally adopted; and*

***Be it further resolved,** that the committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the Faculty Senate no later than March 24, 2026.*

Chair Robinett explained that last year Faculty Senate established an ad hoc committee in response to anticipated federal transitions and all of the changes that have emerged from that process. He said the committee was established to include a wide array of the university community in order to provide guidance to the administration and allow for anyone to poll that group to get guidance on different things. He added the ad hoc committee was established last year and intended to terminate this year, but there are still a wide range of issues to navigate, Senators Gravitt and Melkumian remarked that it seems obvious that the committee is still needed.

RESOLUTION APPROVED 19 YES (15 in-person, 4 zoom) – 0 NO – 0 ABSTENTIONS

C. Proposal to Amend Faculty Senate Bylaws

1. First Reading

Whereas, recent faculty layoffs have created a significant number of vacancies on Faculty Senate councils and committees; and

Whereas, Faculty Senate councils and committees are being asked to review and revise their bylaws; and

Whereas, a shortage of experienced faculty members on councils and committees would create undue hardship in addressing pressing campus issues;

Be it resolved, that the Faculty Senate Bylaws be amended to add the following section after Membership in Article VII:

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 for Senate Bylaws amendments, there must be a first reading, followed by a second reading and vote at the following meeting. He observed that WIU has lost a lot of people with an incredible amount of institutional knowledge. He stated that Senate councils and committees, like Faculty Senate, have term limits as well as restrictions on who can serve on Senate councils. He believes that these are in place for a meaningful reason – so that the same people do not do the same service all of the time – but he also thinks that, given where the university is right now, the Senate should have the opportunity to consider faculty for service on councils they are willing to serve in. He thinks these faculty might bring wisdom, either through a continuing role or because a senator could contribute in a meaningful way on a Senate council.

Chair Robinett clarified that if this bylaws amendment is approved, then if the Senate Nominating Committee or the full Senate wants to appoint someone who would be in violation of the existing rules, a motion could be made to suspend the service bylaws, which would allow that individual to potentially occupy that role for no longer than this academic year. He added that the Senate would not be saying if this bylaws amendment is passed that those rules are negated but instead that it wants opportunities to be available for certain individuals, via specific motions voted on by two-thirds of the body, to allow them to serve in those roles.

Senator Gravitt noted that the amendment indicates the waiver cannot exceed one academic year; since the 2025-26 academic year has already begun, she would like to see clarification that it applies to this year and not the 2026-27 academic year. Senator Wipperling clarified that if this is going in the Senate Bylaws, it would pertain to whatever year it is being applied to and not to continuing years. Chair Robinett stated that if a senator ever has a question about procedure or how something might be applied in the future, he would appreciate senators taking the time during a meeting to discuss it so that everyone is informed about the decisions they are making and can represent the actions of the Senate to their colleagues across the university. He noted that the role Faculty Senate plays in faculty governance is essential to the success of the institution, so making sure that senators know what they are doing is definitely worth a couple of extra minutes in any Senate meeting so that all can be informed.

D. For the Good of the Body

Chair Robinett told senators this section of the agenda is intended for senators to talk about what they want to talk about, whether it be a pedagogical announcement or something their department or school is doing, Senator Gravitt said her comment is not intended as abject criticism but is more a statement of where the university is at. She pointed out that University Libraries has five people, shared among all floors of Malpass Library, to serve faculty and students. She would like to see this situation discussed at Faculty Senate this year with the possibility of improving it. She recognizes that the university cannot go back and hire the faculty that it let go or who retired, but she thinks this needs to be addressed. Chair Robinett said he strongly agrees with Senator Gravitt, as did the other Executive Committee members, and they are in the process of arranging a time for the Library Dean to come to speak to Faculty Senate. Senator Melkumian remarked there is a committee trying to decide what is needed – what faculty need and what students need – with the goal of developing a report to the administration suggesting who needs to be rehired in University Libraries to address all of this. Senator Gravitt pointed out that there is no one at all in the library on the Quad Cities campus.

Motion: To adjourn (Wipperling)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm
Faculty Senate Office Manager and Recording Secretary