WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE

Regular Meeting, *29 September 2026*, 4:00 p.m.

Via Zoom and Union Capitol Rooms

A C T I O N M I N U T E S

SENATORS PRESENT IN PERSON: D. Allwardt, A. Baker, M. Blankenship, S. Chakravorti, P. Cole, R. DiCarmine, A. Frederick, N. Gillotti, R. Kelly, C. Kovacs, H. Mason, J. McKenzie, S. Nash, L. Parzefall, J. Walker

SENATORS PRESENT VIA ZOOM: M. Hoge, R. Sharma, F. Tasdan

SENATORS ABSENT: E. Asare, A. Melkumian, Y. Tang

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

GUESTS: Lori Baker-Sperry, Mary Bourell, Amy Carr, Merrill Cole, Katrina Daytner, Dennis DeVolder, Tara Feld, Miguel Huerta, Lazarick Jackson, Pete Jorgensen, Jeffrey Keith, Sarah Lawson, Jessica Lin, Kyle Mayborn, Lorette Oden, Renee Polubinsky, Jackie Price, Alonzo Ruffin, Dawn Sweet, Tommy Tarr

Faculty Senate welcomed Lisa Parzefall, English, as a new senator to represent the School of Humanities while Senator Woell is on sabbatical this semester.

I. Consideration of Minutes

A. September 15, 2026

MINUTES APPROVED AS DISTRIBUTED

II. Announcements

A. Provost's Report

Provost Mossman thanked everyone for attending events during the first five-and-one-half weeks of the semester. He has observed excellent attendance at events. He recognizes that October will be very busy with departmental-level events and encourages anyone to reach out to him if they would like him to announce these events to a wider audience.

The Provost made Faculty Senate aware of a couple of retention initiatives going on in Academic Affairs. He said two initiatives have come out of the Rural Postsecondary and Economic Development (RPED) grant, headed by Julia Albarracin, professor in the School of Social Sciences, and Miguel Huerta, Executive Director of Advising and Student Support. He noted that Senator Parzefall is part of one of them, the Embedded Tutor Project; three sections of English and three sections of Math have embedded tutors in their classrooms to serve as peer models and resources, such as directing students to the Writing Center. He explained that they serve as a bridge between the faculty member and the students to help students succeed, especially in their first semester of college, in classes that they typically struggle in, such as MATH 100 and ENG 180.

Provost Mossman explained that, in the same way, the Career Readiness Instruction pilot program involves seven sections stretching across the General Education curriculum, including sociology, philosophy, statistics, psychology, and more. He noted that a lot of students come through these sections. He stressed that what is being engaged in is not corporate pre-professional planning; for years the Provost's Office has tried to figure out how to develop a culture of ambition with WIU students, and this pilot program is intended to help students develop certain skills with intent. He explained that students will develop leadership, communication, and those kinds of staple skill sets

that are found in courses such as PSY 100 or SOC 100, but these skills will be taught with intention, by naming what those things are, then actually engaging the students through the curriculum and the content -- without changing the content itself; this is an example of critical thinking. Provost Mossman engaged in an excellent discussion yesterday with Sociology professor Patrick McGinty and Mathematics professor Amy Ekanayaki and thinks the group, which includes others, has had some good communication identifying students who seem to be struggling. He said the institution is trying to determine how to build a bridge to these students help them succeed in their classes because data shows that if students get past their first semester and attain 30 hours after their first year, they are much more likely to continue and complete their education. He believes the key is to create an institutional culture and support system that enables students to be more likely to reach that point.

Provost Mossman gave credit to Dr. Huerta for a successful bridge program that also ties into the larger retention initiatives in the division. He related that 19 students participated in the bridge program, which involved a combination of either ENG 180 or ENG 100 and UNIV 100. He noted that all 19 of these students are enrolled this fall and started their semester with an average GPA of 3.58. He pointed out that this enables these students to go into the fall with a GPA buffer as well as with connections with faculty and Dr. Huerta's team, with a familiarity with Malpass Library, and other connections with the institution. Provost Mossman believes the university will have success with these 19 students and thinks the intention should be to really scale this up so that it is 100 students, for example, who are being helped in this direct way. He believes that if the university can intervene in this way with students, this effort can expand beyond a local, single success to institution-wide support for these types of programs.

Provost Mossman is working on retooling the Consolidated Annual Reports for the Division of Academic Affairs. He related that beginning in President Goldfarb's era, from 2002 until about 2012, the Consolidated Annual Reports involved a lot of forms and were very budget-oriented. Provost Mossman looked up documentation from 2011, and there were 16 different kinds of forms, including requests for hires, classroom upgrades, computers, and other different things built around the allocation of resources. He recalled that around that time the state began missing payments to state universities; before the budget impasse, there were a number of years where funds from the state were arriving late, then, with the budget impasse, the whole process fell apart. He noted that the Consolidated Annual Reports could no longer be tied to the budget because the budget was not on schedule, and in 2015-2016 there was not even a budget from the state. Provost Mossman is trying to work closely with the other vice presidents to retool and reinstate a Consolidated Annual Reports process that will really go a long way toward planning. He anticipates hiring beginning again and wants to make sure the university is in a position for those hires to go smoothly and actually happen with no delays, so the Consolidated Annual Reports will be important for this as well as for classroom upgrades and other things the university needs.

As one final retention note, Provost Mossman informed senators that the Connections Mapping data is now available from the Division of Student Success, and Dr. Huerta and Associate Provost Lori Baker-Sperry are working closely with deans, associate deans, advisors, and others across the board trying to make sure this data is used. He explained that Connections Mapping data basically identifies students who are at risk and need interventions. He explained that with Connections Mapping one can see, for instance, that a student filed a CARE report, the student also appeared in another piece of data, and the student is also having a residence hall issue, so that the puzzle can really be put together and someone can connect and intervene with this student. He realizes that it will be impossible to connect with all of the students who might need interventions because some already left the university before week five or six, but there are still a percentage of students who are trying but struggling, and those are the ones the university can make connections with.

Provost Mossman observed that this is also related to the GPA recovery course that Associate Provost Baker-Sperry and Vice President for Student Success Justin Schuch have piloted, which will be offered in the spring. He said it is targeted toward students on probation to help figure out what happened and how to get them to Year 2 because from there students tend to do better.

C. <u>Student Government Association Report</u>

(Lazarick Jackson, SGA Vice President for Internal Affairs, and Tommy Tarr, SGA Vice President for External Affairs)

Mr. Jackson apologized that the SGA Representative to Faculty Senate, the Director of Academic Affairs, has been unable to attend meetings so far. He explained that SGA has completed interviews for this position, and the Director of Academic Affairs will be available to consistently attend Senate meetings very soon. He thinks it is great that SGA is getting its vacancies filled.

Mr. Jackson announced that SGA will hold an Informal Town Hall from 3:00-5:00 tomorrow (September 30) in the Union Grand Ballroom. He explained that this will give staff and students an opportunity to interact with each other. Mr. Jackson has been doing all that he can to promote the event; he is excited about it and hopes that there will be a big turnout.

Mr. Tarr announced that a student affairs conference will be held October 23 at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville. He asked senators to let SGA know if they become aware of any student who might be interested in attending, and SGA will then send the faculty member more information.

D. Faculty Senate Chair's Report

1. Highlighting Good News

Chair McKenzie told senators she has received lots of notices about good news and decided to highlight four today, which actually encompass five faculty members and one student:

- Tae Seok Yang, a faculty member in the School of Accounting and Business Administration, did a conference presentation with a student, Gabe Sink, at the annual meeting of the North American Management Society, and they received a Best Paper Award.
- Mike Fansler, a faculty member in the School of Visual and Performing Arts, presented for the Australian Band and Orchestra Directors Association in Melbourne this past August. He also gave workshops to 11 bands and orchestras in both Melbourne and Sydney over a three-week period.
- Senator Yong Tang, a faculty member in the School of Communication, Media, and Experience Industries, has published a book called *Freedom of Information Law in China: From Imperial Court Diaries to Open Government Information Regulations*.
- Maureen Bezold, a faculty member in the School of Nursing, Applied Health, and Human Performance, and Heather McIlvaine-Newsad, a faculty member in the School of Social Sciences, spearheaded a campaign to bring a mobile dental unit to campus on September 16 to help students who cannot afford oral health care to get the care they need.

Chair McKenzie remarked that this is only a fraction of the list and encouraged faculty to keep sending her their good news. She noted that faculty often think about their own scholarship or maybe that within their own school or department, but it is awesome to hear about what others find really interesting and the good work they are doing, and it really makes her day.

Chair McKenzie stated that 220 people responded to the survey about Western's mission and vision, but it is not known how many were faculty, staff, or students. She announced that there will be engagement sessions in October to further the work and gather input beyond the mission and vision. She thinks the majority of work on the mission and vision was done through this first survey, and moving forward the University Strategy Council will look at the rest of the strategic plan draft and gather additional input from the campus community. She encouraged senators to engage in the October sessions as they are able and to share the information with others in their areas.

Chair McKenzie announced that three tracks of mental health first aid training will be offered by the University Counseling Center on October 8 and 9 from 8-12 at the Corbin Hall Conference Room; on November 11, 12, and 13 from 8-10 in Horrabin Hall 60; and on November 23 from 8-4:30 in the Union Board Room. Chair McKenzie thinks this is wonderful training and has been through it twice. She said it helps attendees identify, understand, and respond to the signs of mental health and substance abuse challenges in adults. She noted that it is a very tailored training intended for faculty and staff in higher education.

Chair McKenzie related that Provost Mossman shared with her yesterday an article by Eastern Illinois University about artificial intelligence; she has reread it three or four times and has been thinking about it ever since. She thinks it would be interesting for WIU faculty to read because EIU students are petitioning that their faculty are unable to use AI in creating their course materials. She thinks this is interesting to think about because probably everyone in this day and age uses AI for something, even if they do not know they are using it.

E. Other Announcements

1. Disability Resources
   - Jackie Price, Director, Student Development and Success Center
   - Miguel Huerta, Executive Director, Advising and Student Support
   - Ian Szechowycz, Director, Digital Spaces and Online Learning
   - Dawn Sweet, Instructional Design and Technology Manager
   - Joan Nkansah, Instructional Design and Technology Specialist

   Chair McKenzie told senators that Mr. Szechowycz and Ms. Nkansah were unable to attend tonight's meeting, so there will only be three speakers.

   Jackie Price, Director, Student Development and Success Center

   Ms. Price told senators that with MVS and WIUP being phased out and replaced by Colleague, it is important to know that there is nothing in Colleague that allows for Disability Resources to operate, as far as management, in the way that has been done in previous years. She stated that, instead, SDSC/Disability Resources is utilizing its existing database, Maxient, because they can hold confidential information there.

   The process of accommodation notifications has changed. Ms. Price explained that students now have the onus of providing faculty with the letter that Disability Resources sends them; it is the responsibility of the student to notify faculty of their accommodations and provide them with the official letter. Students currently send the letters by going into STARS and choosing which faculty members should receive them, but now students will have to download and email the letters to faculty. Ms. Price noted that SDSC/Disability Resources has seen some evidence of students copying and pasting the letter and maybe changing a thing or two, but if faculty do not receive a .pdf with the SDSC letterhead and one of the names of SDSC staff, it is not an official letter. She added that if faculty question the letter, they can forward it to SDSC for verification.

   Ms. Price has noticed an increase in absence leniency, so she reviewed the process. She said there is a new document related to this which includes a chart that shows best practices and benchmarks across the U.S. from different disability experts and others within higher education; it shows faculty, based on what type of class they have, what the safe zone is for allowing absence leniency. She does not want absence leniency to become a "get out of educational jail free card" because it is not; it instead says that students should be allowed one or two additional days, not weeks or months of missed classes. She encourages faculty to call SDSC/Disability Resources if they wish to talk more about this because their staff will be happy to walk the faculty through their individual circumstance in regard to absence leniency.

Ms. Price recently met with the School of Music to discuss the things she is going over with senators today, and she thinks it proved really useful because several faculty indicated they had not known what certain things meant or that they had any leeway in certain situations. She stated that faculty can rely on Disability Resources to work with them regarding any questions they have about their students. She noted that absence leniency will, unfortunately, not work with anything that is regarded as performance-based, such as internships; faculty may be able to work around some things, but giving blanket leniency in cases such as the Social Work requirement of 450 hours of internship will not work. She invited faculty to call if they get one of the accommodation letters and do not know what they need to do with it.

Ms. Price has also noticed a lot of professors giving students with testing accommodations time-and-a-half to complete an exam, but this should really depend upon the specific learning disorder. She noted that a student with dyscalculia would probably not need time-and-a-half for a history or sociology exam if the test was not mathematics-based, but they would probably need it for physics, math, or statistics exams. Her office is reviewing the specific learning disorders and applying more appropriate accommodations.

Ms. Price outlined that another new procedure is that if a student wants to use an accommodation for a semester while participating in an external placement, such as an internship, student teaching, clinical rotation, or academy, the student must talk with Ms. Price specifically. Ms. Price will then meet with the internship coordinator and/or the person responsible for hosting the student at the external site to see if accommodations are actually feasible and reasonable at that location. Ms. Price explained that Disability Resources does academic accommodations, not workplace accommodations, which would have to be done through Human Resources; but if a student wants an academic accommodation because they are at an external classroom, that has to be done through Disability Resources. She stressed that this cannot be accomplished through a handshake agreement between the faculty member and student teaching placement, for example. She explained that what this means for faculty and advising staff is that the prior semester, hopefully early in that semester and prior to this type of placement, the student will have to set up a meeting with Ms. Price in order to put this in motion. Ms. Price will verify that the right people are meeting at the right time and see what can work and what can be negotiated a little bit.

Senator Nash asked for clarification as to whether students have to send an accommodation letter for every single class. Ms. Price responded that they have to send a letter to every faculty member that they have. Senator Nash noted that Nursing has found that if a student has the same faculty member for more than one class, they will sometimes send the letter for one class but not for the other. Ms. Price stated that the student should send the accommodation letter to whoever is listed on STARS for a class; if there are two faculty members teaching one class, the student should send the letter to both.

<u>Miguel Huerta, Executive Director, Advising and Student Support</u>

. Dr. Huerta explained that the Testing Center is the physical location that students with testing accommodations *can utilize* to take an exam. He explained the reason he says "can utilize" is because a student cannot be forced to use the Testing Center, and this is a very important point. Dr. Huerta works very closely with the SDSC so, in a similar manner, he will confirm with that office whether the student has the appropriate testing accommodations. He also works closely with faculty.

Dr. Huerta stated that the Testing Center is managed by him and his assistant, which is currently very manageable. He noted that they have three tests scheduled for Thursday, October 1 – Test 2, 3, and 4 for the semester – so there is not a lot of uptake right now. He stated that University Technology is finishing the final touches on the Testing Center's website so that, moving forward, students will not have to email Dr. Huerta directly. He explained the new website will include a jot form and additional information for faculty to

access if they have questions. He said that further outreach after the website is fully up to date will come from the SLC@wiu.edu email.

Dr. Huerta said he is the one reaching out to faculty to let them know that a student requested to use a testing center, and there are times when he needs to send messages out separately because the student may not need know about everything he is working through with the faculty member. He stated that the purpose of the emails is to confirm what the faculty member is allowing and to make sure that Dr. Huerta understands what the proper test setting is in the faculty member's classroom so that students requesting a testing accommodation are not given additional resources that they do not necessarily qualify for or that they would not be given in the classroom. Dr. Huerta explained that he asks faculty members questions not because he wants to be in their business but in order to make sure the Testing Center is maintaining the same integrity of the exams that the faculty member provides in the classroom.

Dr. Huerta noted that until its final Library location is ready, the Testing Center is currently located in the Memorial Hall basement, so students only have to go one floor down to access it. He added that there is more than enough space down there, including private offices to ensure that students have the space for their testing accommodations.

Chair McKenzie told senators the reason she wanted Dr. Huerta to speak to Faculty Senate was because there was some miscommunication at the beginning of the year indicating that there would be no testing accommodations done through the Testing Center any more, but that was not correct. She stated that if senators have questions, they now have a face to put with the name. Dr. Huerta encouraged senators to reach out to him if they have any questions.

Senator Frederick asked about the Testing Center hours. Dr. Huerta replied that the office does its best to be open 8-4:30. He added that if the class is offered at a time when the student would not have time-and-a-half allowable to finish the exam, he will reach out to the faculty member to see if the Testing Center can administer the exam at an earlier time. He explained that this is in order to be mindful of the Testing Center staff and make sure that the time works for everyone involved. He stated if the student is not able to test the same day as the class, he will work with the faculty member to make sure the alternate date and time works. He stressed that he does not make the final decision himself but in consultation with the faculty member and the SDSC. He added that it will be important once the website is up, especially during finals, for students to submit their requests early so that Dr. Huerta can schedule them accordingly.

Dawn Sweet, Instructional Design and Technology Manager

Chair McKenzie stated that Ms. Sweet is the "guru" when it comes to Western Online and has already put in a ton of work for faculty in order to make things accessible if they choose to use the tools she has created. She said Ms. Sweet will walk senators through the resources that are already available to help faculty navigate what they use on Western Online.

Ms. Sweet stated that a whole team in addition to herself worked on these resources for over four years, including multiple groups of faculty and the Faculty Senate. She said that as Online Teaching and Learning (OTL) tried to come up with and work on the ideas they were asked to consider, they did keep accessibility in mind. She assured senators that any time they use a template from OTL it will be 100 percent accessible.

Ms. Sweet showed senators an example of what the full UCNI course template would look like if a faculty member decided to use the internal components. She pointed out that the internal components are not required at this time, and it is unknown if they will be, but some faculty are using them while others have chosen not to, which is perfectly fine.

Ms. Sweet noted that currently Western Online in total is 64.9 percent accessible; that includes 239,089 files. She stated that in the last month about 19,052 more files have become more accessible, so the university is improving in that area. She showed that there have been 782 alternative formats downloaded by students; in Panorama, if students want to use an immersive reader on a document, those formats are built in for them. Ms. Sweet also noted that 1,496 remediations were made in September, 153 more than in August.

Ms. Sweet said web accessibility shows the highest percentage of accessibility in Western Online (94.7), which would make sense because if faculty utilize a template provided by OTL it will be 100 percent accessible out of the box. She explained that web accessibility primarily refers to the HTML files that are inside Western Online; this can include information that a faculty member puts into an announcement, a description for an assignment or quiz, or a discussion question. Ms. Sweet stated that PowerPoint accessibility is 69.4 percent, Word is at 66 percent, and .pdf documents are 24.2 percent accessible.

Ms. Sweet stated that when OTL works with faculty on UCNI or just using the HTML5 templates, typically once the templates are put in, their course can rise up to 86 or 92 percent accessible right away, after which all the faculty is left to make accessible is PowerPoints, Word, .pdf, and Excel files. She observed that .pdf files are typically more cumbersome to work on and there are a lot of them; there are also a lot of PowerPoints, and OTL has noticed a number of faculty working with publisher PowerPoints, which are not typically accessible either. She added that if a faculty member's publisher has accessible PowerPoints, the faculty member can request them.

Ms. Sweet reiterated that when faculty receive the OTL template, they will see on Panorama that they have a 100 percent accessibility rate; as faculty add things, however, they will see that number change, at which point they can make changes that might be needed. She pointed out that Files and Issues in Panorama will provide the score for every file a faculty member has in their Western Online course.

Ms. Sweet provided a basic overview of the accessibility that is built into the Western Online homepage and how some of those decisions were made to ensure that people using assistive devices have the easiest navigation possible – basically congruent with what sighted individuals can do to easily get to where they want to go. She noted that Online Teaching and Learning tried to be very meticulous about consistency when designing the accessible templates so that the main areas will be very familiar to students when they move from one course to another. She pointed out that the homepage will have a simplified navigation bar that is intended for someone who might be using a screen reader or PIX; OTL has also tried to find the easiest way for students to navigate the page using the Tab key that has to be used for certain assistive devices. She noted that if a student started at the top left of the page and tabbed through, they could find everything, although most assistive devices provide control keys or clicks that they can use to pull up a menu so that, similar to a sighed person, they can skip to exactly what information they wish to access.

Ms. Sweet said the template was designed with the idea of getting students the main information first. She demonstrated for senators that the first thing a student with an assistive device would access or see would be the system navigation bar, then they would jump down to the simplified course navigation bar where they would read the alt-text in the image banner. She said the third thing a student would reach is the instructor information and quick links; OTL moved this to the top of the page because they thought it was important for students to find out right away who their instructor is and how to get in touch with that person. She added that the quick links were added for faculty who formerly would have added extra links in the navigation bar but will no longer be able to do so with this template. She said that OTL built quick links for instructor info, syllabus, and course navigation, which faculty can leave in and use, take out, or change however they want.

Ms. Sweet stated that the fourth item on the page is the Announcements section, which OTL thought was very important for students, after which they would move to the Calendar, followed by Content. She explained that Content is the sixth thing a student would tab to because they can get to it very quickly from the navigation bar if desired. She pointed out that there is a For Instructors Only widget at the bottom of the page that students will not be able to see; it contains tip sheets and other information that faculty might look for on the OTL website.

Ms. Sweet showed senators, by way of comparison, the full UCNI template, which is not required at this point, and not everyone is using it. She said what faculty using the full template would find, for the most part, is the standard template for their Fall 2026 classes, which looks similar to what OTL has prepared but includes the older content browser that faculty may be used to from their previous classes. She noted that OTL loaded the Welcome module beginning with 2027 classes because some people wanted the instructor information and syllabus there; it will also include the course welcome, navigation instructions if faculty are using the UCNI instructor information, and the accessible course template loaded right into the course, which faculty can download and start editing.

Ms. Sweet reiterated that the accessible templates are accessible right out of the box; if faculty members want to edit their course or instructor information, all of the heading information is already created for them, which is how a student would navigate with the tab key or an assistive device. Ms. Sweet stated that if faculty copy and paste from another area, she recommends doing so as plain or unformatted text that will load right into the existing font; if faculty have trouble with this they can let OTL know. She reiterated that the point is that the templates are a starting place; faculty can take information out, cut and paste over it, or change headings. She said faculty can use the prompts or the template, but they are not required to; it is just there to get them started.

Ms. Sweet pointed out that if faculty want to create a new module, such as a chapter overview or something else they might use in their classes, they can do so with the Upload and Create button, where they can find a number of different templates; these are the new HTML 5.0 templates created by OTL, which are also 100 percent accessible out of the box. She said that Heading 1, 2, etc. can be replaced by whatever the faculty member wants. She said there is also a video page which includes instructions for adding embedded YouTube videos. She noted that there are a variety of different options for faculty to use with the templates, and some faculty have told OTL that they are using them all the time. She said some faculty have asked if OTL can work with them to create specific pages, but those pages will also be available for anyone to use as a template; it would not have the faculty member's information on it, though, but just the main information the faculty member wants to use. Ms. Sweet is happy to work on something like this with any faculty member as long as they realize that the template must be available to others as well.

Ms. Sweet also demonstrated how faculty can maintain accessibility for their courses. She stressed that after making changes anywhere in the editors – announcements, a widget, an assignment or discussion description, or an HTML template – the faculty member should get into the habit of going to the accessibility checker on the toolbar to determine if there are now any accessibility errors and see how to fix them.

Ms. Sweet told senators that OTL created an online course accessibility resource course last spring which can be accessed through Western Online on the Faculty/Staff Development tab. She said that when this was created, all faculty were loaded into it, but she is not sure if new fall faculty have been loaded; if someone tries to access this course and is unable to do so, they can contact support@wiu.edu, choose OTL, and say that access is needed to this. She said that faculty names can be put in by hand, but if a batch load is needed that is a different process.

Ms. Sweet stated that faculty do not have to take this course; it is a resource. She said, for example, if a faculty member wants to do something with accessibility in Microsoft Word, it is possible to search for all the resources with "Microsoft Word" in them in this particular course. She said another way to utilize this resource is for faculty to work through the different areas as if they were taking a course. She noted that it includes checkpoint quizzes that will allow faculty to get certificates of completion, such as for a retention file, but she stressed that this is not required. She recommends that when faculty begin the course, they start by looking at the section on online accessibility at WIU, which just goes over a few of the fundamentals, followed by the online course standards, which are a pretty simple list of standards that coincide with federal and state guidelines.

Ms. Sweet recommends that faculty who have never had the chance to understand what it is like for someone with a disability to navigate an online course watch the video in the Let's Get Motivated activity link. She said while it is a bit old, it provides an example of people with different disabilities trying to navigate online information based on whether they have a screen reader or are using PIX. She thinks it is really eye opening to see what works and does not work well for some users. She noted that there is also the opportunity to participate in a discussion about the video, which a lot of faculty are doing; they are discussing what they did not know before and how the video changed their thoughts about some things.

Ms. Sweet said that if faculty are just getting started, she would recommend they look at the Eight Best Practices tip sheet, which goes over fundamentals such as headings, using the list tool, meaningful hyperlinks, alt-text for images, long descriptions for complex graphics or objects, accessible tables, appropriate color use and contrast, and accessible audio and video. She said these eight fundamentals are part of the required federal and state accessibility laws, and OTL has created a tip sheet for each of them. She added that OTL has not yet provided instructions for doing such things as headings in .pdf because those get a bit more detailed than the instructions for Word, PowerPoint, or Western Online HTML. She stated that the online course accessibility resource course has a lot of different information and can be accessed however faculty like to learn and go through these types of things. She said it also includes YouTube tutorials, some Adobe tutorials from other websites, Microsoft's own accessibility trainings, and additional training courses and accessibility resources that faculty may be interested in. She noted that this, in a nutshell, and in addition to what she showed senators previously, is what OTL has tried to develop to help everyone go forward with accessibility.

Chair McKenzie stated that she uses a Mac so does not use Microsoft Word; she uses a lot of Google Docs and the Google Suite. Ms. Sweet said that OTL can work on something for these kinds of users, but they did not include anything specific to this because this is not something they have an accessibility checker for. She clarified that if a faculty member was using this in Western Online, that is not something Panorama checks, so the faculty member would have to use their own accessibility checker. She thinks that the majority of faculty will not have an accessibility checker for Google products, but that is not to say that OTL cannot come up with a module for Google. She thinks this would not take a lot of time and that OTL may be able to find tutorials that are already created and put them in if that would be helpful. Chair McKenzie thinks it would be helpful to have something on how to create accessible documents because faculty can use Google Docs, download their document as a Word doc, .pdf, or other things, and then put it into Western Online. She thinks it would be helpful for faculty to at least know the steps, similar to the Microsoft tutorial. Ms. Sweet replied that they would not be much different, and she will work on this; if she finds something online, she will upload it without re-creating the wheel, but faculty will not be able to check their accessibility with those Google applications. She added that she can, however, include information about how to download a free accessibility checker. She offered to let Chair McKenzie know when this additional information is available. Ms. Sweet stated that OTL staff will help as much as they can, but they are not accessibility specialists, so their knowledge is limited to the more basic concepts.

IV. Reports of Committees and Councils

A. Senate Nominating Committee
(Peter Cole, Chair)

1. Faculty Nominations

SENATE COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

Council on Curricular Programs and Instruction (CCPI)				
Amy Burke, Applied Clinical, Educational, & Professional Programs			2029	CBHCP
Council on General Education (CGE)				
Matt Hughes, Visual & Performing Arts	replacing	Donald Laney	2029	FINE ARTS
Council on Intercollegiate Athletics (CIA)				
Matt Balk, Humanities	replacing	Charlie Chadwell	2029	CHASE

UNIVERSITY COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES:

Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression (Committee on)		
Tom Sadler, Accounting & Business Administration	Fall 2027	CBHCP
Josh Connor, Applied Clinical, Educational, & Professional Programs	Spring 2027	CBHCP
University Technology Advisory Group (UTAG)		
Rashmi Sharma, Education	2029	CHASE

There were no further nominations, and the slate of candidates was elected.

Chair McKenzie noted that while the Senate Nominating Committee was able to fill a number of vacancies, they are looking for someone from each college to serve on the Senate's ad hoc Committee on University Accessibility, so if any senator knows of someone who would be interested in this service, please let a member of the Nominating Committee or Chair McKenzie know.

V. Old Business – None

VI. New Business

A. For the Good of the Body – None

Motion: To adjourn (Frederick)

The Faculty Senate adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm
Faculty Senate Office Manager and Recording Secretary