

**Faculty Council – WIU – Quad Cities
Minutes – Nov 2023**

List of District Representatives on Executive Committee

- Everett Hamner (CAS, 2026), Co-Chair
- Dana Lindemann (CAS, 2025), Co-Chair
- Haley Wikoff, (COEHS, 2026), Secretary
- Md. Shahin Alam (CBT, 2025)
- Ted Avtgis (COFAC, 2026)
- Bret Bogenschneider (CBT, 2025)
- Christopher Carpenter (COFAC, 2025)
- Jeff Hancks (Library, 2025)
- Daniel Malachuk (CAS, 2026)
- Angela McClanahan-Simmons (COFAC, 2025)
- Monica Rouse (COEHS, 2025)
- Il-Seop Shin (CBT, 2026)

Others in attendance

- Michael Sheerin
- Susan Stewart
- Colin Harbke
- Susie Brooks
- Tammy Werner
- Rob Porter
- Kat Broughton
- Jose Pavez
- Padmaja Pillutla

Guests

- Paul Edwards (VP for Finance and Administration)
- Kristi Mindrup (VP of QC Campus Operations)
- Mark Mossman (Interim Provost)

Friday, Nov. 3; 1:00 PM, QCC 3420 and via Zoom

Zoom Link: <https://wiu.zoom.us/j/92624813559>

1. Call to order at 1:01 pm
2. Motion to approve minutes of Sept 2023
 - Jeff made a motion to approve
 - Chris seconded
 - Unanimous vote to approve

New Business (with considerable overlap of items 3-5):

3. Presentation from and discussion with Paul Edwards. On Dr. Huang's suggestion, Everett had asked Mr. Edwards to share his ideas about how QC academic programs might better receive the attention they need for sustained growth and thereby serve the university as a whole more fully.
4. Discussion with Mark Mossman. Our discussion with Dr. Mossman was planned to overlap with and follow from the discussion with Mr. Edwards. We asked to hear about near-term, tangible steps he might help us take to invest in QC-based students' opportunities. There was also interest in a follow-up conversation about findings and recommendations of the Academic Affairs Strategic Plan committee, but this subject did not arise.
5. Discussion with Kristi Mindrup. Again, there was overlap and follow-ups vis-a-vis the preceding conversation topics. In addition, Faculty Council asked for Dr. Mindrup to be prepared to share about her requested cabinet review of the methodology used to determine QC campus student headcounts, with potential discussion of the opportunities for greater clarity enabled by the new university ERP that is to be in place soon. These topics arose briefly but were largely left aside in favor of focused conversation on directions and means for QC academic program advancement.

Conversation Summary

Opening remarks from Paul Edwards:

- Intending to do things as quickly, thoroughly, and thoughtfully as possible.
- Contract with EAB [Details researched later: a major education consulting firm based in Washington, D.C.; launched 2007; ~1500 employees, last sold for \$1.55 billion in 2017] signed this Monday; will also take advantage of previously contracted (but still in process) report from RNL [Ruffalo Noel Levitz, enrollment and fundraising management firm).
 - EAB will provide suggestions and consultation and paths for:
 - Academic program evaluation
 - QC campus will be considered separately from the Macomb campus
 - Enrollment management
 - Facility condition assessment and space utilization study
 - Determination of what to do with programs and space
 - Consultation about online programs
 - To be driven as a separate line of business
 - Online programs could be housed at QC campus
 - This partnership is sought for accountability, thoroughness, timeliness, and to have an unbiased look at the information.
 - EAB will provide recommendations about what should grow and what should not.
 - \$200,000 a year for the next 3 years will be spent on this work.
- Preliminary projections – 5 years out
 - With no new revenue, using projected enrollment figures, if we changed nothing, in 5 years from now we would have a deficit of around \$33 million.

- If we did nothing differently, 29% of our salaries would then have to be cut for the institution to not have a deficit.
- This would be the last thing that he would want to do; efforts should be put into growth.
- Understands we have expertise to make changes ourselves, but values the accountability, thoroughness, and unbiasedness of EAB. Institutions that fix problems of this size get help; those that don't just keep blaming different leaders and fail.
- Focus on 5 to 10 years from now, not today or tomorrow
 - We have to be mindful of why we're here and our fiduciary responsibility.
 - We need to look forward to the students of the future.
 - We need to reimagine who we want to serve; he would like to see greater focus on online education and then see that support the work that's happening on campus.
- Ideas:
 - More public/private partnerships
 - Does not have the mindset that the QC campus should go to any other institution.
 - We need to get out of the silo mentality we have.
 - Looking at a new budgeting model
 - Need to overcome "birth dearth" ("enrollment cliff" may be more of a "steady slide")
 - In working on online expansion, we need to focus on nontraditional students.

Follow-up questions/thoughts from various QC Faculty and responses from VP Edwards, Provost Mossman, and VP Mindrup:

- Dr. Hamner: There's a growing sense that we must have financially empowered academic leadership – someone who is personally committed and locally connected – here on the QC campus. Without that move, we will likely continue to do the same things over and over again. Until both campuses have people that actually have authority, we can continue to say "two campuses-one university," but we can't actually do anything meaningful here on the QC campus. Can you imagine steps by which that could happen?
 - Response from Dr. Mossman
 - Sympathetic to the idea because it gets to the root thing that we need to work on (enrollment management, decision-making, etc.). We have to start to generate more resources first, but then we can start to push forward with an idea of what academic administration would look like on the QC campus.
 - Recommends "A Thriving Illinois" [[website](#)] on the state of higher education in Illinois, with which he believes our HVHE strategic plan aligns very well, given our focus on accessibility and equity.
 - We need more on-campus events like Dr. Stewart's HRM reception last night.
 - We need to continue to look at enrollment management.
 - Response from Mr. Edwards

- Would support a structure that would allow the QC campus to make decisions on what it needs, operating more “unto itself,” especially given his past experience with multi-campus universities and his belief that this approach is easier. But we’re going to need to work to get there, given the budget constraints.
 - Growing in a thoughtful and meaningful way would allow for further changes in the structure and processes that would allow the QC campus to operate in the way it needs, somewhat more independently.
 - Supports anything that would be more effective and efficient.
 - Enterprise Resource Plan [[Ellucian](#)] will be signed next week; expecting a January launch; this should be another helpful step toward enabling QC growth.
- Response from Dr. Mindrup
 - Optimism about QC programs’ potential
 - Working on putting tools in place (like those from EAB) and looking at data of who the QC campus is and who we serve should help us to look forward to who we are in the future.
 - Merely putting a dean or a provost on the QC campus and otherwise maintaining the status quo wouldn’t help us to grow, but truly empowering such a person would. We need to look at programmatic opportunities that students say they want/need and what we already know via various analyses.
- Dr. Hamner: There is agreement from the QC faculty that any wise planning we do is important; all valid data is valuable. Given that the EAB process is happening, how do we make it as worthwhile as possible, while also not waiting longer to move forward? We identified steps in the QC strategic plan two years ago and in HVHE last year on which we have yet to act because we lack QC-specific financial means and authority.
 - VP Edwards: EAB was selected because their initial report will come in the very near future, in a matter of months (likely end of spring semester).
 - VP Mindrup: The IBHE higher ed needs analysis in IL and focusing on QC can also help us (simultaneously with the EAB research).
- Dr. Pillutla: We’ve had a decent amount of turnover in the last 23 years, and the thing we struggle the most here at the QC is that there doesn’t seem to be a shared administrative vision (across all offices, including not just President and Provost, but also Dean and Chair levels) for where and how we want the QC campus to go. Where will we be in 5 years from now?
 - Response from Dr. Mindrup
 - Vision for the campus is stated extensively in the QC strategic plan
 - “We have come a long way to establish our presence, but we haven’t opened the box.”
 - We’ve identified the strategic focus areas; the next step is to operationalize the strategic focus for this campus.

- She feels that we've made significant progress in the last 3 years even if there have also been areas of regress.
 - The type of students this campus serves is the growth potential of this university.
 - Follow-up question: request to highlight 2 or 3 specific positive things that have been implemented.
 - Response from Dr. Mindrup
 - Community perception of the campus: we've done major relationship building and repairing with community resources and partnerships, e.g. Corn Belt Ports program.
 - Outstanding outreach to the community, e.g. via the near-term opening of our Early Learning Center in Moline
 - Digital marketing
 - Key people on the campus that are working for the university that are based on the QC campus
 - When asked "Are we closing the QC campus?" there was an authentic response of "No" and shock from other cabinet-level administrators.
- Dr. Malachuk: an openly "pessimistic" question. It feels like there are a lot of barriers standing in the way of being able to move forward meaningfully in the QC, and they're all in Macomb. In order to move a QC faculty member's idea forward, it has to go through Macomb-based chairs and deans who may not choose to advance it. How do we keep innovation from being squashed by this pattern?
 - Response from Dr. Mossman
 - "Very sympathetic" to this frustration. We need this kind of frank communication and there needs to be a result of the conversation.
 - We need to work on the management and operations; we need to identify the barriers and eliminate them.
 - We need to grow online and face-to-face enrollment on the QC campus.
 - Response from Dr. Mindrup
 - Degree completability is a crucial issue. Huge need for entry point classes rather than requiring students to get in on "second floor."
- Dr. Bogenschneider: Support for the [VITA tax clinic](#) has been pulled. I was told it could continue if I funded it personally, which I am considering, but I'm unsure that is possible. But why not support this? Also, is the demographic enrollment cliff we hear so much about the same across the entire state of IL and the same for Macomb and the QC? Isn't the QC a place where population and business are growing? [[Some data from QC Chamber of Commerce.](#)] To focus on accounting, St. Ambrose is growing, despite their program being unaccredited and 3x our cost, while ours is double-accredited and is shrinking. What can we learn from that program or others in our area?
 - Response from Mr. Edwards
 - Could we learn from SAU? Probably, if they will share with us.

- We should be raking in the students given our double accreditation.
 - We need to be asking why students are not choosing us.
- Response from Dr. Mossman
 - Recommends Nathan Grawe book on higher ed about how the population “skyscraper” is becoming a “reverse pyramid” [[Demographics and the Demand for Higher Education, Johns Hopkins UP, 2018](#)]
 - There are fewer people being born in the Northeast and Midwest.
 - We need to address how we’re thinking of the Quad Cities and if we’re thinking of it as a monolithic thing, or looking at it from the perspective of each of the cities. Do Bettendorf, Davenport, Rock Island, Moline, and East Moline need distinct outreach strategies?
- Dr. Stewart: We should be replicating some things that SAU is doing. We need to have an internship coordinator on the QC campus, beyond a Career Center director. We also need an alumni relations rep on the QC campus who pulls people back to campus by hosting events. It is unfortunate that WIU closed its Executive Studies Center - SAU has a great professional development arm on their campus that pulls in people to their campus for workshops, meetings, and more (and they charge them fees in most cases). Who is meeting with QC employers (esp. those with tuition reimbursement benefits) to recruit their employees to take classes at WIU? Can we offer discounts to local employers – for example, send X number of employees to WIU and the employer will receive X% discount on tuition?
- Dr. Werner: Reputation is an immediate problem, and it points to the need for an empowered leader on the academic side located on the QC campus. A student example: we have an engineering major who is a vet and is struggling in a physics course that is being taught by an adjunct who was put in a tough position at the last minute. The student’s experiences in that course are causing him to seriously consider uprooting his family and leave WIU, and he isn’t the only student who has dropped it or is considering doing so. Meanwhile, he and his peers are talking with other students in gen-ed courses and multiplying the effects of this poor experience. He went to the chair in question and to multiple faculty in this room early in the semester (many weeks ago) and repeatedly sought help, but has been told there’s nothing that can be done immediately. Because there is no academic leader here who is deeply concerned with the immediate campus reputation hit, we are sending a very counterproductive message.
 - Dr. Mossman will make himself available to the student directly.
- Dr. Shin: Engineering does not have an academic advisor on the QC campus, yet we have 4 programs running on the QC campus.
- Dr. Pillutla: There’s been a change in the number of students that are here on the QC campus compared to those in livestream or online campus

options. We have this beautiful space, but we are not having weekend residencies for our MBA programs. Other programs are doing that and they are bringing people to campus. If there was someone who was looking at the academic angle, on this campus, then we would have more innovative things happening that bring people to campus.

- Mr. Sheerin: We need to understand the difference between listening and hearing. At many institutions, that have had tremendous difficulties, they had many people that were sent to listen, but they weren't "hearing." There's a need to show that you've heard something. We need action, not just rhetoric.
- Dr. Hamner: Invitation for concluding thoughts to all three administrators: how would you like to see us help? What are a couple things you think we should work on immediately, e.g. in the next six months, rather than waiting for EAB on?
 - Dr. Mossman: communication is incredibly valuable. Happy to meet with us as often as we meet. Specifically, we all need to be aware of how significant our enrollments are and be mindful of enrollment management. We need to communicate clearly with chairs and deans the importance of enrollment.
 - Mr. Edwards: "I "hear" you when you talk about communications and people being in the way." Encouraged us to share an idea with him and reach out. He's pushing for things to happen, and there's been some change. "I understand the need for shared governance, but it also can aggravate me because I firmly believe we get bogged down because everyone gets a say." "We need to work together to move forward and not bog down process; try your best to keep it moving forward." "I value people above all." "Relationships are critically important to me; what you believe and your ideas are critically important to me, but process can be frustrating. I hope bodies or groups do not get in the way of things, that we as people can work together."
 - Dr. Mindrup: "The things that we've heard around the table today have been things that have kept me up at night." "My job is to be the ambassador for this group and I will do my job to keep the QC at the top of the inbox." "My job is to keep the QC on the radar." We need to keep collaborating and working to build on the things that are in our immediate control: programs, courses, and people on campus. We need to continue to connect this campus to the community. Her door is open and she is willing to have conversations.

Updates:

6. Ms. Clare Thompson (Vice President for Advancement, Alumni Relations, and Athletics) will be our guest for the February 2 meeting. Following a BOT member resignation, our April meeting guest is TBD.
7. As a member of this semester's Faculty Senate ad hoc committee on AI, Everett invites everyone to share their experiences with student usage and their own

usage of such generative AI / Large Language Model (LLM) systems as ChatGPT. He is helping to produce a roughly ten-page report that will provide a summary of our findings, recommended reading, proposed syllabus language, and potentially other policy recommendations for Faculty Senate adoption.

8. Other items for the good of the body?

- a. A note from Annette Hamm with Faculty Senate: “[T]he Senate Nominating Committee is still looking for a CBT representative to CAGAS. The individual would need to be able to meet every week at 2:00. CAGAS also holds at least two meetings during the summer. This position would start immediately and continue until Fall 2026.” Questions? Please feel welcome to reach out to Everett and/or Annette. [Il-Seop will share this further in CBT.]

9. Adjourned 2:41 pm