WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Minutes of 7 February 2019

The Faculty Senate met in the Westside room of the Valley Dining Hall. There were 77 Senators and substitutes present.


Guests: Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Associate Dean, Graduate College; Christopher Cheatham, Vice Provost for Budget and Personnel; James Cousins, Associate Dean, College of Arts and Sciences; Paula Davis, Interim Executive Director, Marketing and Strategic Communications; Marilyn Duke, Center for Academic Success Programs; Mervyn Elliott, Director, WMU Essential Studies; Brian Fuller, Sindecuse Health Center; Ming Li, Dean, College of Education and Human Development; Ken Martin, Student Affairs; Linda Parker; Jessica Poling, Vice President, Western Student Association; Tony Proudfoot, Vice President for Marketing and Strategic Communication; David Reinhold, Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies; Cari Robertson, Sindecuse Health Center; Gayle Ruggiero, Sindecuse Health Center; Joseph Sanchez, WMU President, Western Student Association; Susan Stapleton, Dean, Graduate College; Raymond Thompson, Associate Dean, College of Aviation; Houssam Toutanji, Dean, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences; Jennifer Williamson, Discover Kalamazoo

Staff: S. Brodasky, S. Davenport

Faculty Senate President Richard Gershon called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

PROCEDURAL ITEMS

Acceptance of the Agenda

A motion was made by Heun, seconded by Gupta, to accept the agenda as published. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of 6 December 2018 Senate Meeting

Without objection, the minutes of the 6 December meeting were approved as published.

Faculty Senate Executive Board Report – Richard Gershon, Faculty Senate President

Senate President Gershon’s report included the following:

- The following retired faculty recently passed away:
  - James Burns, Teaching, Learning and Leadership
  - Arthur Falk, Philosophy
  - James Petersen, Sociology and associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences
  - Nancy Stone, English

- The Faculty Senate Executive Board is currently seeking to fill positions on its seven councils and numerous committees. Faculty may nominate themselves or others who they believe would be effective members of the councils or committees by sending an email to facultysenate@wmich.edu by 28 February.

- The Presidential Scholars Convocation will be held on 22 March from 4 to 6 p.m. in the Bernhard Center.

- On 25 January, the first of four retreats was held by the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee. This represents an important next phase in the WMU Essential Studies curriculum process.

- Research and Creative Activities Day, organized by the Graduate College, will be held on 11 April. The event brings together graduate students from across campus to present their research and to interact with other graduate students and faculty. Anyone who wishes to attend can meet and talk with students about their research.

- The Campus Planning and Finance Council reviewed and provided input into WMU’s sustainable and proactive storm water planning initiatives that have resulted in substantial cost-savings for campus and improved water quality in the region. At issue is the fact that WMU’s physical campus contains many impervious surfaces such as pavement, which prevents rain and other water sources from naturally soaking into the ground. The goal is to create an effective management of storm water runoff that is both efficient and environmentally friendly.

- The International Education Council is currently working with the Haenicke Institute for Global Education to develop a new Global Classroom initiative, which has the potential to transform cross-cultural student integration at WMU. The global classroom concept takes advantage of current videoconferencing technology to bring shared classroom experiences between a WMU course and a possible counterpart from another university.

Remarks by Edward Montgomery, WMU President

President Montgomery’s remarks included the following:

- Changes in Lansing: there is a brand new legislature with a republican congress and a democrat governor. There is not a lot of experience with higher education in legislature.

- Dunbar Hall: one of the most heavily used classroom buildings and home to more than a dozen academic programs, will undergo $40 million in renovations, thanks in large part to state capital outlay dollars. Some $30 million in funding from the state of Michigan and $10 million in funding
Faculty appreciate the students better than anyone else does, keeping students at WMU is about personal connections. Relationships with the faculty are the most critical in improving retention, and persistence. It needs to be remembered that it is for the state to appropriately fund public higher education operations (not just capital project investment) and the unfortunate history of not doing so. The subcommittee membership needs to know that higher education is the only component in the state budget that has not recovered from pre-Recession levels, despite the fact that it’s one of the few that is serving the most people at the same time. If Michigan is to continue to enjoy a remarkable higher education infrastructure, which has 15 public universities, many of which are nationally ranked, including WMU, then the legislature needs to resource these institutions. Limiting funding for the state’s universities has real costs, for our economy and for the strength and future vitality of high-quality higher education in Michigan.

Spring Enrollment: WMU has had drops in domestic resident students. There are challenges holding on to resident students. There have been increases of students with holds on their accounts for academic or financial reasons. At the end of the spring semester is typically when students leave and don’t come back, but it can be changed. Faculty know the students better than anyone else does, keeping students at WMU is about personal connections.

Sanford Center for Financial Planning and Wellness: part of the Haworth College of Business, was established with a generous gift from alumnus Todd Sanford. The center focuses very specifically on the lack of financial acumen in general and offers ways to address that for both our students and the public at large. This new resource is going to bring a lot of value to students, to campus and to the broader community. WMU appreciates Alumni Sanford and those in HCOB for this vision.

Faculty Accolades:
- Andrew Rathbun, associate professor, School of Music, ensemble album “Atwood Suites” was nominated for a JUNO Jazz album of the Year award in the group category. The JUNOs are the “Canadian Grammy awards.” The Ottawa Citizen, a Canadian media outlet, characterized the album as a collection of “gorgeous compositions and orchestrations stirringly set the poetry of Margaret Atwood to music.”
- Jill Hermann-Willmarth, professor, Teaching, Learning and Educational Studies, was honored by the Literacy Research Association for her book Reading the Rainbow: LGBTQ-Inclusive Literacy Instruction in the Elementary Classroom with the Edward B. Fry Book Award. The Fry award goes to a book that has advanced knowledge about literacy, displays inquiry into literacy and shows responsible intellectual risk taking.

Student Accolades:
- Greyson LaLonde, a junior majoring in psychology, Ontrell McKenzie, a sophomore majoring in biomedical sciences, and Meriah Putnam, a senior majoring in integrated supply chain management are the latest to win the highly competitive Gilman International Scholarship. This State Department scholarship is helping to fund the students’ study abroad experiences this year as part of an effort to expand the number of Americans studying and interning abroad. About one-quarter of those who applied for scholarship nationally received an award for the spring 2019 round. Seven students from WMU applied and three were selected.

Questions to the President centered on the decline in enrollment, student debt and community colleges offering 4-year degrees. Discussion was held.

Remarks by Jennifer Bott, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Provost Bott’s remarks included the following:

Think Big: the town hall meetings have offered significant time in learning about the legacy of WMU. The meetings are an opportunity for faculty, students, and staff to inform the administration about what makes WMU special. The theme of engagement with our community, faculty, and staff has been clear at each of the sessions. All of the ideas collected thus far are on the website: https://wmich.edu/thinkbig. WMU embraces the “Goldilocks” campus, it’s not so small that it does not offer opportunity, but also not so large as to be overwhelming to students. The remaining town hall meetings dates are:
- Feb. 12, 3 to 5 p.m. at the Student Recreation Center
- Feb. 13, 3 to 5 p.m. at the Trimpe Multicultural Center
- Feb. 15, 9 to 11 a.m. at the Parkview Campus

Relationships with the faculty are the most critical in improving retention and persistence. It needs to be remembered that every student is an indicator of our success.
ACTION ITEM
MOA-18/06: Honors Upon Graduation
The Transfer of Credit Committee recommends reduction of the number of credit hours of WMU coursework required to be considered for graduation with honors from 50 to 30.
A motion was made by Jellies and seconded, to approve MOA-18/06.

Discussion was held.
With two votes against, the motion to approve MOA-18/06 carried.

INFORMATION / DISCUSSION ITEMS
WMU Essential Studies Update – Sarah Summy, Chair, WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee
Chair Summy’s report included the following:

- The WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee held the first of four half-day review retreats on 25 January. Sixty-six course proposals were reviewed at that meeting through a strong peer-review process that everyone involved believed went well. It is a time-consuming process. Approximately 300 courses will be reviewed by the committee.
- Courses that have been reviewed are either accepted or denied within the workflow system. The majority of courses reviewed in January were approved. If a course has been denied, the initiator of the proposal will receive email notification along with the review notes from the committee on what is needed to re-submit the proposal. Often the reason for the denial is additional information or clarification is needed. The committee strongly encourages re-submissions.
- The status of courses that have been reviewed are included in the minutes of the WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee and can be accessed on the Faculty Senate website. Additionally, inquiries can be made through the WMU Essential Studies email address: wmu-essentialstudies@wmich.edu
- The goal of the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee is to have an initial WMU Essential Studies curriculum confirmed over the summer. The next step following the course approvals will be for the WMU Essential Studies Director, in collaboration with the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee and the WMU Curriculum Director, to review all courses as part of the overall WMU Essential Studies curriculum. It will need to be ensured that there are enough courses, not too few and not too many, in each category and that there are enough sections of each course to meet student demand.
- The Provost has approved a faculty fellow position to assist in set up of the WMU Essential Studies program and focus on writing across the curriculum. Applications are being accepted by the Office of Faculty Development through 22 February. The position will begin in summer. Questions can be directed to OFD.

Discussion was held.

Healthy Campus 2020 – Diane Anderson, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students; Ken Martin, Case Manager for Student Affairs; Brian Fuller, Director, Sindecuse Counseling Center; and Cari Robertson, Director, Health Promotion and Education
The panel presented WMU student data with national comparisons: https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2019/Healthy_Campus_2020-FS_Presentation.7-2019.pdf

Discussion was held.

Discover Kalamazoo – Jennifer Williamson, Business Development Manager

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC CONCERNS
Discussion covered concern regarding the Cooley Law School and low faculty attendance at the “Think Big” town hall meetings.

ADJOURNMENT
The Faculty Senate will meet next on 14 March 2019, in the Bernhard Center, rooms 208-210. The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Sue Brodasky and Suzanne Davenport, Faculty Senate Office