WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Minutes of 7 November 2019

The Faculty Senate met in Rooms 208-210 of the Bernhard Center. There were 69 Senators and substitutes present.


Guests: Brooks Applegate, Educational Leadership, Research and Technology; Louann Bierlein Palmer, Educational Leadership, Research and Technology; Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Interim Dean, Graduate College; Chris Cheatham, Vice Provost for Budget and Personnel; David Dakin, Director of Planning, Space Management and Capital Projects, Facilities Management; Paula Davis, Director of Strategic Communications; Diane Dirette, Faculty Fellow, Disability Services for Students; Marilyn Duke, Center for Academic Success Programs; Rob Eversole, Chair, Professional Concerns Committee; Jayne Fraley-Burgett, Director, Disability Services for Students; Paul Gallagher, Associate Dean, University Libraries; Andrew Holmes, Executive Director for University Accreditation and Executive Director of Technology, Extended University Programs; Tony Proudfoot, Vice President for Marketing and Strategic Communication; David Reinhold, Associate Provost for Assessment and Undergraduate Studies; Lauren Smith, President, Western Student Association; Bre Traynor, Assistant Director, Mental Health Outreach, Student Affairs

Staff: S. Brodasky, S. Davenport

Faculty Senate President Richard Gershon called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.

PROCEDURAL ITEMS
Acceptance of the Agenda
A motion was made by Jellies, seconded by Rudge, to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes of 3 October 2019 Senate Meeting
Without objection, the minutes of the 3 October meeting were approved as published.
Dr. Kristin Sovis, an English professor at Central Michigan University and Dr. Amanda Stearns-Pfeiffer, an English professor at Oakland University.

- A thank you was expressed to Dr. Wanda Hadley for representing WMU on a national stage. Hadley, associate professor of Educational Leadership in Higher Education at the College of Education and Human Development, recently took part in a panel discussion at the 2019 Symposium on Learning Disabilities in Mt. Dora, Florida.
- Western Michigan University is one of 20 universities joining a three-year institutional change effort funded by the National Science Foundation to develop inclusive faculty recruitment, hiring, and retention practices. This is an effort that is co-lead by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities. It’s called Aspire: The National Alliance for Inclusive & Diverse STEM Faculty and it is aimed at ensuring all STEM faculty use inclusive teaching practices and that institutions increase the diversity of STEM faculty.
- Zac Archer, faculty member in Mechanical Engineering, was noted for his work on the cutting edge research on autonomous vehicles.
- The Think Big town hall sessions wrapped up last week. There were some sobering data points shared, but also some very exciting possibilities for demonstrating WMU’s ability to provide a real, relevant, and rare experience for students. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bott, Vice President for Marketing and Strategic Communication Tony Proudfoot, and Vice President for Student Affairs Diane Anderson were thanked for their leadership in this important initiative. Think Big is not “finished” and it is not simply a task for only the cabinet, or select departments, or for individuals to handle. Everyone at WMU has a lot of difficult work to do in order to implement the platform that was identified, and it is work that will require everyone’s attention, time, and talents.
- At the cabinet level, the work continues on addressing the issues raised in the Employee Engagement survey. Three work teams have been formed around the topics of Communication, Leadership, and Collaboration in order to move forward with strategies in those areas.

*Remarks by Jennifer Bott, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*

Provost Bott’s remarks included the following:

- Last year WMU reached a high for reporting midterm grades at 34% and surpassed it this fall at 39%, which is an all-time record high, but it is still not enough.
- There were more than 730 attendees at the four Think Big sessions combined. The process is a collective effort and will continue to be.
- The Employee Engagement survey disaggregated data was disseminated at the Academic Forum. Each of the college deans were asked to determine focus areas by college with input of faculty and staff.
- A well-attended feedback session was held to gather information pertaining to the planned Dunbar Hall renovation.

Comments included:

- The Provost was asked to provide an update on spousal hires. Bott responded that a workgroup is being formed to explore the issue.
- It was suggested that the due date for midterm grades to be submitted be distributed to faculty far in advance. Bott noted that was a great suggestion.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**MOA-19/04: Creation of Student Expectation Attendance Policy – Rob Eversole, Chair, Professional Concerns Committee**

Eversole stated that at the 9 May 2019 Faculty Senate meeting a motion was made, and seconded, to approve MOA-19/04.

A motion was made by Jellies, seconded by Rudge, to amend MOA-19/04 such that in section 5 the language “conflicts” be changed to “obligations” and in the glossary the language “order” be changed to “documents”. Motion carried.

A motion was made by Jellies, seconded by Mingus, to amend MOA-19/04 such that in section 5 and the glossary the language “This may involve up to 14 sequential calendar days, hence two weeks of class meeting time” be changed to “Any sequential or non-sequential absence may total no more than 15% of scheduled class meeting time”. Motion carried.

Discussion included:

- It was asked if there is an exception for students with disabilities. It was noted that there are other policies already in place for disabilities and hardship, so those circumstances do not apply in the context of this policy.
- A question was raised regarding internships which are not addressed in the policy and should be an exception. It was noted that nothing requires exception because the policy is merely guidelines and nothing is dictated for faculty.
- When asked how the new policy would be communicated to students, it was recommended that attendance expectations be included on course syllabi since it is a matter of faculty prerogative and responsibility to communicate their expectations for attendance.

There was a motion on 9 May 2019 made by Jellies, seconded by Ayers, to approve MOA-19/04. With one against and one abstention, the motion to approve MOA-19/04 carried.

**MOA-19/12: Revision to Graduate Catalog to Redefine Full-time Graduate Student Status for Loan Deferment and Insurance Eligibility – Timothy Michael, Chair, Graduate Studies Council**

Michael stated that the Graduate Studies Council recommends the revision of the Graduate Catalog definition of full-time graduate student to indicate that graduate students working on their final project or internship credits are considered full-time for the purpose of loan deferment and insurance eligibility. Clarify that this full-time exception involves one credit is recognized for financial aid or load eligibility purposes, and that for F-1/J-1 international students this is only in effect if approved by WMU International Admissions and Services in advance.

A motion was made by Michael, seconded by Rudge, to approve MOA-19/12.

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A motion was made by Rantz, seconded by Jellies to amend MOA-19/12 to include courses Independent Research (7100) and Field Experience (7120) in the last two paragraphs on page 2, and second and third paragraph in the Glossary of Terms on page 3, and second and third paragraph in the Glossary of Terms on page 4. Motion carried.

Motion to approve MOA-19/12 carried.

MOA-19/11: Revision to Graduate Catalog to Allow Graduate Certificate Credits for Use in Graduate Programs – Timothy Michael, Chair, Graduate Studies Council

Michael stated that the Graduate Studies Council recommends revising the Graduate Catalog to clarify that departments can allow graduate certificate credits to be used within a graduate degree (and vice versa), under specific conditions. A motion was made by Michael, seconded by Jellies, to approve MOA-19/11. Motion carried.

INFORMATION / DISCUSSION ITEMS

Higher Learning Commission Site Visit Update – Jennifer Bott, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and Andrew Holmes, Executive Director for University Accreditation

Bott deferred to Executive Director for University Accreditation Andrew Holmes. Holmes stated that the Higher Learning Commission site visits dates will be April 12 and 13, 2021. Activities are underway to prepare the campus for the visit and drafting of the comprehensive evaluation document has begun. He provided an outlined of the process in the presentation linked below: https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2019/HLC-Overview.FS11-7-19.pdf

Questions included:

- It was questioned why emeritus faculty and alumni were not mentioned as sources since they would have insight. Holmes indicated that WMU is open to all feedback, and everyone is a good source of information.
- It was noted that during the next semester a lot of work will be done for the Academic Program Review process. It was asked how that data could be used for the HLC visit. Holmes noted that all efforts of improvement are evidence that is relevant for HLC. The teams will be seeking feedback on how WMU believes it is making improvements.

Student Mental Health Issues – Bre Traynor, Assistant Director Mental Health Outreach, Jayne Fraley-Burgett, Director for Disability Services for Students, and Diane Dirette, Faculty Fellow for Disability Services for Students

Traynor stated prior presentation to the Faculty Senate regarding student mental health included data of WMU in comparison to national statistics. She provided specifics for WMU students, and Fraley-Burgett provided statistics for use and accommodations of the Disability Services for Students in the presentation linked below: https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2019/Mental_Wellbeing_FSI 1-7-19.pdf

Questions included:

- A Senator had attended the mental health first aid training but questioned the mechanisms in place to report a student of concerns. Traynor agreed that it is unclear how to support a student in crisis, and she needs to clarify those details in the training.
- It was questioned what resources are available for veterans. Fraley-Burgett indicated that the office of Veteran Affairs offers resources on campus.
- It was asked how students of color are being addressed, since they are a population that typically would not reach out for counseling. Traynor reported that the Counseling Center is trying to hire more counselors of color toward that effort.

WMU Construction Projects Update – David Dakin, Director of Planning for Facilities Management

Dakin’s remarks included details which are included in the presentation linked below: https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2019/Construction_Update.FSI11-7-19.pdf

Questions included:

- A question was asked about funding for these projects. Van Der Kley explained that WMU sold $92 million in bonds this year and will be selling $80 million in bonds next year. Arcadia Flats housing is planned to be self-sustaining and Hilltop Village is planned to be revenue generating.
- When asked about the demolition plans for the Administration building and the Bernhard Center, Dakin stated that as soon as the new student center opens, the Bernhard Center will be closed and demolition will begin. The plans call for the addition of space as soon as space is removed.
- It was suggested that The Oakland’s be demolished. Van Der Kley noted it will be maintained as a significant landmark.
- It was questioned where offices that are being relocated from buildings scheduled to be demolished will be moved, and when. Bott replied that there are plans being developed with each dean in question to identify spaces that may need to be modified to accommodate those offices.

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC CONCERNS

Discussion included:

- The timing of the last day to add a course in summer I and II was questioned because in summer it is equivalent to adding the class after two weeks. Kritzman stated that the Undergraduate Studies Council is crafting an MOA to adjust drops and adds for summer I and II.

ADJOURNMENT

The Faculty Senate will meet next on 5 December 2019, in the Bernhard Center, room 208-210. The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

Sue Brodasky and Suzanne Davenport, Faculty Senate Office