General Remarks by Edward Montgomery, WMU President

- **Ad Hoc Committee for Interdisciplinary Academic Study:** The Faculty Senate Executive Board recently approved the establishment of an ad hoc committee to examine the current practices of interdisciplinary academic study at WMU and evaluate both obstacles and opportunities going forward. The committee will be charged with understanding the different types of interdisciplinary academic programs that currently exist at WMU. As part of its final report, the committee will be asked to provide examples of best practices of current programs here at WMU and elsewhere. The committee will also be asked to provide a set of recommended strategies with the goal of helping to advance interdisciplinary academic study at WMU. The Executive Board will begin seating the committee in the next few weeks.

- **Faculty Senate Council Nominations:** The Executive Board is finalizing the nominations for faculty membership on the Senate councils and committees. Shared governance is a unique partnership between the WMU faculty, students, and administration. That partnership can take many forms from designing new academic programs and curriculum, to building and infrastructure issues on campus, to working with disabled students to ensure opportunity. Faculty that are interested in nominating themselves or a colleague should email the Faculty Senate office.

- **WMU Essential Studies Course Review and Approval Committee:** The committee has held two of four retreats to review the WMU Essential Studies course submissions. It is estimated that 300+ courses will be reviewed as of the final retreat on April 5

Remarks by James Bolger, Chair, Board of Trustees

- Newly inducted Board of Trustees Chair James Bolger provided a point of greeting from the University’s Board of Trustees. Trustee Bolger is a graduate of Western Michigan University and Grand Valley State University. When he retired from the state police he served as a criminal justice faculty member at GVU. Bolger explained that the Michigan Governor appoints members to the University’s Board of Trustees, and those individuals have an interest in seeing WMU succeed. Trustee Bolger spent some time talking about the work of the Board of Trustees. The BOT supervises the University, but indirectly oversee the budget and selection of the WMU President. They, in turn, review his/her work and provide guidance to major decisions and policymaking affecting the University. The BOT, the University leadership, and all faculty share the common goal to prepare young adults to become successful citizens and to acquire careers of their choice.

General Remarks by Rick Gershon, WMU Faculty Senate President

- **WMYou Employee Engagement Survey:** the release of a comprehensive online survey intended to capture employee engagement and satisfaction was announced. The confidential survey was launched on 8 March and will be available for response until 5 April. The survey was created by a 15-person committee in consultation with an outside vendor. The survey will help WMU leadership better understand the work experiences of faculty and staff, and measure progress on meeting the University’s strategic goals and priorities. The survey is open to all full- and part-time benefits-eligible faculty and staff, and members of the Part-time Instructors Organization and Teaching Assistants Union. Results will be shared with the campus community.


- **Strategic Resource Management:** the SRM team is charged with leading the development of a budget model that meets the University’s needs and that will ensure resources are used across campus in the best way possible. A progress report was given at a town hall meeting 20 March, in the South Ballroom of the Bernhard Center at 10 a.m.

- **Faculty Accolades:**
  - National Science Foundation 2026 Idea Machine: WMU has three finalists in the National Science Foundation 2026 Idea Machine competition. The competition was created to help set the U.S. agenda for fundamental research in science and engineering and received 800 entries, with 100 of those being judged. WMU has three of the 30 finalists invited to submit videos for judging. Those finalists are:
    - Todd Ellis, assistant professor, Mallinson Institute for Science Education and department of Geography with The STEM Teaching and Learning Incubator
    - Terri Goss Kinzy, vice president for research and professor of biological sciences, and Lori Wingate, director of research for the Evaluation Center, with #WhyNotMe: STEM diversity drivers.
    - Belinda Straight, professor of anthropology and gender and women’s studies with Reversibility: Future of Life on Earth.
o The recipient of 2019 Michigan Academic Advising Association Academic Advising Administrator Award is Christine Robinson, director of advising for the College of Education and Human Development.

o The American Association of Geographers has honored the WMU Geography department with its 2019 M.S./M.A. Program Excellence Award. The award committee called out, among other practices of the program, the use of internal departmental funding to prioritize graduate student participation in conferences. In lauding the curriculum, the committee noted that WMU is adding a robust unmanned aerial vehicles component by recently inaugurating a graduate certificate in geospatial applications of UAVs.

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

- WMU reached a five-year high for the submission of mid-term grades at 36% submitted. The College of Fine Arts was the winning college with 54% of grades submitted, second place goes to the College of Arts and Sciences with 46% of grades submitted, and in third place was the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences at 36% of grades submitted.

Think Big Update – Jennifer Bott, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs and Tony Proudfoot, Vice President for Marketing and Strategic Communication

- Provost Bott and Vice President Proudfoot gave a PowerPoint presentation: https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2019/ThinkBig-FS.3-14-19.pdf

- The project is about identifying a branding that is authentic to the University. The project has a rapid timeline of just one year. Market testing will be conducted over the summer. The President’s Cabinet and the Provost Council will narrow the plethora of Big Ideas to three or four that will advance. All ideas are available at website: https://wmich.edu/thinkbig

- The results will be presented to the campus community for reactions at design workshops to be held:
  - April 11 from 5 to 7 p.m.
  - April 12 from 5 to 7 p.m.
  - April 17 from 9 to 11 a.m.
  - April 19 from 9 to 11 a.m.

Public Safety – Scott Merlo, Director

- The purpose of Chief Merlo’s remarks was to give faculty a hands-on understanding of the work performed by WMU public safety. He was asked to address questions pertaining to campus safety, what to do in the event of active shooter, reverse 911 and handling disruptive students. Chief Merlo’s remarks included:

- Statistics prove that WMU is a very safe campus. In the 2018 Campus Climate survey, 96% of respondents stated they feel safe on campus.

- WMU Public Safety has two new K-9 officers who serve a dual purpose of bomb detection and law enforcement.

- There are two methods of communication used, one for extreme emergency alerts, and one for off-campus advisory notifications. Merlo encouraged everyone to sign up for advisory notices.

- There are specific officers that are assigned to each dorm, the library, and the Knollwood/Lafayette neighborhood.

- Active Shooter on Campus and other emergency training is available by contacting Public Safety. It is important to note that faculty in the classroom are considered the leader by the students and they will look to faculty for assistance. Be sure to have a plan, take time to know where there are exits and tornado shelters.

- If faculty encounter disruptive students in class, and are not comfortable confronting the situation, they should end the class and/or call 911. https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2019/PublicSafety-FS.3-14-19.pdf

Email Access Report – Carrick Craig

- This is the General Counsel’s annual report to the Faculty Senate regarding access to email accounts without advance permission of or notice to the assigned account holder. In calendar year 2018 the University accessed the email of five employees. Four of the requests were by relatives of deceased employees. Of the four, two were from surviving spouses, one from a surviving child accessing personal email. One request was from a department chair for access to work related email. Three of the four were faculty members and the other was a staff member. The fifth request was from a department chair to access work related email of a terminated staff member. All requests were approved by the General Counsel and Chief Information Officer in advance of access, and all access was supervised by an Office of Information Technology employee. Craig encouraged all employees to maintain a personal email account for private communication unrelated to the University.