

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

Minutes of 4 March 2021

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate was called to order at 5:04 p.m. on 4 March 2021, via Webex video conferencing by Marilyn Kritzman, president. The recording secretary was present.

Roll Call: There were 64 members and substitutes present, and 26 guests.

Members Present: Osama Abudayyeh, Julie Apker, Onur Arugaslan, JoAnn Atkin, Upul Attanayake, Sunday Bonifas, Jennifer Bott, Jody Brylinsky, Stephanie Burns, James Butterfield, Steven Carr, Zbigniew Chajecski, Stephen Covell, Lisa DeChano-Cook, Anthony DeFulio, Heidi Douglas-Vogley, Clifton Ealy, Maria Fava, Yvonne Ford, Maria Gigante, Sandra Glista, Lori Gray, Decker Hains, Keith Hearit, Don Hoover, Mark Hurwitz, Pavel Ikononov, Antonio Isea, John Jellies, Dean Johnson, Philip Johnson, Jean Kimmel, Tetyana Koshmanova, Marilyn Kritzman, Mary Lagerwey, Douglas Lepisto, Debra Lindstrom, Nathan Lisak, Thayma Lutz, Molly Lynde-Recchia, Candy McCorkle, Matthew Mingus, Edward Montgomery, Dave Nofsinger, Kelley Pattison, David Paul, Staci Perryman-Clark, Susan Piazza, Troy Place, William Rantz, David Rudge, Linda Schmidt, Larry Simon, C. Dennis Simpson, Scott Slawinski, Sarah Summy, Marianne Swierenga, David Szabla, Joyashish Thakurta, Yu-Lien The, Jan Van Der Kley, Andre Venter, Zeljka Vidic, Andrew Zolp

Members Absent: Suzan Ayers, Steve Bertman, Amy Bocko, David Flanagan, Beth Jarl, Kyle Jehnzen, Vyacheslav Karpov, Terri Kinzy, Dae Kim, Peter Krawutschke, Valerian Kwigizile, Parviz Merati, Reza Mousavi, Joshua Naranjo, Paul Pancella, Kelsey Paschich, Alexandra Pekarovicova, John Petrovic, Mickey Rosalez, Tim Scheu, Ralph Tanner, Vince Torano

Guests: David Areaux, Chair, Physician Assistant; Cathryn Bailey, Gender and Women's Studies; Steven Butt, Dean, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences; Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Dean, Graduate College; Brian Carnell, Associate Director for Educational Technology; Christopher Cheatham, Vice Provost for Business and Personnel; Ron Cisler, Dean, College of Health and Human Services; Carrick Craig, General Counsel; Paula Davis, Director of Strategic Communications; Mioara Diaconu, Social Work; Derek Diget, Office of Information Technology; Susan Freeman, Gender and Women's Studies; Julie Garrison, Dean, University Libraries; Richard Gershon, Emeriti; Andrew Holmes, Director of University Accreditation; Katie John, Associate Vice President, Government Relations; Haylee Knowles, Executive Assistant, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Carla Koretsky, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences; Ming Li, Dean, College of Education and Human Development; Nancy Mansberger, Director, Academic Labor Relations and Contract Negotiations; Edwin Martini, Associate Provost, WMUx; David Powell, Dean, College of Aviation; Laura Probyn, Executive Communications Specialist, Marketing and Strategic Communications; Taylor West, President, Western Student Association; Thomas Wolf, Chief Information Officer, Office of Information Technology; Jacobi Wright, Vice President, Western Student Association

Faculty Senate Staff Present: Sue Brodasky

Quorum

A quorum was present with 64 Senators in attendance of the 45 needed to establish quorum.

Agenda

It was moved by Hains, seconded by Summy, to amend the agenda to postpone the COVID-19 Vaccination and Graduate Student Association presentations to an upcoming meeting date yet to be determined, and to add a report from General Counsel under reports of Ex Officios. The motion carried. It was moved by Jellies, seconded by DeChano-Cook, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried.

Minutes

It was moved by Rudge, seconded by DeChano-Cook, to approve the 4 February 2021 minutes as presented. The motion carried.

Reports of Officers

Faculty Senate President Kritzman's report included the following: A moment of silence was observed for James (Jim) Bosco, Educational Technology an emeriti faculty that passed away. Newly elected Faculty Senator Zbigniew Chajeki, Physics was recognized. President Kritzman reminded the campus community of an initiative from the Faculty Senate as of July 2016. Freedom of expression is one of the hallmarks of effective shared governance in the University. The WMU Faculty Senate is dedicated to fostering productive, vigorous, and meaningful dialogue and debate in an environment of civil discourse that respects various points of view. To guide efforts and appreciate the meaning and practical applications of civil discourse and to strive to advance the Academy, the Faculty Senate approved a general aspirational statement related to civility that reads "*Western Michigan University is committed to creating and sustaining an environment that honors the inherent dignity and worth of all members of the WMU community. Respectful behavior expressed verbally, textually, visually, and physically should be the norm in all University communications and venues including classrooms, meetings, offices, workplaces, forums, events, social media, and residential communities. As an institution of higher education, we welcome a diverse range of perspectives and opinions and uphold the importance of civil debate. We fully support the free exchange of ideas and beliefs, as well as the expression of provocative or unpopular ideas. It is through this process that we generate knowledge and deepen our understanding of humanity. Freedom of thought and expression may create conflict, strong emotions, and divergent ideological positions. While these effects are expected and welcomed, all members of the community have a responsibility to behave in a manner that does not harm others nor creates a hostile environment. Behavior that attacks, humiliates, belittles, or conveys hatred towards others diminishes our thriving and safe university environment. Each member of our academic community is encouraged to be thoughtful and sensitive in their choice of words and behaviors. We should be aware of how our behavior affects others. Furthermore, we carry a responsibility to challenge those who communicate intolerance, hatred, and bigotry. Words and actions matter. Everyone is asked to do their part in creating a healthy and positive university community and a culture that truly values each member's uniqueness, experiences, and perspectives.*"

The Executive Board publicly thanked the members of the Faculty Senate's Centers and Institutes Committee whose terms have expired. Their work was invaluable for establishing the review processes at WMU. At the most recent Executive Board meeting, it was agreed to support the Academic and Information Technology Council's recommendation from the Office of Information Technology to require two factor authentication for all WMU employees. The Executive Board accepted the Last Lecture Series implementation plan. The Last Lecture Series is a collaborative effort between the Faculty Senate, the President's Office, the Provost's Office, Marketing and Strategic Communication, and University Advancement. This newly created and on-going initiative will provide retiring faculty an opportunity to share career-closing thoughts with colleagues, students, alumni, family, and friends as well as providing recognition for the faculty from the University, students, and colleagues. A dedicated website where faculty will complete an online form to register to participate in the last lecture series is currently under construction. The Faculty Senate Executive Board recognized two faculty who retired as of August 30, as part of the early retirement incentive, that have contributed significantly to the Faculty Senate and WMU. First was Richard Gershon:

WHEREAS, Richard Gershon over a 30-year career at Western Michigan University, dedicated himself to the furtherance of Higher Education in the Academy of Scholars through his deep and abiding commitment to the School of Communication as well as to the overall University; and

WHEREAS, Richard Gershon has served as chair of the Faculty Senate's Campus Planning and Finance Council, Interdisciplinary Committee, and numerous councils and committees; and

WHEREAS, Richard Gershon brought to final completion the total review and revision of general education

to the WMU Essential Studies program, and the review and revision of the Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws; and

WHEREAS, Richard Gershon has faithfully served as a Faculty Senate Executive Board Director, Vice President, and Senate President, leading the WMU faculty in shared governance and faculty leadership.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Executive Board of the Faculty Senate of Western Michigan University, on this 4th day of March 2021, does recognize, congratulate, and commend Richard Gershon for his dedication and contributions toward the enhancement and betterment of Western Michigan University.

Next was Mervyn Elliott:

WHEREAS, Mervyn Elliott over a 21-year career at Western Michigan University, dedicated himself to the furtherance of Higher Education in the Academy of Scholars through his deep and abiding commitment to undergraduate education as a Master Faculty Specialist within the College of Aviation; and

WHEREAS, Mervyn Elliott, advanced many significant initiatives, including his steadfast commitment to the overall University mission that led to the development of a new general education program, WMU Essential Studies; and

WHEREAS, Mervyn Elliott's leadership greatly influenced the development and launch of WMU Essential Studies, including critical service as the Chair of the Faculty Senate's ad hoc General Education Design Committee and of the ad hoc General Education Logistics Committee, and as the WMU Essential Studies Director. His work has been exemplary in every way and will have a lasting effect on Western Michigan University undergraduate students for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, Mervyn Elliott has been a valued and trusted colleague who has connected faculty, administration, and the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate in the furtherance of the principles of shared governance while, by his own admission, being a remarkably average piano player.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Executive Board of the Faculty Senate of Western Michigan University, on this 4th day of March 2021, does recognize, congratulate, and commend Mervyn Elliott for his dedication and contributions toward the enhancement and betterment of Western Michigan University.

President Kritzman announced that the 2021 WMU Faculty Senate Appraisal of the Provost has concluded. The response rate of the appraisal was 33.3% or 279 out of a possible 840 respondents. Past practice of the Faculty Senate has been to present only the two summative questions within the survey, questions 16 and 17. At the request of Provost Bott the results displayed included all quantitative data. <https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2021/2021FacultySenateAppraisalProvost.pdf>

WMU President Edward Montgomery reported that he testified to the Michigan House of Representatives Higher Education appropriations subcommittee. All 15 public university presidents have been asked to testify before the subcommittee as the State works through the 2021-22 fiscal year budget. This is a seasonal exercise, as WMU is often asked to speak to the subcommittee during the budgeting process about how WMU use the State's investment to educate students, conduct research, and outreach that contributes to society. He appreciated the opportunity to share how the important work WMU is doing at making a difference. Spring break is less than a month away and is hoped to be the final transition from mixed modalities to a full distance learning mode. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bott recently released a message regarding plans for the fall semester and the anticipated full return to campus. Gratitude was express to faculty for their efforts to maintain a high-quality education for students through a very difficult time. Along with watching the continuing vaccine rollout WMU will track local health and safety information in concert with public health leaders. WMU is in the process of planning for a virtual spring commencement. The commencement committee, comprised of faculty, staff and students, is working to provide a meaningful celebration for students, their families, and friends. The ceremonies will be released on May 1. Recognition was expressed for Dr. Bob Bensley for his work in helping public health students gain valuable real-world research experience by participating in a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study on mask use. The Mask Adherence Surveillance at Colleges

and Universities Project (MASCUP) included 60 colleges and universities across the country. It was intended to determine the percentage of individuals on each campus wearing masks, and the percentage who were wearing masks correctly, meaning fully covering the nose and mouth. The work yielded some very positive insights for WMU's campus. According to the study's latest observational results, there was a 98% compliance rate with mask use on WMU's campus, with 97% observed using masks correctly. The WMU Department of Public Safety has earned full accreditation status from the Michigan Law Enforcement Accreditation Commission. Completing the rigorous accreditation required the department to comply with 105 standards, participate in an on-site assessment, and commit to ongoing compliance reporting. The department is one of 34 units, out of 600 agencies in the state, that has earned accreditation through Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, the commission's governing body. Thanks to those faculty members who are taking part in the libraries' open education resources grants to provide free online access to course materials to students. This program benefits students by reducing their expenses and enables instructors to offer easily accessible materials. This semester WMU has 10 faculty members from colleges across campus participating in this innovative program. Thanks to each of them, as well as the librarians who are making this program possible.

Questions included concern about COVID-19 vaccine not being acceptable for some due to religious belief and if WMU will accommodate for those who chose not to have specific vendor vaccines. President Montgomery explained that it is unknown which brand of vaccine will be provided to WMU, however, if faculty, staff, or students want a different brand than what WMU is distributing they are welcome to choose to be vaccinated at a different location. Discussion was held regarding hooding ceremonies and students photographs to be included in the virtual commencement.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bott thanked the faculty who participated in her appraisal, and to the Faculty Senate for sharing the data. It is incredibly important to her, and she plans to address the results at the 8 April meeting. The Interdisciplinary Team Excellence Enhancement internal grant applications are due by 5 p.m. on March 23, 2021 (<https://wmich.edu/research/interdisciplinary-grant>). The Institutional Interdisciplinarity Team began meeting and 51 proposals have been received. She has arranged for a facilitator to lead the team (<https://wmich.edu/interdisciplinarity>). The Fall Contingency Workgroup has been reconvened to plan for any pivoting of instruction if necessary, for fall 2021 (<https://wmich.edu/falltaskforce/contingency>).

General Counsel Carrick Craig and Deputy General Counsel Jessica Swartz provided an overview regarding regulations surrounding recording students during virtual classroom activities. Swartz provided examples. The main issue is student consent whether implicit or not. The original question had been raised by students in a specific department which led to research in order to determine WMU procedures. <https://helphub.wmich.edu/hc/en-us/articles/360057897091>

Questions included departmental requirements of recording asynchronous courses, to which it was stated that unless it is an ADA accommodation the instructor can refuse to record the sessions. Instructors observing virtual classes offering to view the recording rather than sitting in on the class, so it was questioned what if students have not provided consent, to which Swartz stated that consent from students is always needed. Discussion was held regarding sharing and restricting viewing of virtual class recordings. Further questions were raised about specific instances and the need for student consent.

Reports of Faculty Senate Councils and Committees

Chair of the Graduate Studies Council Julie Apker reported that the Graduate Studies Council recommends the revision of the committee requirements in the Graduate Catalog to allow co-chairs for thesis, specialist, and dissertation committee, requiring at least one co-chair has full graduate faculty status. It was moved by Apker, seconded by Rantz, to approve MOA-21/01. The motion carried.

Questions included if one of the co-chairs could be from another institution, to which Apker stated yes.

Reports of University Committees

Director of University Accreditation Andrew Holmes provided an update on the Higher Learning Commission Comprehensive Evaluation. Topics included critical actions and dates, student opinion

survey, federal compliance, COVID-19 response, assurance argument, peer review remote visit, and campus awareness dissemination.

<https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2021/20210304-HLCupdate.pdf>

<https://wmich.edu/hlc>

It was questioned what the expected results will be, to which Holmes said the evaluation exemplifies the progresses WMU has made and he is optimistic.

Western Student Association President Taylor West provided a WSA activity update. Topics included WSA year in review, WSA mission statement, WSA visual identity program, changes of WSA to a bicameral legislature, 17 successful pieces of legislation, launch of theLEGACY newsletter, the new WSA website, upcoming events, upcoming elections, partnership with the Faculty Senate, grading scale change discussion, and the impact of COVID-19.

<https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2021/20210304-WSAPresentation.pdf>

Questions included clarification of the WSA identity bill, which centered on sustainability and racial justice being included in the WMU mission statement. Discussion was held regarding the financial and other difficulties in changing the WMU grading scale.

Professional and Academic Concerns

Meeting Moderator Decker Hains stated that a Professional and Academic Concerns was received prior to the meeting from Professor Kelley Pattison, Bronson School of Nursing. She asked for clarification from Provost Bott regarding resuming normal activities in fall 2021. Does this mean WMU will be back to face-to-face courses or will faculty be able to choose if they will teach face-to-face or virtually. Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bott responded that faculty, staff, and students are being asked to conceive of a fall that is “normal” and letting pedagogy drive the decision of course modality with the consideration that courses can be in-person on campus. This decision is predicated on public health guidance and if a further pandemic response is needed will be address as necessary.

Adjournment

It was moved by Rudge, seconded by Mingus, to adjourn the meeting at 7:15 p.m. The motion carried.
The Faculty Senate will meet next on 8 April 2021 via Webex Events at 5 p.m.

Approval

Submitted by Sue Brodasky, Faculty Senate Administrator and Recording Secretary.

Minutes approved this eighth day of April 2021.