

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

Minutes of 8 April 2021

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate was called to order at 5:04 p.m. on 8 April 2021, via Webex video conferencing by Marilyn Kritzman, president. The recording secretary was present.

Roll Call: There were 65 members and substitutes present, and 26 guests.

Members Present: Osama Abudayyeh, Julie Apker, Onur Arugaslan, JoAnn Atkin, Upul Attanayake, Steve Bertman, Amy Bocko, Sunday Bonifas, Jennifer Bott, Jody Brylinsky, Stephanie Burns, James Butterfield, Steven Carr, Zbigniew Chajecki, Stephen Covell, Lisa DeChano-Cook, Anthony DeFulio, Clifton Ealy, Maria Fava, Yvonne Ford, Maria Gigante, Lori Gray, Decker Hains, Keith Hearit, Don Hoover, Mark Hurwitz, Pavel Ikonomov, Antonio Isea, John Jellies, Dean Johnson, Philip Johnson, Vyacheslav Karpov, Dae Kim, Terri Kinzy, Tetyana Koshmanova, Marilyn Kritzman, Valerian Kwigizile, Mary Lagerwey, Douglas Lepisto, Debra Lindstrom, Nathan Lisak, Thayma Lutz, Molly Lynde-Recchia, Candy McCorkle, Parviz Merati, Matthew Mingus, Edward Montgomery, Reza Mousavi, Dave Nofsinger, Kelley Pattison, David Paul, John Petrovic, Susan Piazza, Troy Place, William Rantz, David Rudge, Larry Simon, C. Dennis Simpson, Scott Slawinski, Sarah Summy, Marianne Swierenga, David Szabla, Joyashish Thakurta, Yu-Lien The, Vince Torano,

Members Absent: Suzan Ayers, Heidi Douglas-Vogley, Susan Freeman, David Flanagan, Sandra Glista, Beth Jarl, Kyle Jehnzen, Jean Kimmel, Peter Krawutschke, Joshua Naranjo, Paul Pancella, Kelsey Paschich, Alexandra Pekarovicova, Staci Perryman-Clark, Mickey Rosalez, Tim Scheu, Ralph Tanner, Linda Schmidt, Jan Van Der Kley, Andre Venter, Zeljka Vidic, Andrew Zolp

Guests: Eric Archer, Education Leadership, Research, and Technology; Cathryn Bailey, Gender and Women's Studies; Michele Behr, University Libraries; Jonathan Bush, Chair, WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee; Steven Butt, Dean, College of Engineering and Applied Sciences; Christine Byrd-Jacobs, Dean, Graduate College; Christopher Cheatham, Vice Provost for Business and Personnel; Jou-Chen Chen, Family and Consumer Sciences; Paula Davis, Director of Strategic Communications; Mioara Diaconu, Social Work; Derek Diget, Office of Information Technology; Bryon Glock, WMUx; Evan Heiser, WMU Signature, Andrew Holmes, WMUx; 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; Edwin Martini, Associate Provost, WMUx; Randy Ott, University College; Laura Probyn, Marketing and Strategic Communications; Tony Proudfoot, Vice President for Marketing and Strategic Communication; Geraldine Rinna, University Libraries; Jessica Swartz, Deputy General Counsel; Luchara Wallace, Chair, Athletics Board; Megan Way, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs; Thomas Wolf, Chief Information Officer, Office of Information Technology

Faculty Senate Staff Present: Sue Brodasky, Paige Upchurch

Quorum

A quorum was present with 65 Senators in attendance of the 45 needed to establish quorum.

Agenda

It was moved by Jellies, seconded by Petrovic, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

Minutes

It was moved by Ikonomov, seconded by Piazza, to approve the 4 March 2021 minutes as presented. The motion carried.

Reports of Officers

Faculty Senate President Kritzman reported that the Faculty Senate Executive Board recognized a WMU leader that has contributed significantly to the Faculty Senate and WMU.

WHEREAS, Thomas Wolf, Jr., over a 32-year career at Western Michigan University, has served the University and its faculty from his first position as Bernhard Center busboy/dishwasher, at age 16 through his distinguished career as Chief Information Officer; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Wolf, Jr. was appointed as the first Chief Technology Officer, serving the academic needs of the faculty, the advancement of WMU technology and all members of the WMU community. He is a third generation Bronco and father of a fourth generation Bronco; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Wolf, Jr. has led academic technology at WMU to the highest level through service to faculty, staff, students, and the administration. He has assured the faculty at WMU is best informed in all areas of academic technology through his intense, ongoing, involvement in the shared governance of the Academic Information Technology Council and long-term participation in each and every Faculty Senate meeting; and

WHEREAS, Thomas Wolf, Jr. has proudly carried the WMU colors in Pickleball Tournaments throughout the United states; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Executive Board of the Faculty Senate of Western Michigan University, on this 8th day of April 2021, does recognize, congratulate, and commend Thomas Wolf, Jr. for his dedication and contributions toward the enhancement and betterment of Western Michigan University.

President Kritzman stated that just about a year ago, the world as it was known, took a turn as the World Health Organization declared a then little-known virus, dubbed COVID-19, a global pandemic. On WMU's campus, the three week pause from in-person instruction stretched to a year-long, and still evolving adventure in education. Classroom instruction flipped on a dime, and classes and work meetings switched to Zoom and Webex. Dining rooms, kitchens, and bedrooms became offices. Pets joined meetings, small children, albeit unintentional, streaked classes and the great toilet paper shortage of 2020 made the news. All collectively watched family, friends, students, and colleagues battle COVID-19. Some prevailed and we celebrated. Some did not and we mourned. Science raced to find a vaccination that would curb the impact of the devastation of the last twelve months. When faced with the impossible, campus leaders came together to make the best possible decisions, based on what was known at the time. There were successes. There were mid-course corrections. But regardless of what happened on any given day WMU persisted. Moving toward a revised normal on campus, may the lessons learned, the leadership given, and the grace extended during these past twelve months never be forgotten. On behalf of the Faculty Senate Executive Board, President Kritzman extend a collective appreciation and thanks to WMU colleagues for their herculean efforts.

The Higher Learning Commission site visit will take place on 12 and 13 April, faculty and staff are encouraged to attend an open session either on Monday at 11:15 a.m. or Tuesday at 10:15 a.m. Links to join the meetings can be found on the WMU HLC website.

WMU President Edward Montgomery reported that virtual commencement will be held on 1 May. WMU will be awarding a total of 2,433 degrees, including 1,840 bachelor's, 559 master's, 2 specialist, and 32 doctoral degrees. The names of all graduates will be included in the presentation as well as the virtual hooding for doctoral graduates. In addition, there will be safe, socially distanced, outdoor photo opportunities for students.

Congratulations to the two faculty members who were recently honored with the Distinguished Teaching Award at last month's Spring Celebration of Scholarship and Teaching. Dr. Leah Omillion-Hodges, is the 2019 recipient, associate professor, School of Communication. The 2020 honoree is Dr. Jeffrey Angles, professor, Department of World Languages and Literatures. This is the highest honor given by the

University to those who are not just exceptional educators, but who also motivate and challenge their students, while inspiring within them a pursuit of lifelong learning.

Research and Innovation Vice President Terri Kinzy is hosting the Spring Research Convocation on 16 April focusing on WMU faculty research. Another upcoming virtual event that faculty are encouraged to attend is the International Festival. The final of the three nights will be live but can be viewed anytime on YouTube.

Another reminder was given for next week's Higher Learning Commission virtual site visit. As part of the two-day event all members of WMU's community can engage with the site review team during two virtual drop-in sessions. The first session will take place on 12 April at 11:15 a.m. and the second will be 13 April at 10:15 a.m.

WMU has been authorized as a COVID-19 vaccination site and awaiting to administer vaccines once inventory has been received, which will be announced. In the meantime, there are other avenues for seeking COVID-19 vaccination. Those options include the Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services Department and area store pharmacies. Even after you are vaccinated, it is important to continue vigilantly following safety behaviors. Case rates in Michigan is among the highest in the country.

Questions included results of the campus climate survey being released soon; possibility of COVID-19 vaccination requirements not likely due to efficacy, legality, and issues of exemptions; the WMU website student photo; possible fall semester COVID-19 social distancing protocols; and fall semester class modalities.

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs Jennifer Bott presented a response to the results of the Faculty Senate Appraisal of the Provost that included a summary of strengths and weaknesses; losses focused on revenue, staffing, and vision; how to address losses through the University college, interdisciplinary, Strategic Resource Management, enrollment, and financial aid; communication; and next steps. Provost Bott provided a response to the narrative comments received in the appraisal. She is open to feedback and relies greatly on constructive criticism, even when it is difficult to hear. For those that provided that constructive criticism, she is grateful. She can always improve, and feedback makes a difference. However, she was disappointed by some of the comments that were vile and intentionally personally offensive. These comments have no place in civil discourse and are antithetical to the values of higher education. Further, she was saddened by the many gendered comments, offered under the cloak of anonymity, that go against the very nature of the inclusive campus that values social justice and diverse identities that WMU espouses. Provost Bott looks forward to working with all colleagues to address the many issues highlighted and discussed in the appraisal within a culture of respect and civility. <https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2021/20210408-PROVOST-APPRAISAL.pdf>

Provost Bott also offered a reminder of the upcoming HLC virtual drop-in sessions and reported that upcoming strategic planning details will be coming next month.

Questions included the recent communication regarding out-of-state employees and tax implications to which Provost Bott confirmed that contracts already in place will be honored for summer I, summer II, and fall 2021.

Reports of Faculty Senate Councils and Committees

Chair of the WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee Jonathan Bush provided an update of the committee that included an overview and general updates, review of fall 2020 launch, the student facing website, fall 2020 assessment data, and next steps for use of assessment data. The WMU Essential Studies Executive Advisory Committee will be hosting assessment days on 14 and 15 April from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. for which details will soon be distributed.

<https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2021/20210408-WES-Presentation.pdf>

Questions included the frequency of assessment data collection and the inability to opt-out of collecting assessment data.

Reports of University Committees

Chair of the Athletic Board Luchara Wallace provided an update on the Board's activity that included an overview of WMU athletics leadership and sports; membership of the Athletic Board; athletics strategic priorities; student athlete superlatives; activities of the Athletic Board; student athlete wellbeing; National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) compliance; student athlete academic progress; challenges to the Athletics Department; and the Athletic Diversity Taskforce.

<https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u370/2021/20210408-Athletics.pdf>

New Business

Deputy General Counsel Jessica Swarts provided the annual Email Access Report that included one request since October 2020, from the parents of a student that had passed away in March 2021 that was granted according to established procedures.

Council elections were made electronically, and results will be announced at the 13 May Faculty Senate meeting.

Professional and Academic Concerns

Prior to the meeting, a professional concern was received regarding the recent jointly issued communication regarding hiring out of state faculty, which is considered a "working condition" under labor laws and was mostly expressed in the context of hiring part-time instructors. The concern was forwarded to the WMU-AAUP and the PIO for their consideration and action. Provost Bott addressed the topic earlier in the meeting.

Appreciation was expressed for the WMUx instructional designers and WMUx staff for the extensive assistance provided during the pandemic.

Faculty were encouraged to nominate themselves for Faculty Senate service to fill vacancies on several councils and committees. If interested contact the Faculty Senate office at: faculty-senate@wmich.edu

Adjournment

It was moved by Jellies, seconded by Zolp, to adjourn the meeting at 6:45 p.m. The motion carried. The Faculty Senate will meet next on 13 May 2021 via Webex Events at 5 p.m.

Approval

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

Minutes approved this thirteenth day of May 2021.