

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL
Minutes of Tuesday, 10 November 2009, 3 p.m.
Faculty Lounge, Bernhard Center

Members present: A. Anderson, R. Aravamuthan, K. Baldner, D. Cowan, B. Ferrin, K. Hillenbrand, I. Nash, D. Nisula, D. Reinhold (for Provost T. Greene), D. Ravotas, D. Sachs, A. Smith, V. Torano, G. Whitehurst, and J. Wu. **Absent without substitution:** K. Hearit. **Guests:** Carrie Cumming, senior associate registrar, and Betty Dennis, associate dean, Extended University Programs. **Also present:** Jeanine Bartholomew, academic advising liaison.

Procedural Items

Council Chair Bruce Ferrin called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

Acceptance of the Agenda

Aravamuthan moved acceptance of the agenda, as amended, seconded by Cowan. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Reinhold moved approval of the minutes of 13 October 2009, seconded by Torano. Motion carried.

Chair's Remarks

Ferrin welcomed two new members, Ilana Nash (English) and Kathryn Hillenbrand (Speech Pathology and Audiology), and suggested some changes in the order of the agenda. Ferrin also noted that he has been elected to a seat on the Graduate Studies Council and can serve as a liaison to that council, if necessary.

Information Items

Report on Attendance Initiative – Carrie Cumming, Senior Associate Registrar

Carrie Cumming addressed the council regarding this initiative. She explained the mechanics of how faculty record student absences, and how students (and other campus offices) are notified. She also provided data regarding reported absences this semester. Cumming noted the Registrar's Office was undecided as to whether or not to include students who had missed only one class. She also noted that student feedback on this has been very positive.

Report from Western Student Association Regarding Student Perspective on Attendance Initiative – Jeremy Wu

Wu reported that most students he had heard from felt positive about this initiative.

Update on Assessment of General Education – David Reinhold

Reinhold discussed the University's assessment of the effectiveness of the general education program. The University has now begun a process of testing a number of incoming and outgoing students on a series of skills that are central to general education (critical thinking and writing skills) to determine if and how much their skills have improved during their time at Western. The data collected is limited (100 students), and the data represents only a "snapshot" of existing skills rather than a longitudinal study. But given these limitations, the data indicated that the improvement of skills between incoming and outgoing students was at the 64th percentile with respect to comparable institutions. This is one method to attempt to assess the effectiveness of general education, and other methods are forthcoming.

Extension of Guest Student Policy to Include Students in the Career English Language Center for International Students (CELCIS)

Ferrin addressed the council. The question regards which students to count in the tally of our student population. These are (or include) students who are not earning credit here, but are utilizing our resources.

*Discussion of WMU Mission Statement
Included in the Draft Academic Affairs Strategic Plan*

Ferrin suggested this discussion be tabled until the next meeting. Reinhold moved that motion, seconded by Anderson. The motion carried unanimously.

Action Item

Vote to Approve 2009-10 USC Activities

A motion was made and seconded to approve the amended list of 2009-10 USC activities. Motion carried unanimously.

1. Clarify USC function #6 with function of Campus Planning and Finance Council.
2. Continuation of charge #4 from AY 2008-09 focusing on expansion of mid-term grading and the Attendance Initiative.
3. Discuss the role of the faculty in the WMU strategic plan.

4. Committee to Oversee General Education report on assessment of general education and the baccalaureate writing requirement.
5. Review dismissal policy (at provost's request).
6. Explore methods to include CELCIS students in official count of WMU student population, e.g., extension of guest student policy to cover CELCIS students (at provost's request).

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kent Baldner