

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
FACULTY SENATE

UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL
Tuesday, 14 June 2011, 3 p.m.
Faculty Lounge, Bernhard Center

Members present: Kelly Ackerson (for K. Hillenbrand), A. Anderson, N. Andreadis, K. Baldner, B. Ferrin, K. Hearit, Erin Kaplan (Western Student Association President), P. Krawutschke, David Reinhold (for Provost Tim Greene), D. Sachs, V. Torano, G. Whitehurst

Absent without substitution: R. Aravamuthan, D. Ravotas

Guest: Carrie Cumming, Interim Registrar

Procedural Items

Council Chair Bruce Ferrin called the meeting to order at 3:09 p.m.

Acceptance of Agenda

Whitehurst moved acceptance of the agenda, seconded by Krawutschke. Motion carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Anderson moved approval of the minutes of 10 May 2011, seconded by Krawutschke. Motion carried.

Chair's Remarks

Ferrin noted that he will not be able to chair this council again after this coming year, and members should start thinking now about a replacement.

Action/Discussion Items

*Discussion of the Role of the Committee to Oversee General Education
in Reassessment of General Education*

The third 2010-11 charge from the Faculty Senate Executive Board to this council was to consider "reconceptualizing" the General Education program. The council has conducted several extended discussions of this matter over the course of this last academic year, and has been in communication with members of COGE for their thoughts on this matter. Too many issues were raised in these discussions to be captured in these minutes, but the end result was that Baldner moved, seconded by Sachs, that this council recommends to the Faculty Senate Executive Board that it should initiate high level discussions among

representatives from the Faculty Senate, the administration, and possibly student representatives, to discuss whether or not (and how) the General Education program ought to be revised. Motion carried.

Curriculum Implications of Sustainability Initiative

President John Dunn has signed a 'sustainability initiative' urging faculty to consider how to include sustainability into the curriculum. After extensive discussion, the council thought that in the short run, it should consider asking COGE to modify Area VII Natural Science and Technology: Applications and Implications of the General Education requirements, and in the long run USC should encourage revision of core curricula in some (or perhaps all) colleges to incorporate sustainability-related content or (perhaps) require that (for students in that college) the Area VII Gen Ed requirement be satisfied with a course focused on sustainability content.

*Further Discussion of the Calculation of Grade Point Averages for Students
Changing Majors, with Carrie Cumming, Interim Registrar*

In November 2010, a Faculty Senator suggested that students changing majors are disadvantaged by WMU's late/drop policy. Some such students, having earned low grades in their original majors, have difficulty in meeting potential employers' requirements for minimum grade point averages, even though students transferring to Western with the same low grades can declare a new major without having those low scores dragging down their Western GPA's. It seemed to this faculty member that this policy disadvantages our own students. After considerable discussion, Krawutschke moved, seconded by Baldner, that the council not recommend any changes in the late/drop policy to address this issue. Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kent Baldner