

WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY SENATE

UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES COUNCIL  
Tuesday, 9 February 2016, 3 p.m.  
Faculty Lounge, Bernhard Center

**Members present:** K. Ackerson, A. Anderson, R. Aravamuthan, J. Atkin, K. Baldner, L. Coons, Carrie Cumming (for C. Tremblay), B. Gogan (for J. Cousins), K. Hillenbrand, C. Koretsky, M. Kritzman, D. Reinhold, D. Sachs, D. Walcott, G. Whitehurst

**Absent without substitution:** T. Fischman, E. Schleis

**Guests:** William Rantz, Interim Chair, Said AbuBakr, and Andrew Kline, Chemical and Paper Engineering, Michelle Kominz, Geosciences

**Also present:** David Paul, Part-Time Instructors

**Procedural Items**

Council Chair M. Kritzman called the meeting to order at 3 p.m.

*Acceptance of Agenda*

Anderson moved acceptance of the agenda (as amended), seconded by Koretsky. Motion carried.

*Approval of the Minutes*

Aravamuthan moved approval of the minutes of 12 January 2016, seconded by Atkin. Motion carried.

*Chair's Remarks*

Chair Kritzman reported on the events of the most recent Faculty Senate meeting.

**Information/ Discussion /Action Items**

1. *Department of Chemical and Paper Engineering [CEAS 15-002-CHP] Offer an Undergraduate Certificate in Paper Engineering – William Rantz, Andrew Kline and Said AbuBakr*

Rantz and Kline addressed the council. The proposal would create a new Undergraduate Certificate Program in Paper Engineering, which would include various courses and an industrial apprenticeship for a total of 23 credit hours. The new program is expected to increase the employment potential for these students. The program would attract students from Chemistry, Biochemistry and other branches of Engineering, and would increase the enrollments in various PAPER courses.

Questions were raised about why the department does not eliminate the minor, which seems to have overlap with the proposed certificate program. AbuBakr indicated that the department would like to wait for now and see what students

want. Some council members still thought this was inadequate because the certificate requires only one more course over the minor. There was a concern about the proliferation of programs. AbuBakr reiterated that the department would be willing to consider dropping the minor in the future if the number of students in it declines. A speaker for the department promised that they would re-evaluate the minor in the near future. This item had been tabled last month. Hillenbrand moved, seconded by Whitehurst, to take this item off the table. Motion carried. The motion itself to approve (originally made last month) carried.

2. *Department of Geosciences [CAS 16-127] Establish an Accelerated Graduate Degree Program in Geosciences (replaces [CAS 16-74] and [CAS 15-105]) – Michelle Kominz*

Kominz addressed the council concerning this proposal, which would establish a new Accelerated Graduate Degree Program in Geosciences. The objective of this program would be to take advantage of Western's Advanced Graduate Degree Program to attract ambitious geosciences students to WMU and to improve the career outcomes for existing students. A Masters degree in geosciences is the entry-level degree for most geoscientists in the non-academic sector of the economy. Thus it is to the advantage of our students to obtain a Masters degree. The accelerated program will allow more students to successfully complete a program that will prepare them for applying for jobs. It will reduce the price of their education and reduce the time for obtaining the Masters degree by one semester. We expect that this opportunity will attract more transfer students who have discovered an interest in geosciences, and give us an advantage compared to peer institutions. This will also result in more students enrolled in our Master of Arts in Earth Science program, and, as such, more students in graduate classes. This council passed this motion once before, but it was rejected by the GSC. GSC wanted a requirement for a university-wide GPA of 3.0. The new proposal includes this language. Anderson moved acceptance of this proposal, seconded by Ackerson. Motion carried.

3. *Committee to Oversee General Education Rubric for Area II Humanities – John Geiser*

Geiser was not present at the meeting. Questions were raised about scoring courses poorly because of large enrollments. (The rubric proposes grading courses, in part, on course caps.) Several council members were strongly opposed to this part of the proposal. There were questions about a number of the scoring rubrics, including the value of "multiple pedagogies," section-wide standards for courses with multiple sections, and the meaning of "intellectual traditions."

4. *Baccalaureate-Level Writing Requirement re-approval process*

During the 2016-17 academic year, COGE proposes to begin review of all Proficiency 2 baccalaureate-level writing and writing-intensive courses. Departments teaching Baccalaureate Writing Courses would be asked to submit self-studies by October of 2016.

5. *USC General Education Revision Feedback*

The council received some of the feedback the Ad Hoc General Education Committee has received about its proposed revision of the Gen Ed program.

6. *Intellectual Skills Program Advisory Committee*

By policy, "The Intellectual Skills Program Advisory Committee will assist the Intellectual Skills Development Program in ensuring that all Western Michigan University undergraduate students are able to demonstrate competencies in reading, writing, and quantitative skills." Kritzman has tried to contact members of this committee to see if they are still active, but has received no feedback from any of the committee members. Members of the Senate Executive Board have suggested we consider disbanding this committee. The chair of this committee has been invited to address this council, but she is on medical leave. Kritzman will invite the chairs of Mathematics, English, and Special Education and Literacy Studies to address the council for suggestions for how to reconstitute this committee.

7. *Discussion of a Student Success Oversight Committee*

Questions have been raised about whether or not it would be wise to constitute a "Student Success Oversight Committee" as a standing sub-committee of this council. Suggestions were made that Students Affairs, Advising, and Disabilities Services should be represented on any such sub-committee. The council will continue to discuss this issue.

**Other**

Dave Reinhold addressed the council about questions about undergraduate policies regarding certificate programs. The council may need to re-visit its wording about these programs.

Hillenbrand is chairing the Honorary Degree Committee. The policy for nominations for Honorary Degrees has been changed, and the committee has one nomination forthcoming.

Finally, Kritzman reported on the progress of 5000 level course sub-committee. The council voted on a proposal on this matter, which is now in the hands of the Graduate Studies Council.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kent Baldner