

Western Kentucky University
University Senate
Meeting Minutes
18 April 2019, 3:45 p.m.
Faculty House

A) Call to order

- A regular meeting of the Faculty Senate was called to order by Chair Kirk Atkinson at 3:45 p.m.
- Members present (substitute): Janet Applin, Kirk Atkinson, Melanie Autin, Leslie Baylis, Jim Berger, Jason Bergner, Scott Bonham, Tim Brotherton, Dan Clark, Margaret Crowder, Aquesha Daniels (Mariah Yates), Susann Davis, Pitt Derryberry, Carl Dick, Michelle Dvoskin, Loretta Dye, Claus Ernst, Travis Esslinger, Colin Farrell, Stacey Forsythe, Jim Fulkerson, Dawn Garrett-Wright (Liz Sturgeon), James Gary, Natasha Gerstenschlager, Elizabeth Gish, Dominique Gumirakiza, Lance Hahn, Kirolos Haleem, Lawrence Hill, Jean-Luc Houle, Guy Jordan, Pat Kambesis, Kim Link, Stephen Locke, Lauren McClain, Mac McKerral, Patti Minter, Kurt Neelly, Morteza Nurcheshmeh, Heather Payne-Emerson (Julie Lee), Leslie Plumlee, Matt Pruitt, Mark Schafer, David Serafini, Jo Shackelford, Joe Shankweiler, Ajay Srivastava, Tammie Stenger-Ramsay (Raymond Poff), Cheryl Stevens, Toni Szymanski, Carol Watwood, Aaron Wichman, Mary Wolinski, Alison Youngblood, Uta Ziegler
Guests: Amy Brausch, Terry Dean, Conner Hounshell, Kandy Smith, Jennifer Miller, Julie Lee, Joseph Evans, Amber Scott Belt, Danita Kelley, Lester Archer

B) Approve March 2019 minutes and Special Session from April

- J. Applin motioned to approve the March minutes. A. Jerome seconded. Passed unanimously.
- C. Dick motioned to approve the Special Session minutes. D. Clark seconded. Passed unanimously.

C) Reports, Part I

- **Chair – Kirk Atkinson**
 - 1) K. Atkinson read a statement from Dean Snyder expressing his support from colleagues, the Senate, and students.
 - 2) Good turnout at the BoR social last Thursday.
 - 3) NCFS is getting close to finalizing bylaws. Hopefully this process will end soon.
 - 4) I'm proposing using monitors throughout the Faculty House to facilitate visual aids during meetings. (There is one currently installed.) I'm proposing the cost of this be added on to the WKU Commons project, since that project is going to permanently take the SEC room. I'm also proposing that some of the equipment/furniture be considered a sunk cost and be donated to departments that need them, put into surplus, etc. I'll have a formal proposal in May.
- **Vice Chair – Dan Clark**
 - 1) At the end of this meeting, we will
 - Election of new officers (President, VP, Secretary) at April Senate meeting
 - Caucus for standing committee membership at April Senate meeting
- **Secretary – Jason Bergner**

- *Coalition of Senate/Faculty Leadership for Higher Education – Molly Kirby (no report)*
- *AAUP Representative – Margaret Crowder (no report)*
 - 1) We may have enough AAUP members to have a chapter. A number of people have talked about rejoining, so we're hoping to start an active chapter in the fall.

D) Committee Reports and Recommendations

- *Academic Quality – Heather Strode (no report)*
 - 1) Action item: Audit and Withdrawal policy proposal
 - D. Serafini motioned to accept proposal to change university audit and withdrawal dates. J. Berger seconded.
 - M. McKerral – This issue has come up before. I'm not convinced it's a good idea. I also don't like doing things just because other schools do them. Questions: In courses where there are many assessments, carrying that amount of work for 70% of the semester (according to the proposal) is burdensome. Has the committee looks into how this affects grade inflation? Will this delay graduation? I would think we'd want to have caps on the number of times a student could withdraw.
 - J. Applin – Would this have an effect on the F/N grading?
 - J. Wilkerson – Yes. The F/N is currently at 60%, so this would move it to 70%. This was brought to Academic Quality from SGA. Many times the mid-term fell after the withdraw date, which penalizes the students in courses where all they have is a mid-term and a final.
 - M. McKerral – How many classes are the mid-term / final only situation?
 - A. Jerome – Would the faculty be happy if it was the 60% instead of 70%. This would get you past the mid-term?
 - J. Wilkerson – We took an average of the KY schools and our benchmark schools.
 - D. Clark – A member of my department said that the retention committee viewed this favorably.
 - J. Applin – What's the SGA take on this?
 - S. Mayer – I don't know how my classes are going to turn out by the time the current withdrawal date arrives. I support having the date pushed back, and I would say the majority of the students do as well.
 - E. Gish – I don't most of our students are going to drag it out and drop repeatedly. I think most of them want to do well. If this is going to make things easier for our students, then we should do it.
 - S. Pruitt – Whether 60 or 70%, I'm fine. The way it is now, the deadline is too short.
 - A. Jerome – At what point are the students responsible for making sure they succeed? You are going to know way before 70% if you are going to make it.
 - L. Hill – I haven't heard any negative things about what would happen. There are concrete pros and no concrete cons.
 - M. McKerral – I thought I rambled off a pretty good list. This proposal is focusing on classes where big exams a couple of times a semester are the norm. I'm concerned the impetus for this is driven by one grading schematic.
 - S. Mayer – I don't think any students strive to get a W in a course.

- A. Wichman – Frequent, short assessments are the way to go. I don't want to conflate this issue with the drop date question.
- A. Jerome – If they WD, do they get a refund? Would they get a refund by 70%?
- M. McKerral – I have great faith in the students. It's unrealistic that grade pressure and maintaining scholarships don't come into play here. If we decide to do this, we should sunset this and then examine the data to see what happened.
- J. Wilkerson called the question. L. Hill seconded. Debate was ended by a unanimous vote.
- Resolution was passed by a vote of 44-5.
- ***Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities – Lauren McClain (report posted, endorsed by the SEC)***
 - 1) L. McClain motioned. Unanimous approval.
 - We had the highest response rate for the faculty work-life survey. Thanks to you all for your participation.
 - 2) Three action items:
 - Policy on policies
 - L. McClain motioned for approval of this policy change. G. Jordan seconded. Passed (with friendly amendment) by unanimous vote.
 - M. Crowder – I agree with this addition. We have been fortunate that the Senate's voice has been listened in the recent past, but that may not always be the case. I think we need a stronger statement.
 - J. Berger – Offered a friendly amendment to match the change to what was discussed by the SEC.
 - Evaluation and compensation proposal
 - L. McClain motioned for approval of this policy change. J. Berger seconded. Passed by a unanimous vote.
 - K. Atkinson – This is a good first step. Conversations I had with President Caboni throughout the merit process brought some of these items to the attention of the committee. I'm endorsing what they are doing.
 - Consensual relations between faculty and students
 - L. McClain motioned for approval of this policy change. S. Davis seconded. Passed by a unanimous vote, with two abstentions.
 - I have a friendly amendment that the relationship needs to be reported in writing, as well as some grammar.
 - A. Jerome – Is there a separate policy for administrators, staff, and teaching assistants?
 - L. McClain – This policy is specifically about faculty. There is separate policies for admin, staff, and students.
 - U. Ziegler – I assume this extends to any WKU campus. I think this is a privacy issue on both the faculty and student sides.
 - S. Pruitt – With the requirement to report even if it's outside the department, does the student have a right to not have that reported and a record created of that?

- L. McClain – The goal is to protect the student, regardless of age of the student. It’s a liability for the faculty member and the university. There’s huge potential for the relationship to go south.
 - E. Gish – We talked about this at SEC. We talked about the situation where the student is older, but this is about protecting the students from feeling pressured to get into or get out of relationships.
- ***Budget and Finance Committee – Jim Berger (no report)***
- ***Colonnade General Education Committee – Mary Wolinski (report posted, endorsed by the SEC)***
 - 1) M. Wolinski motioned. Unanimous approval.
 - 2) We approved five new courses.
 - 3) Action items:
 - New Colonnade option for international experience
 - M. Wolinski motioned. D. Clark seconded. Unanimous approval.
 - A. Wichman – Could you comment of the differentiability to students?
 - J. Hanley – I know different folks are looking into getting scholarships for students, but this only provides an option, not a requirement.
 - A. Jerome – When I advised, I constantly ran into students who wanted to count their study abroad experiences as Connections.
 - S. Mayer – SGA supports this.
 - J. Lee – What about courses that are offered both face-to-face and abroad?
 - J. Hanley – The deal we worked out with the Registrar is that if a course is already in the Colonnade, there’s no reason to change it.
 - A. Jerome called the question. D. Serafini seconded. Vote passed to end debate.
 - Vote passed unanimously with three abstentions.
- ***Graduate Council – Carl Dick (report posted, endorsed by the SEC)***
 - 1) C. Dick motioned. Unanimous approval.
 - 2) Graduate council elections are coming up.
 - 3) We revised our grad council bylaws to fit with recent changes to the Senate Charter.
 - With the reduction from six colleges to five, we’ve revised the guidelines so that committees can have two reps from a college instead of one. We still require at least three colleges be represented on each committee.
- ***Undergraduate Curriculum Committee – Janet Applin (report posted, endorsed by the SEC)***
 - 1) J. Applin motioned. Unanimous approval.
- ***Faculty Handbook Committee – Kate Hudepohl (report posted, endorsed by the SEC)***
 - 1) D. Clark motioned. A. Jerome seconded. Unanimous approval.

E) Reports, Part II

- ***Advisory Report, Faculty Regent – Claus Ernst***
 - The last Board meeting was a disappointment. We discussed the CAPE recommendations, and only three people voted (the SGA regent was not there). I wanted to introduce an amendment into the CAPE committee that programs suspended could be later reviewed by the new provost. I was not allowed to introduce the amendment since I didn’t have a second. The original plan was that

the CAPE recommendations would go to the Provost. With Provost Ballman leaving, the recommendations went directly to the Board. The question was called immediately, and I was not allowed to speak during the meeting.

- M. Crowder – Can there be any adjustment to procedure when there is a small committee and someone is absent?
 - C. Ernst – We’re working on a new set of bylaws, and that’s where this should likely be addressed.
- **Advisory Report, Provost – Cheryl Stevens**
 - I’m committed to serving WKU to the best of my abilities.
 - We’ve completed the hire of the two new deans. I’m looking forward to meeting with them.
 - We spent a lot of time last week interviewing for the two new VP positions.
 - I’d like to meet with the CAPE committee to talk about the CAPE process. I want feedback on how to do that better.
 - We need to develop a strategy for programs designated for transformation. It should not be a reshuffling of existing courses but a thoughtful process to better serve our students.
 - President Caboni reference a new Provost’s Council. I think this council should serve in an advisory capacity, be comprised of 5-7 people, and not necessarily one from each college. Rather, the people should be passionate and forward-thinking about issues that are going to impact WKU in the future.
- **Advisory Report, SGA President – Stephen Mayer**
 - This might be my last Senate meeting, but this past year has been one of my best years. I have learned so much over the past year.
 - SGA has finished our largest semester of scholarships ever. Thanks to you for advertising these scholarships and supporting us.

F) Old Business

G) New Business

- 1) L. McClain proposed resolution to make academic affairs the top priority in the budget. A. Wichman seconded.
 - Resolution passed unanimously with one abstention.
- 2) G. Jordan proposed resolution to thank President Caboni for his support and commitment to shared governance. J. Berger seconded.
 - L. Hahn – I’m not sure I’m ready to support this resolution since it’s the current administration that led us into this situation.
 - L. McClain – I think this is a fantastic idea. When we meet with the President about the faculty-life surveys, many more issues will be raised.
 - Resolution passed 27-7 with four abstentions.
- 3) Proposed changes to Senate Charter – 1st reading only (no voting)
- 4) Elections of Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary
- 5) Caucus for standing committee membership

H) Information Items

I) Adjournment

- J. Berger motioned. Unanimous approval.