

Western Kentucky University
University Senate
Senate Executive Committee (SEC) Meeting Minutes
11 February 2019, 3:15 p.m.
Helm 108B

A) Call to order

- A regular meeting of the SEC was called to order by Chair Kirk Atkinson at 3:16.
- Members present (substitute): Janet Applin, Kirk Atkinson, Terry Ballman, Jim Berger, Jason Bergner, Dan Clark, Susann Davis, Carl Dick, Colin Farrell, Jim Fulkerson, Elizabeth Gish, Larry Hill, Stephen Mayer, Joe Shankweiler, Heather Strode, Mary Wolinski
- Guest present: Amber Belt

B) Approve January 2019 minutes

- C. Dick motioned to approved. J. Berger seconded. Passed unanimously.

C) Reports

• *Chair – Kirk Atkinson*

1) Senate charter updated

- It's out on the website now. [K. Atkinson went over the website later in the meeting, including ideas for streamlining the site.]

2) SEC space thought and ideas

- The SEC will potentially lose this space during the renovation for the Commons. This body is going to have to think about where to relocate (probably permanently). The future chair and SEC will have to make this decision.

3) Ogden special election

- Someone left WKU and needed to be replaced, along with three open spots.
 - If there aren't enough nominees, it may need to be an appointment.
- C. Dick – The Associate Dean has sent out the info to the faculty, so it's in the works.

4) Replacement on Colonnade

- We have an opening.
- M. Wolinski – I was waiting on you [the SEC] to take action / decide on this issue / these candidates.
- K. Atkinson - Three people volunteered. The question is do we want to look at these three people and make a decision/vote. Usually, if only one person volunteers, that person is chosen. With three volunteers, would you [the SEC] like to look at these folks and make a choice?
 - S. Davis – How do we normally handle this?
 - K. Atkinson – Normally this is through the normal caucusing process in April, and we don't deal with it. We should at least look at this, but I'll lean to whatever you [as a body] want to do.
 - D. Clark produced the list of the three names at this point. He gave the names in order, as there was some implicit suggestion that perhaps the first person who volunteered should be selected. D. Clark suggested this may not be the best method since the names came in very fast.

- J. Lindsey – Is there any group that’s underrepresented on the Colonnade committee?
 - M. Wolinski checked the list of voting members. It was determined that one of the volunteers came from a college that was underrepresented on the committee when compared to the other two volunteers.
 - C. Farrell – This particular volunteer (from the underrepresented college) is in my department. She’s is looking to get involved on campus and currently isn’t heavily involved. She wouldn’t likely miss any meetings.
 - C. Ernst – In the caucus, you normally just have the three candidates talk it over and work it out among themselves. We should do this before we vote.
 - D. Clark – Caucus of what, though? These aren’t college spots. These are at-large spots.
 - C. Ernst – As an alternative, a committee can take on additional members.
 - M. Wolinski – We are limited in at-large committee slots by the Senate Charter.
 - E. Gish – Motioned to accept the CHHS volunteer. J. Berger seconded. Passed unanimously.
- 5) University CAPE process has started. Several people here are part of that process.
- There is supposed to be transparency, but that doesn’t mean we can talk about everything. One reason is because we only make recommendations, not final decisions.
- 6) Need member on student research committee. They would prefer a senator, but this isn’t a requirement. They would like someone that the Senate has been involved in selecting. Darlene Applegate is the contact.
- 7) Status of NCFS
- Had a conference call about a week ago
 - I’m on a charter and by laws committee. The other committee is in charge of annual fees, so I don’t know anything about that, though I’ve made recommendations.
 - There’s an idea to have associate members, but this may lead to large blocs of votes from certain schools having more power. I’ve made a suggestion about this.
- 8) S. Davis – follow up with Title IX changes?
- K. Atkinson – the President’s response told me that he agreed with the vast majority of recommendations in that report
 - There’s something happening at the national level. He wants to make sure that’s worked out before he moves on this. He still intends to move on that this spring.
- **Vice Chair – Dan Clark (no report)**
 - 1) Departmental senator elections are in the next month. If you know good people, encourage them to volunteer for service.
 - **Secretary – Jason Bergner (no report)**
 - **Committee Chairs**
 - 1) **Academic Quality – Heather Strode (report posted)**
 - H. Strode motioned. Unanimous approval.

- 2) ***Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities – Lauren McClain (report posted)***
 - H. Strode motioned. D. Clark seconded. Unanimous approval.
- 3) ***Budget and Finance Committee – Jim Berger (report posted)***
 - J. Berger motioned. Unanimous approval.
 - We are working on two major things:
 - Still working on the RAMP model (getting in verified to make sure we're accurate)
 - Working with staff council which describes ways unit heads can get training for conducting evaluations for future merit pay increases
- 4) ***Colonnade General Education Committee – Mary Wolinski (report posted)***
 - M. Wolinski motioned. Unanimous approval.
 - We approved two Connections courses.
 - Had special meeting about 4th category for Connections.
 - The committee unanimously moved to go forward with this. Other attendees were separately polled and were also unanimously in supporting moving this forward.
- 5) ***Graduate Council – Carl Dick (report posted)***
 - C. Dick motioned. Unanimous approval.
 - We're working on revising the Grad Council by laws based on Senate Charter changes.
 - We've had some changes on subcommittees due to people leaving.
 - There were three programs that had courses approved. A new program was tabled due to a lack of information.
- 6) ***Undergraduate Curriculum Committee – Janet Applin (report posted)***
 - J. Applin motioned. Unanimous approval.
 - Seeking this body's opinion...we have a discrepancy in our bylaws and guidelines regarding calendar creation dates
 - What's the best way to deal with this?
 - K. Atkinson – There's no way the deans are going to get the calendar early.
 - J. Applin – I got pushback on this issue from trying to set the calendar before the first meeting.
 - K. Atkinson – Aren't those dates derived from the Senate dates?
 - J. Applin – Yes.
 - K. Atkinson – If the guidelines are in conflict with the Senate's, then the committee's guidelines should be changed.
- 7) ***Faculty Handbook Committee – Kate Hudepohl (no report)***
 - K. Atkinson – They met for the first time. I attended. This committee is not a standing committee of the Senate. It's odd that they aren't a standing committee, but they are in the Charter. This is something to think about.
- **Advisory Reports**
 - 1) ***Advisory Report, Faculty Regent – Claus Ernst***
 - Board meeting report:
 - Board approved current salary increases.
 - Made adjustment to carryforward amounts

- We have a shortfall of \$3M (about 1.5%).
- Vote on tuition increase for next year. We are limited to 2% for next year. The fees don't increase, so the overall effect will be less than 2%.
 - Some programs are exempt.
 - Grad programs are left alone.
 - This increase won't result in much money (less than \$3M). This will likely cover fixed cost increases (e.g. WKU's contribution for health insurance). The financial outlook is still bleak.
- No tenure-track faculty member will lose his job from the CAPE process.
 - J. Lindsey – Is student enrollment projected to go down?
 - C. Ernst – Yes
 - J. Lindsey – When you said faculty members will not be cut by CAPE, you did mean just the tenure-track people are safe?
 - C. Ernst – Yes. That's what M. Price reported at the Board meeting.
- We've had positive news about retention rates.
- L. Hill – Were there increases in tuition for online courses?
 - J. Applin – On Demand courses went up.
- J. Applin – What about carryforward? I didn't think we were going to have this anymore.
 - C. Ernst – This is a very strange thing about our budgeting process. It's money that comes from the prior budget (\$27M from the last year). This is money which isn't spent and accumulates. We estimate it and then distribute it. It's my wish that we minimize this in the new budgeting process.
 - J. Applin – Didn't the departments get the money back?
 - C. Ernst – Some of it, but when things break, the monies are raided to pay for it.
 - C. Ernst – [to T. Ballman] How much can the departments keep?
 - T. Ballman – I don't know. When we have a structural deficit, we have to use the carryforward to plug the holes.
- J. Lindsey – Will the fees on campus increase?
 - C. Ernst – No
 - S. Mayer – The course fees are the ones students don't see when they register. Other fees are listed online.

2) *Advisory Report, Provost – Terry Ballman*

- I just came back from AASCU and where people are very proud of the regional universities because we serve the future of the country. They are also concerned about enrollment declines. [She shared a document showing the decline in enrollment since fall of 2013.]
- Most of our revenue comes from tuition. Our international student enrollment is down 48%, and it's going to drop more.
- We are like many universities, focusing on retention. We are doing a great job. We're up to 72% on 1st to 2nd year students. Attendance is a predictor of student persistence.
- It's a demographic reality, especially in the Midwest, of declining enrollment.

- H. Strode – Why don't we offer more in-state tuition to surrounding states/counties?
 - T. Ballman – I don't have an answer for that. The university is being responsible in giving scholarships.
- J. Berger – Our institution should look at focusing more on adult learners, especially if our 18-22 demographic is declining.
- J. Lindsey – Would it be advantageous to reduce tuition? Would we bring in more students and thus end up with a larger pool of revenue? With the continued tuition hikes, we are now pretty expensive. How about in-state tuition for everyone across the country?
- C. Ernst – We are moving to a model by which the pricing structure is hidden. We have an official price, but who actually pays that? We offer many stipends, so who really pays the full amount? Also, we need to be careful if we replace a non-resident student with a TIP student. That would cause us to lose money.
- J. Berger – Aren't the optics going to be against us? If the advertised price is high, then students may choose other schools based on what it appears they would have to pay here. Wouldn't it be better to post the actual price?
- K. Atkinson – [to C. Ernst] To address your non-resident student being replaced by a TIP student, that's not what we're talking about. We're talking about increasing the number of students overall, not replacing the ones we have with different ones.
- C. Ernst – I don't disagree with any of that. When you look at the neighboring schools (e.g., Indiana University), we are right there in terms of cost. We are no longer a bargain of any kind for students.
- J. Lindsey – That's dangerous. We should change that, if possible.
- K. Atkinson – That's risky, because revenue is going to go down, at least initially.
- L. Hill – That's not true. If you know the average tuition that students are paying, why not just charge that? That's better than the seeming random process of telling one student he will pay more versus less for another one. You'd end up with the same revenue and perhaps a lot better morale and more people showing up. It seems pretty straightforward to me.
- K. Atkinson – I think you're right.
- S. Davis – The rationale for having a non-resident student fee is that as residents of KY, we pay taxes for the support of the state universities. Has this been adjusted now that the state provides less of our budget?

3) Advisory Report, SGA President – Stephen Mayer

- We leave for Frankfort tomorrow for the rally for higher education
 - We are bringing over 150 people from around the state.

D) Old Business

E) New Business

F) Information Items

G) Adjournment

- S. Davis motioned, E. Gish seconded. Unanimous approval.