

FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 1 October 2024
4:00 p.m. – Via Zoom

ACTION MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeremy Robinett, Chair; Jeff Hancks, Vice Chair

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ben Brewer, Secretary

ALSO PRESENT: Christopher Pynes, Interim Associate Provost; Krista Bowers Sharpe, Parliamentarian; Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Office Manager

GUEST: Sarah Lawson, Registrar

1. *General Education approval process*

Chair Robinett remarked he has had several exchanges about what the Council on General Education (CGE) will be approving in relation to the Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI). Chair Robinett reached out to Interim Associate Provost Pynes last week because of this confusion, and Dr. Pynes provided a clear message that matched what Chair Robinett understood. Chair Robinett said this explanation was communicated in response to the inquiry, but another question arose this week; in order to make sure everyone is communicating the same information, Chair Robinett followed up with Linda Prosis, Administrative Assistant to the Provost, who provided a more thorough response. He explained that as people try to change their courses to different General Education IAI categories, particularly in the case of courses that are in categories that have been eliminated, these will need to be approved by CGE.

Ms. Hamm asked if changing from one Gen Ed category to another would need to be approved by Faculty Senate after CGE approval or if it is something CGE could just report out to the Senate in their year-end annual report. Chair Robinett responded he thinks it needs to go through the normal Gen Ed approval process of being reported to Faculty Senate as part of that council's report at a regular Senate meeting.

2. *Zoom Protocols*

Chair Robinett reported that following the Zoom bombing episode at the last Faculty Senate meeting, he spoke to the university's legal counsel, Victoria Smith as well as to Jeremy Merritt, Stacey Hunt, and Ian Szechowycz from University Technology; he also notified and apologized to Interim Provost Mossman and Interim President Mindrup. He said the CIO Group has recommended that there be no publicly advertised Zoom links for meetings of Faculty Senate and its councils where the general public has access to them, and that there be a waiting room set up for each meeting of the Senate and its councils to enable moving attendees into a waiting room if needed.

Chair Robinett said that General Counsel Smith told him the Faculty Senate is not actually required by the Open Meetings Act to facilitate ways for everybody to be able to attend meetings via Zoom; the general public has the opportunity to attend in person, and those who wish to attend via Zoom can be made to register with their email in order to get the link. He said General Counsel Smith followed up on this with the Public Access Counselor. Chair Robinett related that Faculty Senate is allowed to only provide the Zoom link to those who the Senate specifically wishes to attend; there is no requirement to provide the public outside the specific group with the link, but Chair Robinett would like Faculty Senate to continue to provide the opportunity for the campus community to attend. He asked the Executive Committee to consider using a calendar invite with a specific meeting link; this could be provided to senators, chairs/directors, the President, the Provost's office, the Registrar, and specific others, while people beyond this group could contact the Senate Secretary or Chair to get the link.

Interim Associate Provost Pynes recommended that the Executive Committee consider creating an ecom-locked website where the Zoom links could be made accessible; anyone with a WIU ecom name and password could get the links for all Senate councils or just for the Senate meetings so that an invitation and new Zoom link would not have to be created for each meeting, which can become laborious. Registrar

Lawson added that the Senate would probably still want to change the Zoom link every semester at least because there is the possibility of people sharing it. Chair Robinett remarked this was not suggested by the University Technology representatives, but he will follow up with them; the invitation method may have to be used for next week's meeting depending on how quickly such a website could be set up, but he would be happy to use the website idea.

Interim Associate Provost Pynes wonders if it might be possible for Faculty Senate to be run as a webinar where some individuals could watch but not interact while others would be able to participate, but he is not sure if this is possible with Zoom. He noted that the government uses Webex, owned by Cisco systems, rather than Zoom because Zoom is less secure; Chair Robinett added that the military also will not use Zoom. Interim Associate Provost Pynes suggested that the state of Illinois may wish to explore whether Zoom is the safest and best product for state public universities to use.

Parliamentarian Bowers Sharpe asked if there is any idea who perpetrated the Zoom bombing incident or if they were on- or off-campus. Chair Robinett responded there was a partial IP address that University Technology was able to track to Maryland, but they do not know anything else. He added the Zoom bombing did not follow the regular pattern of such attacks because the hackers used actual WIU names, and a bot usually does not use the names of employees.

Chair Robinett asked if the Executive Committee agrees with his proposal of changing the Zoom protocols for Senate meetings; there were no objections.

3. *Charge to Executive Committee*

The Executive Committee is charged to:

- review the Constitution and Bylaws for the purpose of recommending updates necessitated by institutional changes;
- examine and document the composition of IL and peer institutions' faculty senates to determine if recommendations should be made to change WIU composition given recent changes; and
- examine if the election processes and procedures outlined in the Constitution and Bylaws should be changed in light of decreased faculty numbers.

Chair Robinett stated that a senator asked the Executive Committee to potentially lower the number of signatures necessary to run for a seat on Faculty Senate; currently the petition form requires 15 signatures or 20 percent of the eligible faculty, and only one of the colleges would benefit from using the 20 percent figure, which would only reduce their number of signatures by one. He said the senator suggested that ExCo consider reducing the number of signatures to ten or a different percentage.

Chair Robinett noted that the Senate Nominating Committee is looking at the composition of Senate councils and committees and are charged to work with the Student Government Association to clarify where it is necessary for undergraduate or graduate students to serve on Senate councils or committees; currently the bylaws specify service by undergraduate students.

Interim Associate Provost Pynes suggested that when looking at the composition of peer institutions' faculty senates, ExCo may wish to take a particular look at Illinois State University's academic senate. He said they include students, faculty, and administrators within the same body, which is a very different structure than what WIU has. Chair Robinett said when he attends the Council of Illinois University Senates meeting on October 18, he plans to use that as an opportunity to ask how their senates are constituted.

Chair Robinett would like ExCo members to take a look at the Senate Constitution and Bylaws so that this can be a regular discussion item for future ExCo meetings.

4. *Possible Upcoming Elections*

Chair Robinett announced that Vice Chair Jeff Hancks may be taking an administrative position that would prevent him serving on Faculty Senate. Once his contract is signed, Faculty Senate will need to have an election on the floor for a Vice Chair, perhaps as soon as the next meeting. There will also need to be an election to replace Mr. Hancks as representative of Resource Professionals on the University Personnel Committee and as the Quad Cities faculty representative on the Faculty Senate.

Interim Associate Provost Pynes has asked Bob Emmert of University Technology how much it would cost to obtain a Qualtrics license for Faculty Senate. He said he is sympathetic to this problem because he is aware the Senate will need a secure way to send out the survey of the Interim Provost this year as well as other surveys, such as the interest survey from the Senate Nominating Committee.

5. *Council for Instructional Technology (CIT) policies and procedures*

Now that its bylaws amendment has been approved to allow for CIT to establish a subcouncil on AI, they are bringing forward a proposed change to their policies and procedures. This will appear on the October 8 Senate agenda under New Business.

6. *Finalize agenda for Senate meeting of October 8 – guests Carl Ervin, Cara Cerullo, and Jackie Price*

Chair Robinett reflected that this is the time of year when students who may have had a smooth time at the beginning of the semester sometimes encounter challenges, which will be addressed by Cara Cerullo, Director of the Counseling Center, and Jackie Price, Director of the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities, during Announcements at the October 8 Senate meeting. Carl Ervin, Director of the Office of Justice, Inclusion, Equity, and Diversity, will speak on October 8 about the events and efforts that his office is engaged in this year.

The Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Office Manager
and Recording Secretary