

## FACULTY SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 17 September 2024  
4:00 p.m. – Via Zoom

### ACTION MINUTES

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jeremy Robinett, Chair; Jeff Hancks, Vice Chair; Ben Brewer, Secretary

**ALSO PRESENT:** Mark Mossman, Interim Provost; Krista Bowers Sharpe, Parliamentarian; Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Office Manager

**GUESTS:** Denise Gravitt, Sarah Lawson, Ketra Roselieb, Jett Walker

1. *Ketra Roselieb, Executive Director of Financial Affairs*

Chair Robinett expressed his appreciation to Ms. Roselieb and members of the Budget Transparency Committee (BTC) for attending the meeting. Chair Robinett said he invited Ms. Roselieb because during discussions about finances and the institutional budget, it emerged quickly that faculty are sometimes not brought into conversations about accounts and where the university's money is utilized. He said Ms. Roselieb has agreed to meet with Faculty Senate in both fall and spring. He added that she is aware of the Executive Committee's charges to the Budget Transparency Committee, and Chair Robinett hopes they can collaborate together to move WIU forward.

Ms. Roselieb said she is looking forward to strengthening these relationships because she believes everyone is working toward the same goal. She hopes to be able to be transparent about the information she is working with and why the administration is making the decisions it is making because she thinks it will go a long way toward that common goal of making sure WIU succeeds and develops an environment that supports student learning. She plans to work with the BTC more frequently so that both sides of the table can be fully knowledgeable.

Ms. Roselieb showed attendees a PowerPoint presentation she gave to the Board of Trustees; the PowerPoint will be shared with senators for Ms. Roselieb's presentation to them on September 24. She explained there are multiple funding sources, each of which has restrictions, but for simplification she broke them down into three areas. She explained that the Income Fund, includes state appropriations and tuition dollars; the Other/Local Fund is comprised of student fees, indirect cost recovery, grants, and commissions; and Auxiliary (or AFS/Revenue Bond) Funds are restricted to University Housing and Dining, the University Union, and Campus Recreation (which includes the Golf Course).

Ms. Roselieb explained that the university's structural problems come from the Income Fund; the other funds are supposed to be self-sustaining. She said the Income Fund is where payroll and everything related to supporting facilities and the educational experience comes from. She noted that, on average over the past few years, the fund is supported about 50-50 by state appropriations and tuition; the percentage of state appropriations has varied greatly over the past 20 years and has decreased along with enrollment. Ms. Roselieb said the state appropriation is about \$56 million, and tuition is a little less than that at this point. She stressed that all expenses from this fund must be related to academic instruction, 80 percent of which goes toward personnel. She noted that WIU's largest asset is its human capital, followed by financial aid provided to students, and utilities and other contractual services.

Ms. Roselieb explained the Other/Local Account, also known as the 3-accounts, come from student fees (for example, Beu Health Center, facilities enhancement, Athletics, talent grants, transit, etc.). She noted that some funding for this account comes from grants and indirect cost recovery, which is the administrative overhead that is recouped from grants. Ms. Roselieb explained the third fund, Auxiliary/Restricted funds, is limited to specific university entities who also have their own bond covenants and ability to issue debt. She said these entities (Housing and Dining, the University Union, and Campus Rec) must operate on their own and cannot take state appropriations dollars from the Income Fund; the money a student pays to live in a residence hall cannot be used to pay for the salary of that student's instructor.

Ms. Roselieb showed that the Income Fund in FY 21, 22, 23, and 24 had slight increases in revenue but not at

the same rate that expenses were also increasing. She explained this is due to multiple things, including contractual obligations, inflation, and student financial aid. She noted that net revenue has also decreased due to the university's significant enrollment declines. She thinks the university should have been projecting for this in order to make sure that expenditures were in line with revenue. She noted that in FY 21 and FY 22, WIU received Covid relief funds that were able to be claimed as lost revenue, so the revenue figures for those years are a little inflated. Ms. Roselieb said those dollars were used responsibly to support students and suppress WIU's Covid exposure, but WIU at that time saw drastic enrollment declines that were at least partly pandemic-related. She thinks the Covid dollars allowed the university to extend its problems for a few years and not address what had become a fundamental problem for the past several years at that point.

Ms. Roselieb reiterated that the university's deficit is primarily in its Income Fund because the other funding sources are designed to be self-sustaining, although they, too, are experiencing difficulties. She noted that Housing and Dining, for example, has not been able to adjust their operations quickly enough to address enrollment declines and has seen years of financial deficits which they are working to address now in various ways.

Ms. Roselieb stressed that WIU needs to address its cash flow problems and its structural deficit in order to achieve a balanced budget, and the administrative team continues to work toward that goal in order to achieve financial sustainability. She added that the dire need to make difficult decisions quickly is sometimes hindered by the university's cash flow situation. She noted that while expenses are recorded accurately in the correct fund source, from a cash perspective there is some ability to float the Income Fund and the Other/Local Fund against each other and use them interchangeably; this cannot be done with the Auxiliary/AFS funds, which have restrictions on what they can be used for. She noted that those two funds together in June 2018 had a balance over \$25 million, but in June 2024 that had fallen to \$4 million. Ms. Roselieb explained that cash will not always correlate to budget based on when certain payments are received; grants, students, and the state may have payments outstanding or not be paying at the same rate they have in the past. She noted there was a huge dip in the cash available in the Income Fund in FY 2024, but money was able to be shifted so that the university could continue its operations. Ms. Roselieb explained this shift was able to be made as a one-time interim measure by moving some scholarships from the Income Fund to revenue bond, but that is not a best practice and not something the university can continue to do.

Chair Robinett asked what WIU's monthly expenses are. Ms. Roselieb replied that, on average, expenditures from the Income Fund for payroll run over \$7 million. She said personnel expenses of about \$2 million per month are paid out of the unrestricted column, depending on what grants come in, and revenue bond expenses are about one million dollars per month. She specified that this is just personnel, which represents the majority of the university's expenditures, but there are also several million dollars of operating expenses, such as utilities, telecommunications, equipment, and those sorts of things. Chair Robinett asked if in June 2024, not taking into account \$1 million in the Auxiliary Fund since that seems to be a different category, it is correct to say the university had slightly less than \$5 million, but its expenditures were somewhere near \$9 million; Ms. Roselieb responded that is a fairly close estimate because the Income Fund had \$7 million in expenditures with about \$2 million in other services being paid per month.

Chair Robinett observed it seems like there are certain times of the year where big expenditures go out and other times of the year with big incomes. Ms. Roselieb said that is because the majority of the university's income arrives in August with some also arriving in January during the normal billing cycles. She noted that state appropriations are established on a reimbursement or voucher basis, so that is more of a monthly occurrence; payroll is vouchered to be reimbursed by the state. Ms. Roselieb explained that while planning must occur around most income arriving at the beginning of each semester, there are some things that can affect that, such as issues the university is currently experiencing with financial aid being applied to student bills, which directly affects the amount of cash received. She said another example is Monetary Assistance Program (MAP) funds, which are applied to eligible student's accounts at the beginning of the semester, then are reimbursed by the state; this is approximately \$7 million each semester and in past years has sometimes not arrived until as late as November or December for the fall semester. She added that the state has been very accommodating in light of WIU's financial situation and has promised they will reimburse the university sooner, but those are some of the things that must be planned for from a cash perspective because sometimes agencies or grants may not be able to reimburse the university in a timely fashion.

Chair Robinett told ExCo and the BTC that he spends a lot of time asking Ms. Roselieb to help him understand this process because faculty have not always been included in budgetary conversations; he was operating from a position of ignorance that he felt was greater than he should have as a Faculty Senate Chair, and Ms. Roselieb has been very gracious about answering his many questions.

Senator Gravitt recalled that when Interim President Abraham was at WIU, there was a time when students were practically being paid to come here. She asked how that position has changed and how the projections are toward improving WIU's situation long term. Ms. Roselieb pointed out the between FY 21 and FY 24, if personnel is removed from the operating budget, the next largest expense is what the university gives to students in awards, grants, and matching funds. She stated that prior to FY 21, that was close to \$7 million, but it increased to over \$20 million in FY 23 because of significant changes made to the institutional structure. She related that several things have been done to mitigate this expense, including tying institutional aid to direct costs for students so that they cannot get a cash refund of institutional dollars, lowering the amount of each of the levels of commitment, and eliminating some awards that were not strategic. Ms. Roselieb explained the aid awarded to students should be comprehensive of what students need, and there were some that could have been better aligned in the past; that award packaging has been realigned. She added that some other measures have been put in place for those awards, such as academic GPA standards in order for students to keep their institutional aid awards. She said the decision was made, however, not to change the criteria for students who were already receiving awards and have agreed to certain criteria. She admitted this is adding to the complications occurring now in student bills, and it also means that the financial ship cannot be righted overnight because these students are still matriculating through the system. She anticipates that there will be a \$3 million decrease in the awards that WIU gives out this year compared to last year and compared to overall expenses, and that amount will likely continue to decrease. Ms. Roselieb added that there is the need to be cognizant that at a certain point this may to a certain extent have an effect on enrollment because students may view this decline in aid as an indication that WIU is not investing in them and think they can get more aid from another school. Ms. Roselieb said the university is trying to be more strategic now with its aid to students, and this is definitely part of the budget goals moving forward.

Senator Gravitt asked how much of the aid that WIU is giving out can be billed to the state. Ms. Roselieb replied that some of it is out of the university's own pocket, but there is now an effort to tie the Western Commitment scholarship to meet the criteria of the Aim High grant, so WIU was able to get some matching funds from that. Chair Robinett asked how WIU compares to other state institutions in the amount spent on institutional aid. Ms. Roselieb replied she would have to do some research to respond to this question. She noted that state institutions are seeing more pressure to increase the amounts of awards. She suspects that the University of Illinois spends more in awards and grants than WIU's entire budget, and they are doing that to shift a bit more toward the private model and discount in a way that most public institutions cannot. She thinks WIU was ahead of the curve on offering discounts, and it probably helped the institution's decline from being even greater, but she is not sure to what extent or whether it was worth it. She believes it was an unfortunate series of events that WIU saw such a spike in its awards and grants to students and then was unable to make up for that in any significant way with increased enrollment.

Chair Robinett asked if the Budget Transparency Committee will be able to work with Ms. Roselieb to better understand how some of the bigger categories break down into smaller ones; Ms. Roselieb replied she will be happy to work with the BTC on that. Chair Robinett related he is often asked about the relationship between the monies the institution has available and the money kept in the Foundation and asked Ms. Roselieb if she could explain this. Ms. Roselieb stated that nothing she showed on the PowerPoint today has anything to do with the University Foundation. She explained that while the Foundation does pay for many student scholarships as well as some expenses on behalf of units of the university, those are not reflected in the budget but are instead reflected in the agreement with those units or with the Foundation and on the Foundation's financial statements. She thinks it is important to be cognizant of the support the Foundation continues to supply because when they pay for scholarships to students, that is reflected in the university's revenue because that money is billed to the student, then the Foundations office applies the scholarship to the student's bill. She added the Foundation has been a great partner from a cash flow perspective because they have in some cases been able to prepay the money that will be awarded to a student before that is applied to a student's bill, which Ms. Roselieb said has been helpful to the university's critical operations as it has teetered through its financial situation.

Senator Brewer remarked this presentation has been very helpful. Chair Robinett said he looks forward to working with Ms. Roselieb on the Budget Transparency Committee and appreciates her agreeing to come to Faculty Senate next week as well as next semester so that everyone can stay more educated about the status of the university.

2. *Charges for Senate councils and committees*

The Executive Committee reviewed and approved charges for the Senate Council for International Education, Council for Instructional Technology, Council for Intercollegiate Athletics, Council on General Education, Senate Nominating Committee, and Executive Committee. Chair Robinett has been discussing with Interim Provost Mossman the creation of a Senate ad hoc committee which will come to ExCo at a later date.

Ms. Hamm asked if Interim Provost Mossman could address questions she raised to Chair Robinett about the last bulleted charge to the Council for International Education, “To identify a process for approving campus-wide and Discipline-Specific Global Issues courses.” She wonders if there still has to be a process for these types of courses in light of elimination of the Foreign Language-Global Issues requirement. Interim Provost Mossman responded he will have to check with Linda Prorise, Administrative Assistant to the Provost, but the recent changes are not intended to impact processes.

Chair Robinett clarified that the bullet point stems from the understanding that Discipline-Specific Global Issues courses could be used by programs, if desired, instead of creating a new Multicultural Perspectives course. Ms. Hamm asked Chair Robinett if he is saying that programs would be able to still create Discipline-Specific Global Issues courses that would then count as Multicultural Perspectives courses. Interim Provost Mossman noted that for the Multicultural Perspectives requirement, different generic categories (FLGI and Multicultural Gen Ed) have been combined, and areas would still continue with their curriculum approval processes.

Chair Robinett observed that the Multicultural Perspectives requirement is a graduation requirement, not a General Education requirement, so it would not go through the Council on General Education for approval. Interim Provost Mossman related that he, Ms. Prorise, Registrar Sarah Lawson, and CAGAS Chair Rich Filipink discussed recently whether Multicultural Perspectives courses should go through CAGAS for approval. Registrar Lawson remarked she thinks they would go through CCPI because there would be no question of changing the graduation requirement, just approving the course, and CAGAS has never been a body that approves curriculum. Interim Provost Mossman remarked that Dr. Filipink thought the Multicultural Perspectives courses should go through CAGAS, but Ms. Prorise thought they should go through CCPI.

Ms. Hamm pointed out that the Council for International Education (CIE) was the body that approved Global Issues courses. She understands that CCPI would approve the new course creation, but she thinks there needs to be a separate body, such as CIE, that approves attaching the Multicultural Perspectives designation to that new course. She does not think that CCPI, the way it is currently set up, could attach that additional designation to a course. Chair Robinett agreed, stating it would be similar to the way the WID Council operates. Interim Provost Mossman said that CIE was not considered when these discussions came up because they were mainly focused on CAGAS. Registrar Lawson thinks having CIE be the designating body makes a lot of sense. Chair Robinett agreed that this would be consistent with the Senate’s existing faculty governance model for curriculum. Ms. Hamm added that CAGAS usually has a pretty full plate already. Interim Provost Mossman promised to follow up on this with Ms. Prorise.

4. *Assessment of Student Learning 2022-2023 (informational)*

This item is being brought forward by Lori Baker-Sperry and Christopher Pynes in the Provost’s office and will appear on the Senate agenda for September 24 under the Provost’s Report.

5. *Request for access to Executive Committee shared drive by non-ExCo members*

Chair Robinett related that several different requests have come in for access to the Executive Committee shared drive by non-Executive Committee members. He said that traditionally the practice has been to provide non-ExCo members with access to the documents they need to address or look at for the discussions,

but over the past few weeks there have been more requests than usual for access to ExCo and Senate folders. He asked ExCo if they think there needs to be any changes made to the way things are communicated or shared.

Senator Brewer pointed out that anyone can attend and participate in ExCo because they are open meetings. Chair Robinett agreed, although attendees would not have access to the shared drive. Interim Provost Mossman remarked that one of the requests was from his Administrative Assistant, Brenda McConnell, who wanted access to the shared drive in order to see the agenda in advance and help him get organized for the meeting. Ms. Hamm asked if it would help if she emailed the agenda to Ms. McConnell every Monday for every ExCo and Senate meeting; Interim Provost Mossman thought this would address her request. ExCo members agreed that it is reasonable to provide access to the folders to those who request it if they need to have access to it for the discussion.

#### 6. *Status of ongoing elections*

Ms. Hamm reported that one faculty member has volunteered to fill the vacant seat for the College of Fine Arts and Communication on Faculty Senate, replacing Suyeon Ko for the remaining two years of her term. If no other petitions are received at the Senate office by tomorrow's deadline, Damon McArthur, Art and Design, will be declared elected.

Two faculty members from the College of Fine Arts and Communication have submitted petitions to fill a vacant seat on the University Personnel Committee: Istvan Szabo, Music, and Ilon Lauer, Communication. If no other petitions are turned in tomorrow, ballots will be sent out on Monday, September 23 to Unit A faculty in this college to vote for their representative.

Ms. Hamm reported that no petitions were turned in from the College of Education and Human Services, which has two vacancies on Faculty Senate for seats vacated by Jim Sarra and Denny Barr. The Executive Committee approved extending the deadline by two weeks, and Ms. Hamm will contact faculty in that college with this information.

Chair Robinett related he reached out to Bob Emmert in University Technology to see if Faculty Senate can get one of the university's five Qualtrics licenses to more efficiently send out surveys and ballots. Interim Provost Mossman suggested Chair Robinett reach out to Christopher Pynes or Andrea Alveshere if he is unable to obtain a Qualtrics license by the time ballots go out on Monday. [Note: neither Drs. Pynes nor Alveshere were able to send out the ballots; since Chair Robinett has not heard back from University Technology he will prepare a Google poll for this election.]

The agenda was finalized for the Faculty Senate meeting of September 24, and the Executive Committee meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Annette Hamm, Faculty Senate Office Manager  
and Recording Secretary