
PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE

Minutes of 18 January 2023

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Professional Concerns Committee was called to order at 12:30 p.m. on 18 January 2023 via Webex conferencing by John Miller, chair.

Members in Attendance: John Miller, Timothy Palmer, Elizabeth Terrel, Rena VanDerwall

Member Absent: Karen Schieman

Advisory Members Present: Joseph Erskine, Kathy Mitchell

Ex Officio: John Jellies

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by Palmer, seconded by Jellies, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Jellies, seconded by Palmer, to approve the 7 December 2022 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Miller reported that the survey designed to collect data from deans, department heads, and/or chair/directors about policies currently in practice that are associated with student conduct residing outside of Faculty Senate policies has been distributed. Twenty-one units have responded. A follow-up request will be sent.

Ex Officio Jellies reported that he communicated with the Faculty Senate Executive Board about membership challenges of the PCC. Not all colleges are represented, and attaining a quorum at meetings is often a challenge. The Faculty Senate has subsequently sent out a request to WMU faculty for increased participation on committees, including PCC. Beyond gaining members from unrepresented colleges, Ex Officio Jellies encouraged PCC members to identify colleagues who may be interested in serving on the committee.

Ex Officio Jellies also reported that the Faculty Senate Executive Board will be requesting PCC to revisit syllabus statement requirements. Recent recommendations included making syllabi more accessible. Undergraduate Studies Council (USC) communicated that USC is not interested in considering other new syllabus requirements. Chair Miller will request the report from USC relating to syllabi requirements.

Reports of University Representatives

Erskine reported that the Office of Student Conduct panels are being assembled for fall semester students who did not accept responsibility for alleged misconduct. Erskine suggested that some student misconduct issues could possibly be resolved if faculty first considered an instructor hearing, rather than moving directly to the more cumbersome panel hearings. Erskine added that there may be occasions where the faculty and the student never communicated about an alleged conduct violation. It is possible that faculty development, through WMUx, can educate faculty about optional paths that are available when addressing student misconduct. This issue was noted and will be discussed at a subsequent PCC meeting.

Mitchell expressed no concerns associated with grade appeal and program dismissal activity at the Office of the Ombuds. Eric McConnell, Assistant University Ombuds, will be invited to attend the next scheduled meeting of PCC, given Mitchell's retirement in early May. This will allow McConnell to become acquainted with PCC procedures.

Unfinished Business

Chair Miller and Terrel will create a report for the Faculty Senate on the activities and accomplishments of PCC.

New Business

None

Announcements

None

Adjournment

Chair Miller adjourned the meeting at 1:15 p.m. The Professional Concerns Committee will meet next on 15 February 2023 at 12:30 p.m. via Webex video conferencing.

Approval

Submitted by Timothy Palmer, Secretary

Minutes approved on 15 February 2023.