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**Undergraduate Studies Council**  
Minutes of 12 September 2023**Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Undergraduate Studies Council was called to order at 3:04 p.m. on 12 September 2023 via Webex video conferencing by Diane Riggs, chair.

**Members in Attendance:** Jessica Birnbaum, Carrie Cumming, Lisa DeChano-Cook, Jordan Dunn, Lori Gray, Tomika Griffin-Brown, Anthony Helms (substitute for Irma Lopez), Dylan McGlothlin Juhl (substitute for Sue Steuer), Dave Karowe, Dawn Mason, Susan Piazza, Diane Riggs, Jill Rowe, Abdus Salam, Scott Slawinski

**Members Absent:** Carly Hagins

**Advisory Member:** Colleen Stano

**Ex Officio:** Sarah Summy, Faculty Senate President

**Guests:** Timothy Palmer, Co-Chair, Service-Learning Course Approval Committee; Melinda Holohan, Chair, Transfer of Credit Committee

**Quorum**

A quorum was present with 15 members in attendance, of the 18 needed to establish quorum.

**Agenda**

Amendment was made to the agenda for Chair Riggs to report on the Intellectual Skills subcommittee in place of Eisenhart.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Cumming, seconded by Gray, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

**Minutes**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Piazza, seconded by Griffin-Brown, to approve the 11 April 2023 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**Undergraduate Studies Council 2023-24 Charges**

Faculty Senate President Summy read the charges for the Undergraduate Studies Council for 2023-24. Charges remain the same for 2023-24 with the addition of Charge #3: USC to collaborate with Graduate Studies Council on defining cross-level courses and recommend implementation practices. Conclude the initiative by producing a Memorandum of Action (MOA). The Executive Board asked USC to examine the issues around cross-level course offerings to determine current procedures to develop a current policy. This will affect 4000 and 6000 level courses that might be taught together with differentiation for undergraduate and graduate students in terms of breadth and depth of course content.

**Reports of Officers**

Chair Riggs discussed USC task of reviewing curriculum program changes, but not course changes.

President Summy announced that DeChano-Cook is now the curriculum manager and welcomed Associate Dean Griffin-Brown as the representative for Merze Tate College.

**Reports of University Representatives**

DeChano-Cook shared information about MOA-23/01 that was passed in spring 2023. As part of the MOA, USC will review proposals that convert concentrations into majors. Expedited forms make the process as easy as possible. The form will be in place until 30 October 2024.

Griffin-Brown reported on academic advising work with the Student Success Hub, which is a software integration launched in March 2023. Fall 2023 will be the first academic year cycle for this new system. Since academic advising moved to centralized advising, every freshman received Degree Works plans. In addition to creating these graduation plans for students, academic advising held over 8,000 advising appointments. Griffin-Brown described the success plans designed for students which include various activities in both academics. A success plan is a list of tasks that students need to complete including, but not limited to, club membership, campus involvement,

familiarity with Degree Works, declare a major, meet with advisors, apply for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and apply for scholarships. Griffin-Brown discussed the ratios of advisors to students in various colleges. WMU has a higher ratio of students to advisors than the national average. The advising ratio of students to advisors at WMU is 374:1, which is above the national average.

Dunn joined the meeting at 3:20 p.m.

Holohan joined the meeting 3:26 p.m.

### **Reports of Council Standing Committees**

Chair Riggs provided the Intellectual Skills Program Advisory Committee (ISPAC) report on behalf of Kirsty Eisenhart. Literacy has resolved the issue of language skills proficiency by offering three-credit course option that is also a WMU Essential Studies course (LS 1045). Math is still working on addressing the math proficiency requirements and aligning with WMU Essential Studies requirements. After discussion, USC decided to dissolve ISPAC.

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Piazza, seconded by Birnbaum, to dissolve the Intellectual Skills Program Advisory Committee. The motion passed unanimously.

Palmer provided the Service-Learning Course Approval Committee (SLCAC) report. The committee reviews courses which include a service-learning component to attach a designation to its curriculum. This official designation is one way to advertise courses to students looking for service orientation. For courses to be approved, there is a list of criteria to earn the service-learning designation. Shawn Tenney, Program Manager of Service Learning, is working with faculty members in multiple departments to develop further course offerings. Reviews occur on an ad hoc basis. Palmer suggested that one change to the committee be to add an advisory role to support and encourage more service learning in the community. Chair Riggs will discuss with Tenney to see how USC could help with this charge.

Salam attended the meeting at 3:40 p.m.

Holohan provided the Transfer of Credit Committee (TCC), report that the committee is robust and active, with faculty and appointed administrative members. In spring 2023, TCC identified a need for two new advisory members: one from Registrar's office and one from Early College Programs. This year, TCC intends to develop a transfer credit handbook that can be accessed university wide. For example, a glossary of terms, FAQs, resource maps, personnel maps, suggested workflow of transfer credits may be included. Holohan reported that TCC has one more opening for a faculty member from College of Arts and Sciences.

### **Unfinished Business**

None.

### **New Business**

Chair Riggs asked for representatives to serve on SLCAC and TCC. Griffin-Brown volunteered for SLCAC and Cumming volunteered for TCC.

### **Announcements**

None.

### **Adjournment**

**[MOTION]** It was moved by Cumming, seconded by Rowe, to adjourn the meeting at 3:58 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Undergraduate Studies Council will meet next on 10 October 2023 at 3 p.m. via Webex.

### **Approval**

Submitted by Susan Piazza, Secretary

Minutes approved on 20 November 2023.