

Professional Concerns Committee

Minutes of 21 February 2024

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 21 February 2024, via Webex conferencing by John Miller, chair.

Members Present: Jennifer Bott (substitute for Timothy Palmer), Kerry Hegele (substitute for Rena VanDerwall), John Jellies, Michael Kahwaji (substitute for Elizabeth Terrel), Richard Meyer, John Miller, Marian Tripplett

Members Absent: None

Advisory Members Present: Joe Erskine, Eric McConnell

Advisory Member Absent: None

Guest: Sarah Meiser, Office of Student Conduct

Ex Officio: Zeljka Vidic

Quorum

A quorum was present with eight members in attendance, of the five needed to establish a quorum.

Agenda

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

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Jellies, seconded by Meyer, to approve the 17 January 2024 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Miller presented the Memorandum of Action (MOA) 23/04 *Establishment of a Review Cycle for Academic Conduct Policies* to the Faculty Senate. The Education Training materials will be the topic of the March PCC meeting.

Ex Officio Vidic did not provide a report.

Reports of University Representatives

Erskine reported that the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities continues to work on cases. Some work is being done to uncover Artificial Intelligence (AI) related work in the classroom. Erskine gave examples of how cases involving AI can be determined by using concepts like not matching past work, commentary on the match of the submitted work and the assignment, and others.

McConnell discussed the work of the Ombuds Office. He presented a roster of who serves on the Academic Integrity panels (representative of the faculty and PCC). McConnell will undertake a review of wording on the Ombuds website, undergraduate and graduate catalogs, to ensure they are up-to-date, in consultation with PCC. The committee will provide feedback and, where necessary, develop MOAs to move changes forward. Disparities in academic dismissal and grade appeal were examined; case numbers are limited, and differences are not evident. Additional measures have been implemented to communicate with students about timelines for appeals, investigations, and hardship processes.

Unfinished Business

University-wide academic and student conduct materials were shared in advance of the meeting and reviewed, as was the glossary of the catalogs. Specific changes were discussed, considered, and will be drafted into an MOA at a future meeting. There was a discussion of faculty's role in the academic conduct process where students do not accept responsibility. Chair Miller will put these changes into MOAs for review in March. Training material reviews will begin in March and conclude in April.

New Business

None.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Miller, seconded by Meyer, to adjourn the meeting at 1:30 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Professional Concerns Committee will meet next on 20 March 2024 via Webex conference at 12:30 p.m.

Approval

Submitted by Jennifer Bott on behalf of Timothy Palmer, Secretary

Minutes approved on 20 March 2024.