

Undergraduate Studies Council

Minutes of 12 March 2024

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Undergraduate Studies Council was called to order at 3:03 p.m. on 12 March 2024 via Webex video conferencing by Diane Riggs, chair.

Members in Attendance: Jessica Birnbaum, Carrie Cumming, Lisa DeChano-Cook, Lori Gray, Tomika Griffin-Brown, Anthony Helms (substitute for Irma Lopez), Dave Karowe, Dawn Mason, Diane Riggs, Scott Slawinski, Sue Steuer, Yuanling Sun, Wei Zhang (substitute for Susan Piazza)

Members Absent: Jordan Dunn, Leah Latumaerissa, Jill Rowe, Abdus Salam

Advisory Member in Attendance: Colleen Stano

Ex Officio Absent: Bret Wagner

Guests: Adrienne Fraaza, Director, Office of Student Transitions; Carolyn Smith, Program Manager, First Year Experience

Quorum

A quorum was present with 14 members in attendance, of the 10 needed to establish quorum.

Agenda

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

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Mason, seconded by Karowe, to approve the 13 February 2024 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Riggs reported that there will be a discussion and voting on Memorandum of Action (MOA) 24/04 which defines and has guidelines to cross-level listed courses. Fraaza and Smith were introduced. They will report on the First Year Program.

Ex Officio Wagner announced the election of 2024-25 USC officers will be on the April meeting agenda.

Reports of University Representatives

DeChano-Cook stated that a draft of year-end report should be presented at the April USC meeting. A new MOA concerning transfer credit is in planning stages and may be ready for the April meeting.

Griffin-Brown reported that the university was entering priority registration for fall. In addition, Information Technology (IT) implemented a marketing cloud to send to all students via email such "advising journeys" which are about degree planning and registration. The first email will be sent to advisors and the second to students. Over 400 students scheduled appointments after receiving the email and another 300 after the weekend. Merze Tate will be hosting a registration encouragement session.

Fraaza and Smith reported the following on the First Year Experience (FYE) Program:

1. History: The FYE began in 2005 organizing orientation, fall welcome, and other services. The unit moved to Merze Tate in 2020.
2. Overview: The FYE class serves over 700 students, with classic, exploratory, and theme sections. FYE program is staffed by faculty and student facilitators. The Common Read has been inconsistently held. A common curriculum is featured across the sections with some flexibility for instructors. The class offers a holistic approach. The students learn about campus resources, how to be successful college students, and to adopt the conventions of eight dimensions of well-being.
3. Transfer students have a one-day session which is required to attend orientation and can be advised earlier.
4. Second year experience is not a class but consists of a newsletter, conference style program with

second year and transfer students. Transfer students can attend fall welcome and student summit as well as receive newsletters.

5. A challenge for FYE is that there are not enough faculty instructors. More faculty involvement would be beneficial. Compensation and teaching overload may keep faculty from volunteering. Currently, most sections are taught by staff. The course size is small, capped around 20 students.
6. Assessment is being conducted for courses or instructor improvement. Some instructors have content experts visit for some portions of the classes.
7. Student feedback from students is positive and often points to connections they make within a small class. There is opportunity for faculty to tailor sections to their own interests with some overlap across sections.

Fraaza and Smith left the meeting at 3:46 p.m.

New Business

Chair Riggs presented MOA 24/04 *Cross Level Course Listing* and provided background research, justification for simple definition, and advantages of having cross-listed courses. Instructors must possess graduate faculty status to teach cross-listed courses. This stipulation will be added to the 24/04 MOA text. **[MOTION]** It was moved by Cumming, seconded by Karowe to approve MOA 24/04 *Cross Level Course Listing*. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Riggs presented Audiology Preparation Concentration in Healthcare Services and Sciences proposal.

[MOTION] It was moved by Karowe, seconded by Sun, to delete the Audiology Preparation Concentration in Healthcare Services and Sciences proposal. The motion carried unanimously.

Announcements

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Karowe, seconded by Wagner, to adjourn the meeting at 4 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Undergraduate Studies Council will meet next on 9 April 2024 at 3 p.m. via Webex.

Approval

Submitted by Scott Slawinski, substituting for Susan Piazza, Secretary

Minutes approved on 9 April 2024.