
Undergraduate Studies Council
Minutes of 10 September 2024**Call to Order**

A meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Undergraduate Studies Council was called to order at 3:02 p.m. on 10 September 2024 via Webex video conferencing by Diane Riggs, chair.

Members in Attendance: Jessica Birnbaum, Jennifer Bott (substitute for Bret Wagner), Carrie Cumming, Lisa DeChano-Cook, Tomika Griffin-Brown, Irma Lopez, Dylan McGlothlin, Diane Riggs, Scott Slawinski, Katherine Suender, Yuanling Sun

Members Absent: Dave Karowe, Abdus Salam

Advisory Member in Attendance: Colleen Stano

Ex Officio: David Rudge

Guest: Amy Naugle, WMU Faculty Senate President

Quorum

A quorum was present with 12 members in attendance, of the 10 needed to establish a quorum.

Agenda

An amendment was made to the agenda to add the election of vice chair.

[MOTION] It was moved by DeChano-Cook, seconded by Griffin-Brown, to accept the agenda as amended. The motion carried unanimously.

Suender joined the meeting at 3:25 p.m.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by DeChano-Cook, seconded by Griffin-Brown, to accept the 16 April 2024 minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Faculty Senate President Naugle presented the 2024-25 Undergraduate Studies Council charges.

Chair Riggs introduced new USC members, McGlothlin and Suender. Chair Riggs provided an overview of the USC 2024-25 calendar and two subcommittees, Transfer of Credit (TCC) and Service-Learning Course Approval (SLCAC).

Ex Officio Rudge conducted the elections of vice chair and secretary.

[MOTION] It was moved by Riggs, seconded by Cumming, to elect Bott, serving as the fall 2024 substitute for Wagner, as vice chair and Sun as secretary. The motion passed.

There was discussion regarding the possibility of moving the meeting time to 3:15 p.m. or 3:30 p.m.

Reports of University Representatives

DeChano-Cook reported that the Faculty Senate passed Memorandum of Action 24/03 Undergraduate Transfer Course Evaluation Policy, and implementation issues are being addressed. New templates for WMU Essential Studies courses will be introduced, with proposals forthcoming to the USC. Issues with implementing the new transfer student software were discussed, along with concerns about students using Prior Learning Assessment (PLA) to get around transfer requirements. DeChano-Cook emphasized that programs with free elective courses should be more specific to prevent advisors from manually entering large numbers of elective courses.

Griffin-Brown reported that WMU has achieved its highest student retention rate in history at 81.1%, surpassing the previous record set in 1997. Enrollment has increased by 11%, marking the third time in the past decade. However, the retention rate for African American students has dropped by roughly 2%, an area that needs improvement. Griffin-Brown also noted that the Student Success Hub has conducted

over 27,000 academic advising appointments, with 69% of students who had at least one appointment being retained. Griffin-Brown highlighted the creation of a strategic plan for centralized advising, now available on the Advising website. A question was asked whether free community college programs are impacting WMU's enrollment and retention. Chair Riggs expressed concerns about how free community college might affect the WMU Essential Studies program.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

None.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by DeChano-Cook, seconded by Birnbaum, to adjourn the meeting at 3:57 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Undergraduate Studies Council will next meet on 8 October 2024 at 3 p.m. via Webex.

Approval

Submitted by Yuanliang Sun, Secretary

Minutes approved on 8 October 2024.