
Undergraduate Studies Council

Minutes of 14 September 2021

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate Undergraduate Studies Council was called to order at 3:07 p.m. on 14 September 2021, in the Faculty Lounge of the Bernhard Center and via Webex video conferencing by Clifton Ealy Jr., chair.

Members in Attendance: Deanna Bush, Carrie Cumming, Clifton Ealy, Steven Eberth, Bruce Ferrin, Marcia Feters (substitute for Kristal Ehrhart), Lori Gray, Irma Lopez, Mary-Louise Totton, Nicolas Witschi

Member Absent: Jessica Birnbaum, Betsy Drummer, Elisha Ewing, Ashlynn Jackson, Colin MacCreery, Kelly Wittenberg

Advisory Members Present: Edwin Martini, WMUx

Ex Officio: Scott Slawinski

Guest(s): Kirsty Eisenhart, Vice Chair, Intellectual Skills Program Advisory Committee; Scott Hennessey, Chair, Transfer of Credit Committee; Marilyn Kritzman, Faculty Senate President

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Agenda

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

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Cumming, seconded by Jones, to approve the 8 June 2021 minutes as presented. With two abstentions, the motion carried.

Reports of Officers

Faculty Senate President Kritzman delivered the council 2021-22 Charges. She advised the chair to participate in Faculty Senate monthly meetings. She introduced Scott Slawinski as the new council Ex Officio. Discussion was held regarding the timeline for action on curriculum proposals and the need to allow adequate time for review. The intent is for USC to review proposals as they are submitted. There is potential for the committee to decide how many can be reviewed by the committee per month.

Chair Ealy reported that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration has many Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) projects underway, and he is interested in collaborating with institutions that serve underserved students. He suggested the council invite the academic deans to attend a USC meeting to discuss the effects of the pandemic and explore opportunities to collaborate and improve pedagogy and student success. President Kritzman talked about the potential for collaboration with the Academic and Information Technology Council, which may already have this topic as a charge. Ealy raised a point about COVID-19 precautions and mask wearing. Discussion was held regarding exposure risk and community rates of infection.

Ex Officio Slawinski reported that MOA-21/02: Creation of Transfer Minor Policy and MOA-21/03: Revision of Dean's List Honors were approved by the administration.

Totton joined the meeting at 3:41 p.m.

Reports of University Representatives

Associate Provost for WMUx Martini reported that the Office of Faculty Development Director Gwen Tarbox is establishing workshops to provide pedagogies to improve HyFlex teaching. The OFD office is

working to improve responsiveness and the level of assistance to faculty. The Faculty Senate Executive Board has approved housing WMU Essential Studies within the University College.

Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees

Eisenhart provided the report of the Intellectual Skills Program Advisory Committee stating that the University has changed the Intellectual Skills Program in order to update and better define the program. The changes will require curriculum proposals, which raise questions regarding the processing. President Kritzman recommended establishing a meeting for council members with interest in the topic to develop a plan. Witschi noted that changes will need to be reviewed through the USC. Ferrin suggested that a plan needs to be developed to align Intellectual Skills with WMU Essential Studies.

Due to Tenney's absence, a report for the Service-Learning Course Approval Committee was not provided.

Ex Officio Slawinski provided the Transfer of Credit Committee report that included that with the approval of the transfer minor, Admissions is pursuing partners.

Unfinished Business

President Kritzman reported on MOA-14/02: *Undergraduate Certificate Programs* that was replaced by MOA-16/13: *Revise Undergraduate Catalog Non-Degree Certificate Programs*. It appears that MOA-16/13 was never implemented in the Undergraduate Catalog. Cummings reported that there are 18 students enrolled in undergraduate certificate programs this fall: 1 in Public Relations; 1 in Applied Hydrogeology; 7 in Dance Studio Management; and 9 in Music Therapy Equivalency. President Kritzman is seeking support for MOA-21/05: Revision of MOA-16/13 for Undergraduate Certificate Programs to clarify the process.

[MOTION] It was moved by Kritzman, seconded by Cummings, to approve MOA-21/05 for the Faculty Senate Executive Board. The motion carried unanimously.

Martini left the meeting at 4:30 p.m.

New Business

Chair Ealy reported on the need for a USC representative to the University Assessment Steering Committee. Lopez volunteered.

[MOTION] It was moved by Slawinski, seconded by Bush, to select Lopez. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Ealy stated that based on prior comments, President Kritzman and Ex Officio Slawinski will follow up on Intellectual Skills.

Chair Ealy reported on the need for a USC representative to the Service Learning Course Approval Committee. Bush volunteered.

[MOTION] It was moved by Jones, seconded by Feters, to select Bush. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Ealy reported on the need for a USC representative to the Transfer of Credit Committee. Cumming volunteered to continue as the liaison.

[MOTION] It was moved by Slawinski, seconded by Bush, to select Cumming. The motion carried unanimously.

Eisenhart left the meeting at 4:47 p.m.

Announcements

Vice Chair Gray expressed a desire to step down to learn more about the council. Discussion was held.

Cumming reported that undergraduate enrollment goals were met, including almost reaching the First Time in Any College (FTIAC) goal.

The Fallen Bronco Ceremony to honor currently employed faculty and staff, and currently enrolled students who have passed away since March 2020, will be held on 8 October at 3 p.m.

There will be a commencement ceremony on 2 October at 2 p.m. at Waldo Stadium for those students who did not have an opportunity for an in-person event during the pandemic.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Cumming, seconded by Bush, to adjourn the meeting at 4:55 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The Undergraduate Studies Council will meet next on 12 October 2021 at 3 p.m. virtually via Webex.

Approval

Submitted by Steven D. Eberth, Secretary

Minutes approved on 12 October 2021.