
International Education Council

Minutes of 20 January 2022

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Western Michigan University Faculty Senate International Education Council was called to order at 3 p.m. on 20 January 2022, virtually via Webex video conferencing by D. Eric Archer, chair.

Members in Attendance: D. Eric Archer, Joan Conway, Bradford Dennis, David Huffman, Shannon McMorrow, Michelle Metro-Roland, Ann Miles, Jun-Seok Oh, Anna Popkova, Carter Rice (substitute for Ellen Breakfield-Glick), Xiaodan (Abby) Wang, Jim Whittles, Hanny Wuysang, Paulo Zagalo-Melo

Members Absent: Griffin Baginski

Ex Officio in Attendance: Marilyn Kritzman (substitute for Matthew Mingus)

Guests: Gwen Tarbox, Director, Office of Faculty Development

Quorum

A quorum was present.

Agenda

[MOTION] It was moved by Zagalo-Melo, seconded by McMorrow, to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Minutes

[MOTION] It was moved by Whittles, seconded by Wang, to approve the minutes of 9 December 2021 as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Reports of Officers

Chair Archer asked a series of questions from a recent publication of the Association of International Educators (NAFSA):

1. What does the future hold for international education?
2. What matters in global education and why?
3. Is Hybrid modality a permanent approach, or will universities go back to traditional methods?
4. Will universities have both Hybrid and in-person modalities?
5. Can international education diversify?
6. Will the pandemic enhance the case for international research and education?

He noted that during the pandemic, many programs had to be cancelled. Whittles stated that Hybrid or virtual may be required in the future, but it is hard to teach via Webex at the College of Aviation. Archer continued by asking what will 2022 bring in international education? Enrollment management is a challenge; there are budget shortfalls and hiring freezes. Metro-Roland stated that WMU has new ways to communicate with students. Now there are virtual groups for international students before they arrive on campus, which allows students to become virtually connected. WMU has done an exceptional job facilitating this new mode of communication and training. Zagalo-Melo stated the acceptance of technology has increased, especially with the orientation program. WMU has had new ideas and approaches that have resulted in progress being made as a result of the pandemic constraints. In the next steps, especially in the new University Strategic Plan, everything should be viewed through a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI).

Chair Archer also reported that the denial rate for H1B visa petitions has dropped to 4%, compared to 24% three years ago. The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) re-established its advisory council with academics giving feedback on security issues and DHS policy development. The White House has also published new guidance on research disclosures with a focus on research with Chinese nationals

and institutions. New research contracts must be produced, and researchers can reveal past ones without penalty.

President Kritzman stated that there were positive acknowledgements for the work of IEC at the most recent WMU Board of Trustees meeting.

Reports of University Representatives

Zagalo-Melo provided the Haenicke Institute for Global Education report. He stated it has been a difficult start of term, with the death of an international WMU student. A lot of time has been spent working with the consulate and many other issues. Zagalo-Melo proposed a discussion with the Faculty Senate related to the current posthumous degree policy. The policy currently states that a student has to be in their last semester and a faculty member needs to request the posthumous degree to be awarded. Kritzman stated the policy had been reviewed last year and the Executive Board had recommended updates, including changes to eligibility requirements. Zagalo-Melo also reported that Joe Milostan, from Kansas State University, has been hired as the new Director of Study Abroad. WMU has experienced a slight decrease in international enrollment for spring 2022, and had an increase in international graduate enrollment, especially in master's programs.

Reports of Council/Committee Standing Committees

Zagalo-Melo provided the American Council on Education Internationalization Lab 2.0 report. Chair Archer stated that the American Council on Education Internationalization Lab 2.0 will be hosting an in-person meeting in Washington, D.C., to close out the lab for this academic year.

Zagalo-Melo provided a University Strategic Planning internationalization workgroup report. A third meeting of the Internationalization strategic plan committee (IZN) was held, during which the larger group was divided into smaller working groups. These IZN working groups are focused on Mobility, Global Learning/IZN at Home, Faculty and Staff Support, and Structure and Institutional Commitment. Wayne Bond of Career and Student Employment Services leads the mobility group. The lead for Global Learning is Steve Covell, and Archer leads Faculty and Staff Support. McMorro is the lead for Structure and Institutional Commitment. Zagalo-Melo shared a PowerPoint presentation and stated IZN will have two town halls to gather input on IZN with WMU constituent groups. Metro-Roland added that it would be beneficial to include staff in this important process. IEC members were asked for feedback on the Town Hall meeting format. It was suggested that it is important to make sure others are heard and provide input. Miles asked who is anticipated to attend the town halls, to which Zagalo-Melo responded that they will be open to all faculty, staff, and students to participate. Tarbox suggested that new faculty members could be an important group to the process, because they are the future of the institution. Additionally, it was suggested that individuals be asked to pose questions on Google Forms, or an equivalent program, in advance of the meetings. President Kritzman suggests breakout sessions where groups address target questions.

Zagalo-Melo reported that HIGE has been working with Paula Termuhlen, dean of WMU and the medical school, to discuss potential collaborations on IZN between WMU and WMed.

Unfinished Business

None.

New Business

Chair Archer postponed the discussion regarding planning for the January 2022 council meeting.

Guest Tarbox, Director of the Office of Faculty Development (OFD), reported on OFD efforts, including international faculty development and curriculum internationalization. WMUx grew out of Extended University programs and serves as an innovation home for teaching and learning. OFD is central to this and works closely with the instructional design team. The OFD vision includes cooperation among designers and faculty members, and new international learning trends. OFD works closely with Student Success within the new Merze Tate College. OFD continues to offer workshops on mentoring and working with international students and to recruit faculty to help share best practices for teaching

international students. Additionally, all the work of OFD is framed within a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Whittles asked about the new events in spring 2022, and Tarbox listed several and stated the OFD website continues to be updated with events. Wuysang stated that the Graduate Student Association (GSA) is in favor of the “buddy system” of pairing domestic and international students that Tarbox had mentioned, and that the Graduate College holds writing circles for graduate students like the writing events hosted by OFD. Popkova stated that internationalization of curriculum can be done with any course, to which Tarbox responded that there is funding through OFD to allow faculty to attend conferences or other professional development opportunities related to curriculum development. Chair Archer asked how the IEC could help to support OFD efforts related to curriculum internationalization, supporting international student learning, etc. Tarbox stated that input about new ways of developing content to offer over the summer is something OFD is seeking. Graduate students often have availability for different learning opportunities in the summer as do some faculty. Archer stated that the IEC may be able to help establish passive repositories of information on topics discussed during the meeting so individuals can seek out this information on their own time. Miles asked about encouraging more experienced faculty to embrace new methods in teaching. Tarbox proposed the idea of intergenerational teaching and pairing junior faculty with more senior faculty so that they may support each other in teaching and learning efforts. Tarbox also mentioned that forty faculty were hired during the pandemic and that there are efforts to increase active and problem-based learning activities as part of new faculty orientation.

Announcements

Metro-Roland stated some good news related to efforts to support former Afghan alumni in returning to WMU. Two students received visas and are now at WMU and have started classes.

Adjournment

[MOTION] It was moved by Huffman, seconded by Popkopva, to adjourn the meeting at 5 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. The International Education Council meets next on 17 February 2022 via Webex video conferencing.

Approval

Submitted by David Huffman, Secretary

Minutes approved on 17 February 2022.