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Official Minutes
Faculty Senate Meeting
04/21/2025

Pre-Approval

Call To Order and Approval of Minutes

Call to Order: Senate President Michael Slouber called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

Approval of Minutes: The following minutes were approved by consent:

- February 3, 2025 ATC Minutes
- March 4, 2025 ACC Minutes
- April 1, 2025 SLC Minutes
- April 7, 2025 Faculty Senate Minutes

Reports and Announcements

Michael Slouber, Senate President

- The Senate Executive Council approved the nomination of Warren Aller to receive an Honorary Doctorate under WWU policies.
- He noted the Not In Our Name letter from scholars, including those at WWU, regarding antisemitism
- He reminded Senators that nominations are open for next year's Deputy Budget Representative position.
- The last Difficult Conversations event, which is about public health and individual rights, will be held on April 30.

Sabah Randhawa, University President

- A Dear Colleague email was sent this morning regarding budget planning and federal policy issues.

Brad Johnson, Provost and Executive Vice President

- On Friday, the NSF sent termination notices affecting three grants at WWU. The Administration is still in the process of determining what this means and is working with the AAG regarding legal issues. There are three questions currently: How to support the projects? What is the institutional response more broadly? Who does WWU work with/join with on this?

Vicki Hsueh, UFWW President

- The UFWW has been following up with faculty regarding NSF grants.
- UFWW elections will be held this Spring. Nominations will likely close on May 15 (Spring Meeting), with voting to be concluded by May 30/June 2.
- There will be two sessions on how to get involved in UFWW (May 5 and 6), with details to be posted on the UFWW website.
- The UFWW advocacy menu on its website has been updated with additional resources and information.

Bidisha Biswas, Faculty Legislative Representative

- As the Legislative session in Olympia completes its work, the Council of Faculty continues to work on supporting higher ed.

Information Item

Senate President Slouber announced that the External Intimidation, Abuse, or Harassment Reporting Form is live. It is linked in several places on the Faculty Senate website and is administered through the Office of Faculty Relations.

Action Items

- **Shared Governance Policy (Faculty Handbook):** A motion from Senate Executive Council to approve the draft revised shared governance language in the Faculty Handbook passed unanimously, with one abstention, with the following friendly amendments adopted by consent:

    - Section (g) – Strike entire section
    - Section (i) – Strike language following "jointly established"
    - Section (k) – Change "important" to "necessary"

  The Senate-passed resolution is available on the Faculty Senate website. It will now go to the Board of Trustees for final review.

- **Attendance and Grading Policies Draft University Catalog Revision:** A motion from Senate Executive Council to approve the Attendance and Grading Policies Draft

For Approval

University Catalog Revision passed unanimously, with one abstention, with the following friendly amendments adopted by consent:

- Move "Instructors set their own attendance policies in the course syllabus, clearly specifying how, and to what extent, absences affect, or do not affect, the student's grade" to second paragraph
- Revise new second paragraph to read "Instructors set their own attendance policies ~~in the course syllabus, clearly specifying how, and to what extent, absences affect, or do not affect, the student's grade~~"
- Strike "clearly" from "The instructor's syllabus policy on attendance must be clearly articulated and consistently applied to all students"
- Modify paragraph four, sentence one to read "Instructors who grade based on attendance must articulate their policy in the syllabus and the policy must be applied consistently to all students. "

The Senate-passed resolution is available on the Faculty Senate website. ACC will be responsible for developing updated syllabus requirements to reflect the approved policy language.

- **Motion to Support the Resolution Passed By Western Libraries Faculty Regarding Western Administration Decisions About Personnel Impacting Services and Resources:** The motion from Senate Executive Council passed unanimously.

Discussion Items

- **Student Performance Issues:** Michael Karlberg, Professor, Communication Studies, gave a presentation about the many factors affecting student performance including technology, COVID-related changes to courses, and anxiety about the future. He spoke about his conversations with students regarding leniency and baseline expectations. He recommends that there be conversations at the departmental/college level, thinking about the philosophy behind DAC, and a reduced reliance on software features that put students in front of screens. He urged the Administration to have conversations with high-transfer community colleges about reliance on online/hybrid education and that faculty recognize their responsibility for mental health concerns by building courses that provide hope, meaning, and purpose. Several Senators expressed support for the issues raised, including technology concerns and heavy use of DAC accommodations. Several Senators commented about the need for data to substantiate these concerns and their disagreement with framing rigor as in conflict with accommodation issues. Additional comments were made about supporting spaces for students to build friendships and about the diminishment of Libraries resources that support student academics.

  The Senate will have a follow-up discussion at the May 5 meeting, and Senators were asked to think about what kinds of actions and what types of data would be useful in shaping Senate action on this issue.

- **Faculty Handbook Revisions (Code of Ethics):** Brandon Dupont, Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Handbook Revisions, gave a presentation of the draft revised Faculty Code of Ethics developed by the Ad Hoc Committee on Handbook Revisions. There was a comment in support of paring down the intimate personal relationship language to simply: "Intimate personal relationships between faculty and students are prohibited." Subsequent discussion clarified the history and rationale of this draft language.

  The Senate will vote on the draft revised Code of Ethics at the May 5 meeting, and Senators are asked to bring any proposed amendments as a written motion, or to submit them in writing prior to the May 5 meeting.

- **DAC Grievances from Faculty:** The follow up to the DAC concerns raised at the March 10 Faculty Senate meeting during Items from the Floor related to student accommodations and monitoring of students during testing, was postponed until May 5 by consent due to time limitations.

Items from the Floor

- **Draft Resolution to Establish and Support Mutual Academic Defense Compacts in Defense of Academic Freedom, Free Expression, Institutional Integrity, and the Research Enterprise:** Bidisha Biswas, Faculty Legislative Representative, presented a draft resolution to establish and support mutual academic defense compacts. If the resolution passes, she would like to share it with the Council of Faculty to encourage them to endorse it, invite all higher education institutions in Washington to join the effort, and send it to Washington Congressional delegation with a request that they engage in a bipartisan effort to support higher ed institutions in WA.

  A motion by Bidisha Biswas, and seconded, to include the draft resolution as an action item at the May 5 Senate meeting passed unanimously.

- **Draft Resolution to Endorse AAUP Demands on University Administration:** Senator John Bower (Fairhaven) presented a document with AAUP demands and ceded his time to Jenny Forsythe (English), who talked about the work being done with colleges, departments, and unions in support of the demands. The request is for the Faculty Senate to vote in support of the demands as written with the understanding that the AAUP demands working group and allies are prepared to work on adapting them to the WWU campus context in due course.

  A motion by Sondra Cuban, and seconded, to include the draft resolution to endorse the AUUP demands as an action item at the May 5 Senate meeting passed unanimously.

Final Approval

- **Definition of Antisemitism:** Robert Sniderman (Fairhaven) read a statement regarding demand #7 in the AAUP document, regarding the refusal of overly broad definitions of antisemitism—including the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition. He referred to excerpts and read statements from the Not In Our Name Letter, which was recently sent to the University Administration. He stated that WWU is currently considering use of the IHRA definition.

Adjournment

The Senate adjourned at 5:35 pm.

For Approval

Faculty Senate Attendance
04/21/2025

Voting Members			Non-Voting Members		
Camilo Ponton	CSE-Geology	x	John Hardgrove	AS Senate	x
Catherine Clark	CSE-Chemistry	x	Sabah Randhawa	President	x
Christine Johnston	CHSS-HUM-History	x	Brad Johnson	Provost	x
Dawna Drum	CBE-Accounting	--	Christopher Bianco	Council of Deans	x
Dennis Whitcomb	CHSS-HUM-Philosophy	x	Vicki Hsueh	UFWW President	x
Erika McPhee-Shaw	CENV-ESCI	x			
Ernest Hartwell	CHSS-HUM-LLC	x	**Committee Chairs & Senate Representatives**		
Gabe Gossett	Libraries	x	Bidisha Biswas	Legislative Rep	x
Greg Youmans	CHSS-HUM-English	x	Kristi Tyran	Budget Rep	--
James Ray	CFPA-Music	x	Melissa D'Eloia	ACC	x
Jeffrey Meier	CSE-Math	x	Derek Moscato	ATC	--
Jim Cooper	CSE-Biology	x	Shevell Thibou	CUE	--
Jim Graham	CHSS-SBS-Psychology	x	Eva Gil	SLC	--
John Bower	Fairhaven	x	Brandon Dupont	Ad Hoc Handbook	x
John Gialanella	CFPA-Design	x	Shawn Knabb	SOCEC	--
Kameron Harris	CSE-Computer Science	x	Cindy Elliser	CUP	--
Lindsay Foreman-Murray	WCE-Ed Leadership	x			
Margarita Ruiz-Guerrero	WCE-ECE	x	**Recorder**		
Mark Peyron	CSE-Engineering & Design	x	Becky Johnston	Faculty Senate	x
Michael Slouber	At-Large (President)	x			
Nick Washburn	CHSS-SBS-HHD	x	**Guests**		
Patrick Buckley	CENV-ENVS and UEPP	x	Michael Karlberg	Com Studies	x
Ramadha Piyadi Gamage	CSE-Math	--	Robert Sniderman	Fairhaven	x
Ron Helms	CHSS-SBS-Sociology	x	Jenny Forsythe	English	x
Sondra Cuban	WCE-HCS	x			
Stephanie Gomez	CHSS-HUM-Jou/Com	x			
Steven Garfinkle	CBE-Economics	x			
Tesla Monson	CHSS-SBS-Anthro	x			
Tim Bruce	Graduate School	x			
Xiaofeng Chen	CBE-Decision Sciences	x			

Voting Attendees	28	**Non-Voting Attendees**	12	**Total Attendees**	**40**