**Faculty Senate Minutes**

**04/29/2020 Overflow Business Meeting 3:00-5:00 pm via ZOOM**

**ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES**

**ROLL CALL**

* Present: Michael Boatright, Chancellor Kelli Brown, Kristin Calvert, Todd Collins, Heather Mae Erickson, Enrique Gomez, Yancey Gulley, Jeremy Jones, Sudhir Kaul, Rebecca Lasher, Will Lehman, Niall Michelsen, Sean Mulholland, Amy Murphy-Nugen, Kadie Otto, Carrie Rogers, Ken Sanney, Roya Scales, Ophir Sefiha, Damon Sink, Richard Starnes, Martin Tanaka
* Members with Proxies: Charmion Rush, Elizabeth Tait, Cheryl Waters-Tormey
* Members Absent: Saheed Aderinto, Indi Bose, Sharon Metcalfe, Matthew Rave, Peter Savage, Laura Wright (on leave Spring 20)

**Provost Starnes announced that Dr. Lori Anderson, the current dean of nursing in the College of Health Sciences at Tusculum University, will be joining us as the next dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences effective July 1. Thank you to the faculty of the college and the search committee for their hard work.**

**We want to highlight work from the Provost Council and other folks on campus for a working group on Fall 2020 looking over different scenarios. That planning is underway. Will keep senate leadership updated on where we are in the process.**

**OLD BUSINESS**

**APRC Withdrawal Policy**

APRC brought forward the following ***Resolution to Revise University Withdrawal Policy:***

Whereas, the current University Withdrawal policy has the unintended consequence of harming students’ academic standing for withdrawals that are a result of verified extenuating circumstances beyond the student’s control.

Whereas, the current policy treats withdrawals for non-extenuating circumstances the same as withdrawals for extenuating circumstances.

Whereas, no clear rationale exists to treat university withdrawals for extenuating circumstances that are beyond a student’s control the same as university withdrawals for non-extenuating circumstances.

Whereas, the Director of Advising, the University Registrar, and the Associate Vice Chancellor for Student Success have all requested the Academic Policy and Review Counsel’s (APRC’s) assistance in revising the University Withdrawal Policy.

Whereas, such requests for revisions have focused on aligning the university policy with the reality that University Withdrawals for extenuating and non-extenuating circumstances require different approaches and outcomes for the students.

Whereas, the APRC, after deliberations and advisement, has determined that it is in the best interests of our students and the University to revise the University Withdrawal Policy.

Now, therefore, be it resolved, that the Faculty Senate support the following proposed changes to the University Withdrawal Policy as requested by the administration.

1. University Withdrawals as a result of extenuating circumstances will no longer negatively impact a student’s academic standing. Such University Withdrawals, once approved by the appropriate institutional office, shall not hold the student accountable for the term nor resulting cumulative completion percentage. Thus, the student’s academic standing will not be negatively impacted.

2. When a University Withdrawal for extenuating circumstances is approved, the Registrar will apply the student’s academic standing at the end of the previous term to the end of the term of withdrawal, thus not penalizing the student’s academic standing as a result of a university withdrawal.

3. The WCU Course Catalog, and all corresponding institutional messaging, referring to university withdrawals due to extenuating circumstances, shall be revised indicating university withdrawals before or after the withdrawal deadline will not impact the student’s academic standing at the end of the term of the effective withdrawal.

4. In regards to UNC Policy Manual, Chapter 400, Academic Programs, Amendment 400.1.5 [G] Guidelines Related to Fostering Undergraduate Student Success, 01/13/18, WCU shall update the Current Catalog to comply with these standards.

A. Withdrawal with Serious Extenuating Circumstances

1. Consistent with the requirements set out in Section II.C., of UNC Policy 400.1.5[R], each campus must develop a policy whereby undergraduate students can request course withdrawals due to serious extenuating circumstances. Each campus must widely distribute this policy.

2. Campuses will need to code the course withdrawals in their ERP systems as separate grade codes in order to distinguish between withdrawals with extenuating circumstances and those without extenuating circumstances.

3. Campuses should not communicate on the transcript that a course withdrawal was for extenuating circumstances. Campuses should develop a mechanism whereby withdrawals due to extenuating circumstances are designated on the transcript in a manner that respects and protects the privacy of the student.

*Discussion proceeded.*

*Question: Our language isn’t matching up with the UNC policy language.
Response: We determine “extenuating” to be the same as “serious extenuating” with regard to process.*

*Question: Do we have data from other institutions on the number of students per year and how many are granted?
Response: The null data is harder to get to - the denied requests are not recorded in a way that are retained.*

*Comment: The impact on the students that have extenuating circumstances is where we should focus.*

*Question: Who makes the determination that it is an extenuating circumstance? Is the phrase subjective?
Response: These usually route through Kellie Monteith in Student Affairs. There are documentations required. There is a justifiable level of scrutiny that is taken.*

*Question: Is it one person making the decision? Should there be faculty oversight or review of those requests?
Response: In practice we do. They typically come from advisor to department head to dean and then routed. Many of these need to be adjudicated in the last week of class and having that type of process may not make these timely…
Response: Travis shared that the director of counseling services, health services, and/or Dr. Lowell Davis typically vet these.*

 *Question: Would it be wise to at least get a report to the faculty senate every year? Senate should keep tabs.
Response: We can report numbers periodically.*

*Comment: As a faculty member, I trust the processes we have in place to deal with these.*

***A motion was made to end the debate and seconded. Vote proceeded on Poll Anywhere and passed.***

* **Poll anywhere was used. Resolution approved. 19 aye, 2 abstention.**

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| Michael Boatright | aye |
| Indi Bose | aye |
| Kristin Calvert | aye |
| Todd Collins | aye |
| Heather Mae Erickson | abstain |
| Enrique Gomez | abstain |
| Yancey Gulley | aye |
| Jones, Jeremy | aye |
| Sudhir Kaul | aye |
| Rebecca Lasher | aye |
| Will Lehman | aye |
| Niall Michelsen | aye |
| Sean Mulholland | aye |
| Amy Murphy-Nugen | aye |
| Kadie Otto | aye |
| Carrie Rogers  | aye |
| Ken Sanney | aye |
| Roya Scales | aye |
| Ophir Sefiha | aye |
| Damon Sink | aye |
| Martin Tanaka  | aye |

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**SGA Resolution on Menstruation Products**

Whereas, the Student Government Association’s S-19-24 resolved that Western Carolina University provide free menstrual management products in the University Center (UC), Brown Hall, and the Courtyard; in response to increasing enrollment, lack of availability, and undue cost of MMPs on campus.

Whereas, with the consultation of PERIOD@WCU over the summer and into the fall of 2019, the UC created a pilot program to distribute free MMPs through ADA complaint dispensers in both gendered restrooms on the 2nd and 3rd floors of the UC.

Whereas, the program was scheduled to run in the 2020 Spring semester but was delayed as dispensers were installed, but the survey inaccessible, thereby making the official data collection start date March 4th, 2020.

Whereas, on March 11th, the university’s official spring break was extended to March 23rd, on which classes were transferred online, and campus operations were limited to essential services only, in an appropriate response to the novel coronavirus pandemic.

Whereas, it is apparent that the university population will not return this semester, making accurate data collection on the benefits of the program impossible.

Whereas, PERIOD under Emalee Money and Harli Whitney approached Faculty Senate, among others, to support a letter of request on extending the program.

Whereas, it is the wish of PERIOD, the Student Government Association, Faculty Senate, and Staff Senate that the UC MMP pilot program be given a full chance to run and allow for meaningful data collection.

Therefore, Be It Resolved That: The University Center comply with prior permission to run a pilot program during the Spring 2020 semester.

Be It Further Resolved: The program be extended past the original plan dates in compliance to the aforementioned permission.

Be It Further Resolved: The program officially begin when the university returns to normal, pre-pandemic, operations, be it in the Fall of 2020 or later.

Be It Further Resolved: The program be allowed to run for a minimum of 7 weeks to a maximum of 15 weeks, half, and a full semester respectively; the extension of a minimum of 7 weeks was the original time allotted in the Spring 2020 plan.

Be It Further Resolved: That data analysis only be reviewed after the extension is complete to ensure the collection of data is representative of the WCU community.

*Emalee Money was present and shared that the program did not have time to run its course due to COVID-19. They are asking that the program be allowed to run its due course and the original agreement be honored to at least 7 weeks.*

*Enrique Gómez shared that he wrote a letter and as faculty we want to make sure the program continues.*

* **Poll anywhere was used. Resolution approved. 19 aye, 2 abstention.**

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| Michael Boatright | aye |
| Indi Bose | aye |
| Kristin Calvert | aye |
| Todd Collins | aye |
| Heather Mae Erickson | abstain |
| Enrique Gomez | abstain |
| Yancey Gulley | aye |
| Jones, Jeremy | aye |
| Sudhir Kaul | aye |
| Will Lehman | aye |
| Rebecca Lasher | aye |
| Niall Michelsen | aye |
| Amy Murphy-Nugen | aye |
| Sean Mulholland | aye |
| Kadie Otto | aye |
| Carrie Rogers  | aye |
| Ken Sanney | aye |
| Roya Scales | aye |
| Ophir Sefiha | aye |
| Damon Sink | aye |
| Martin Tanaka  | aye |

**Open Discussion on Academic Continuity**

*Comment: Labs, Clinicals, and Internships have been exhausting to figure out. We hope the group moving forward will think about the ways labs can be addressed in continuity plans.
Response: We will look at trying to build capacities that will allow us to move on whatever contingency may be in place. We are looking at courses and best practices. More information will come later this week. We are also looking at buying software that may facilitate some remote lab work. We won’t have all the solutions, but we will at least be better prepared. However we plan fall, it could be altered.*

*Question: At some point we may be called to start with online instruction...should we be asking faculty to think about two modalities? Plan for face to face and online?
Comment: Departments and programs that have a more LMS system created may be doing better. I would encourage faculty to be sure their systems are easily navigable.*

*Comment: We should also keep in mind that this time we started this online thing without a lot of thought. Students are facing problems because we do things differently. There are rules that are already in place, but with online exams the rules are not the same. From a student perspective every class seems different. We should look at standardizing certain things to provide some continuity for the students*.

*Question: We received a letter from President Roper this afternoon. Are we to interpret that Chancellors will make final decisions about fall 2020 campus-by-campus?
Response: It will be institution by institution. We will get a lot of assistance from them on how to deal with supply chain issues. With regards to modalities, it will be left up to the institutions.*

*Comment: For those that might be interested here is an article published on Monday regarding this discussion.* [*https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/04/colleges-are-weighing-costs-reopening-fall/610759/*](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/04/colleges-are-weighing-costs-reopening-fall/610759/)

*Comment: Send the working group questions and we can try to address those. Using software for labs is great, but we are to the maximum limit in many areas. We will have to keep in mind assessment.*

*Comment: We need to encourage senators and leadership to stay available over the summer. There may be broader consultation that needs to happen and endorsement of some of these questions by senate leadership.**We need to just be ready.*

**A motion was made to adjourn. Seconded. Approved.**

**MEETING ADJOURNED**