MINUTES
Academic Senate
October 21, 2014
3:30 p.m.
Alumni Gallery

Members present: Paul Delaney (Professor of English), Mary Docter (Professor of Modern Languages), Michelle Hardley (Secretary - Registrar), Tori Ippolito (WCSA Student Rep), Paul Morgan (Professor of Economics and Business), Tatiana Nazarenko (Dean of Curriculum and Educational Effectiveness), Edd Noell (Professor of Economics and Business), Mark Sargent (Chair and Provost), Brenda Smith (Professor of Psychology), Jim Taylor (Professor of Philosophy), David Vander Laan (Professor of Philosophy),

Absent: Niva Tro (Professor of Chemistry),

Others present: Bill Wright (Associate Provost),

I. Devotion – David Vander Laan

II. The minutes from October 7, 2014 were approved

III. Discussion on Next Steps with Critical Thinking Assessment Results
Based on the recent conversation with the full faculty on the Critical Thinking Assessment results, Jim was interested in hearing from Senators where they thought we should go in closing the loop.

Senators discussed a number of concerns with regard to the data and options to consider for next steps. It was noted that even the process of assessing critical thinking calls our attention to how we do this in each of our classes. Our next steps will be to have 3-4 discussions (at the department level and with the broader faculty and student life staff) on developing new practices and current best practices. The result will be a report on the practices that have been developed as a result of the conversations for faculty to use in examining their own courses. Jim, Tatiana and Mark will meet together to develop a structure for these conversations and report back to Senate what they have designed.

IV. Report from Student Government
Tori brought a list of concerns she has heard from students to discuss.
1. How student athletes complete their PEA requirements
2. Instituting variable weighting of classes respective to their rigor/time commitment
3. Adding credits for all labs
4. Allowing students with two WSI courses in their major to be exempt from having a WSI course outside of their major
5. Having faculty focus more on careers. Creating partnership between Westmont and other companies for internships and externship programs.

These are concerns that students have addressed to her, and even if there are no solutions now Tori was looking for the rationale that she could bring back to the students to address their concerns.

Future Senate discussions will focus on clarifying items 1, 2, and 3. The GE Committee was charged with addressing item #4.

V. Faculty Position Requests
A. Kinesiology – Replacement Position for Kathy LeSage
This proposal for a replacement position was discussed by Senate.

VI. The 2014 GE Committee Annual Report and Recommendations for Oral Communication Developed by the Senate Subgroup
Tatiana presented the work of the Senate subgroup on Oral Communication along with their recommendations. The sub committee recommended that we:

1. Remove the “Speech Intensive” option within the WSI GE category and assess Oral Communication ILO at the departmental level by working with departments to imbed this skill within an existing course.
2. To mandate the GE Committee to articulate the Oral Communication ILO and tentative certification criteria for this requirement and send to Senate for final approval. The GE Committee will also develop a rubric to assess Oral Communication in consultation with the departments who already do Oral Communication.
3. To ensure that all academic departments have course(s) that will fulfill the Oral Communication ILO within their major.

The GE Committee will work on these items based on the comments mentioned in Senate and bring a proposal back to Senate for more discussion.

VII. Discussion on Mayterm
Bill distributed initial data on what our students are taking and transferring into Westmont during the summer. Senate will examine the data closer and discuss next week.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle Hardley
Registrar