

MINUTES
Academic Senate
October 10, 2019
8:30-9:45 a.m.
Alumni Gallery

Members present: Grey Brothers (Professor of Music), Alister Chapman (Vice Chair and Professor of History), Deborah Dunn (Professor of Communication Studies), Leonor Elias (Professor of Modern Languages), Michelle Hardley (Registrar), Russell Howell (Professor of Mathematics), Patti Hunter (Vice Provost), Heather Keaney (Professor of History), Tatiana Nazarenko (Dean of Curriculum and Educational Effectiveness), Mark Sargent (Provost), Jeff Schloss (Professor of Biology), Randy VanderMey (Professor of English)

Absent: Lina Reid (Student Representative),

Others present: Rick Pointer (Chair, Professor of History)

I. Prayer – Randy VanderMey

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes

The minutes from October 3rd were approved.

III. Discussion on the Criteria for Post-Baccalaureate Options

Senators discussed the draft criteria for post-baccalaureate options which Mark emailed after the last Senate meeting. The comments received prior to this meeting offered minor changes, but no major objections were raised.

The goal of the criteria is to set guidelines in which faculty can freely design and propose new post-baccalaureate programs. Following the criteria and working through the normal faculty review process allows Senators to talk through any questions or concerns about the proposed programs, to strengthen the proposals with revisions, and to have a measure of faculty buy-in and support prior to sending the proposal to the full faculty. Successful programs are ones that have faculty support and buy-in. Ideally with these criteria we can help reshape the conversation so that Senate can be seen as an idea generating body that supports the innovation of faculty members. Senators see this document as an invitation to dream together.

Senators realized that adding post-baccalaureate programs has the potential to undercut the core "undergraduate" plank of Westmont's mission. Thus, the Senate wants to ensure that, while faculty may be encouraged to "dream," the main focus of their efforts still remains by far with undergraduate education.

One key discussion point for Senators was how to establish criteria for future programs that would promote a high level of academic rigor but also leave room for flexibility and innovation within proposed programs. Adding in prerequisites or requiring all of the courses in a program to be upper division may limit the number of students who could

pursue those opportunities. For example, the goal of the WSF certificate program is to be accessible to those who have not had much prior experience in statistical analysis and program evaluation. Therefore, some lower division coursework may be appropriate for this vision and the population of students who would pursue this certificate. The criteria we set should allow for these types of proposals.

The most successful entrepreneurial ventures are ones that match student, faculty and donor interests. It would be helpful if innovations that help in recruitment of new students can also help bring in donors to support those programs. Would there be a way for faculty to hear about donor interests more regularly to see if there is a donor match to a faculty member's interests?

Senators discussed how to move forward with both the criteria and how to present the WSF proposal to the full faculty. Ideally there would be a time where the overall concept and current Senate thinking could be presented to the faculty, then offering a few different opportunities for faculty to contribute to the discussion prior to presenting the proposal to the full faculty for a vote.

Mark will work on a draft of the plan moving forward and send it to Senators for review. He envisions introducing the criteria and the WSF proposal at the October faculty meeting, followed by further conversation on these documents in a future faculty forum with a vote on each as separate items at the November faculty meeting.

IV. Discussion on History Department Action Plans

Rick joined Senate to discuss the History department's action plan developed from their most recent 6-year report.

The department has seen much stability over the last 15+ years. The continuity in staffing has allowed for the pursuit of various departmental goals. There is a concern over the national trends in History which show the number of History majors declining. Westmont has not seen a reduction in majors, but the department is aware that there is work that could be done in this area. There is a concern that any increase in History majors might very well be at the expense of other Humanities or Social Science departments. There was some discussion on how to increase the promotion of Social Science and Humanities majors within Admissions to help with recruitment as a way to help increase the number of History majors on campus.

Rick is retiring at the end of this year and the department is working with Mark on hiring a replacement. Given that one department member is leading an off campus program this fall and another will be leading a program next spring a multi-year hire may be needed before running a formal search for a tenure track replacement.

V. Continued Discussion on Senate Review of Global Programs

This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

VI. Discussion on the Policy for Limiting Course Overlap Between Majors and Minors
This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Hardley