

Academic Senate Faculty Affairs Committee, 2021-2022

February 18, 2022, 1:30 p.m.

Location: Zoom

In attendance: Poonam Arya, Linda Beale, Stephen Chrisomalis, Kelly Dormer, Darin Ellis, Ahmad Ezzeddine, Veronika Gawrys, Ewa Golebiowska, Marisa Henderson, Christine Jackson, Sara Kacin, Shelly Jo Kraft, Georgia Michalopoulou, Judith Moldenhauer, Patricia McCormick, Heidi Prillwitz, Bo Shen, Elizabeth Stoycheff, Scott Tainsky, Karin Tarpinning, Ellen Tisdale

1. Approval of minutes from the January meeting.

2. Dr. Ahmad Ezzeddine, VP of Academic Student Affairs and Global Engagement came to talk about international students and global engagement opportunities.

- Numbers of new international students in Fall 2021 were on par with 2019; regained all losses gained during pandemic, but not to pre-Trump numbers yet.
- WSU has been very successful in reaching students from countries around the world. Usually, Wayne State has students from 67-75 countries, but this past year had students from 82 countries. Growing numbers of Nigerian students; always looking to diversify. This upcoming year, the focus is on recruiting international undergrads. Currently most of WSU's international efforts happen at the graduate level, but Ezzeddine thinks we are competitive on the undergraduate level as well.
- Ezzeddine is happy that the new strategic plan does more to prioritize global experiences. Ezzeddine's office is instituting an initiative called Global Learning for All – which aims to give every student an opportunity to gain a global experience, either virtually or in person, either abroad or through diverse communities in Detroit. Another initiative for supporting students who are apply for fellowships – Fulbright, Truman, Goldwater scholarships. Have a similar track for faculty and would love to have more faculty pursue it. Most students and faculty who pursue these opportunities through their office are successful at advancing.
- What are current obstacles for recruiting international students? Immigration and visa regulations have been an obstacle, but they're getting better. Embassies are still backlogged in issuing visas and continued COVID travel restrictions.

3. Associate Vice President Darrin Ellis and Kelly Dormer came to discuss four pretty big university-wide proposed changes (all need approval from the Board of Governors, but are seeking faculty input):

- Changing WF/WN/WP designations to just W. This is an equity issue; minority students were more likely to have WF, and many graduate programs penalize this designation on a transcript. WSU is one of only 3 universities in the state that uses a W pass/fail designation. Less than 2% withdrawal requests have been denied by faculty. Faculty in attendance

supported these changes and recommended they be retroactively applied for the past two years.

- Removing the limit on number of transfer credit hours the university will accept. Currently, students are allowed to transfer in 64 credit hours, including 12 hours toward the students' intended program. Faculty expressed concerns, particularly about those in liberal arts traditions, creating a slippery slope where students would eventually be able to earn a WSU degree while completing little coursework here. Ellis emphasized that programs can still set the requirements and that courses that qualify for the degree will still have one-to-one equivalents.
- In line with the transfer credit issue above, students should be able to transfer up to half of the credit hours for a certificate. Again, faculty expressed concern about watering down certificates. Ellis noted that this change was requested by the foreign languages department to allow more transfer credit to count toward foreign language certificates. Faculty additionally raised the question about extending certificates to non-matriculating students. Ellis mentioned there is a big barrier with financial aid. Financial aid will not pay for a certificate; it will pay only for degrees.
- Changing many of the eligibility requirements for a post-humous WSU from 90% of credits completed to 75%. Faculty debated how this applied to students pursuing MA theses. Also discussed the need to prevent the policy from being applied retroactively. Proposed a limit of within the last 2 years.

4. Brief discussion ensued about standardizing remote instruction/activities when campus is closed due to inclement weather.

- Faculty in attendance agreed that such circumstances created confusion for students. Still want instructors to have discretion for how to best teach their students; felt decisions about university closures should provide faculty with more lead time.