University of Wisconsin Whitewater | Academic Staff Assembly

Minutes: November 29, 2023 (12:30-1:45)   Approved by ASA 12/13/23

Membership Attendance		Absent (A), In Person (IP), Virtual (V), Non-voting (NV)			
A	Jessica Berge	A	Michael Gorman	V	Becky Mueller
V	Heather Conte	V	Christine Hoover (NV)	V	Huckleberry Rahr
A	Ciera Edwards	V	Brenda Johansen	V	David Reinhart
V	Tatiana Fadeeva	V	Becky Jones (NV)	V	Brian Schanen
V	Nicholas French	V	Nadine Kriska	V	Jessica Walz
V	Dana Gordon	V	Kirsten Mortimer	V	Abbie Windsor

Also in attendance in person: (none – virtual only)

Also in attendance virtually: Jamie Busse, Pamela Warren, Ryan Wright, Eric Loepp, Kevin Behringer, Jodi Simek, Mike Wessely

Meeting called to order at 12:32 p.m. by Chair Becky Jones.

Approval of minutes from 11/8/23 meeting were tabled to the next meeting at Brenda Johansen's request.

Guest Speakers:

Eric Loepp and Kevin Behringer from IT Services and the Learning Technology Center spoke about the Explorance Blue course evaluation software. The decision was made to move away from the class climate being used up until now.

Direct login can be found in canvas (on the left navigation for a class), or by going to uww.bluera.com/uww .

New program is expected to allow students to be more aware of the class they are reviewing (to avoid previous issues of students clearly reviewing the wrong course based on their written comments).

Instructors will no longer need to wait for the participation reports to be sent – you will be able to use a dashboard and can even generate a reminder to students who have not completed a review yet. A pdf can be downloaded by the instructor.

The process of scheduling is now automated, eliminating the need for transmitting spreadsheets between ITS and a department admin, which were opportunities for errors and delays to creep into the process. Previously, evals had to be scheduled very late into a term in order to avoid the late drop dates and not include ineligible students. Explorance allows for an almost live update process.

Huckleberry asks whether the anonymity and student confidence in it are eroded by allowing instructors to see who has and who has not yet completed the review. Kevin and Eric note that there has always been the ability to see who has and has not completed, it is just a simpler and more visible process now.

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David asks about the average response rates, especially for online courses, and whether there are target response rates. Kevin notes that once implementation has completed, then departments and instructors may start to examine response rates and take steps to find potential increases. Eric notes that there is no current target, just a hope for ongoing improvements.

David asks whether Blue can be used earlier in the semester, or whether individual surveys can be developed within Blue. Kevin notes that the current recommendation for early or more individualized surveys is to use Qualtrics, but that doing that is one of those things that tends to improve response rates.

Eric notes that there have been discussions about the questions used in the evaluations, but that those are not addressed in this switch – this only addresses the method, not the content.

Brenda asks whether this will change what is submitted as a "Student Evaluation Summary Page" for promotions applications. Kevin notes that there is still an aggregated summary page, available, and it will look nicer than the previous version.

Abbie asks about the courses with odd calendars (i.e. student teaching). Kevin notes that he has worked with COEPS to ensure that the grade submission date is adjusted, and Kevin and Abbie will discuss the source of those manual grade due dates offline.

Brenda asks whether historical evaluations will still be available if an instructor leaves the institution and returns, and Kevin and Eric will investigate to find the answer on that.

Christine asks how students will be reminded to complete their evaluations. Kevin answers that it will show in Canvas, but email reminders will also continue. Christine asks whether the email address to ask for help with any technical issues will remain the same, and Kevin agrees that it will remain the same.

Action Item:

Emeriti Resolution: Brian Schanen motions and Huckleberry Rahr seconds a motion to approve emeriti status for Dave Carlson, who is retiring from the College of Integrated Studies. The motion passes unanimously, and ASA congratulates Dave on his retirement.

Reports:

IAS Review Process Resolution – Brian notes that the Provost and the Chancellor's Office have requested an opportunity to make sure that there is clarity in the language, and he hopes to have an update soon. Becky Jones also notes that the final promotions amounts have not yet been released, and the Provost's Office has noted that it is common for Faculty to submit for promotions without knowing the amount of salary increase available.

IAS Promotions Amounts – Becky Jones notes that the Provost's Office has not yet released the dollar amount tied to promotional levels for instructional academic staff, and that the Provost has noted that there are often times when faculty also do not know the exact amounts before they complete their applications. Becky will continue to follow up.

SPBC – Becky Jones notes that the amount of true deficit is different than the amount that is normally reported, due to the difference in the way that benefits and fringes are paid and reported through system. For positions that are open and are funded under certain categories, the fringe amount

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continues to be deducted. It was also noted that last year, there was $170,000 in work study funds that went unused, which could potentially become an issue if, in the future, those funds are not made available to us.

Goal of 0 deficit across system in 27/28 school year, but Whitewater's goal is to get to a 0 deficit in the 25/26 school year. Potentially, a tuition raise may be considered.

Faculty Senate- Brian reports that WSG attended a recent FS meeting with a proposed update to the attendance policy, which did not pass. WSG returned to yesterday's meeting with further evidence, which was more successfully received. A committee is being developed to work on attendance policies on campus, and Brian has asked to take part as an instructional academic staff representative, which the Faculty Senate Chair seemed receptive to.

Titling Committee – Becky Mueller reports that the Titling Committee met and agreed to meet on an annual basis going forward, and is working to develop guidelines for future operation.

University Compensation and Benefits Committee- Tatiana reports that the main outcome of the meeting was that a February meeting was scheduled, and data is being developed on position turnover, comparative salaries to other comparable institutions within and without the UW System. The Chancellor mentioned that he would like to have a draft on how to improve the compensation for academic staff and university staff by the fall of 2024. Tatiana also notes that there is a separate committee specifically focused on faculty compensation. Jessica Walz notes that raising wages for university staff, who are often seated in the lower pay grades available, is a priority and is in line with the Chancellor's goal of increasing minimum wage, and some concerns around wage compression were discussed. Jessica also noted that the committee began by saying that they were not planning to focus as much on instructors, because the faculty has it's own compensation committee, and that Jessica raised the point that instructional academic staff are not represented by that committee, and risk becoming an invisible category if they are excluded from the discussions of both groups. Becky Jones asks whether it is an issue that ASA needs to take up and address individually, in parallel to the faculty. Jessica notes that it's probably best to see how this committee goes and what the outcome ends as, but that we also want to really push in the future about the academic staff promotion process – especially given that the Chancellor and the Provost noted during the last discussion of that process that this committee would be the appropriate place in which to raise those issues.

Technology Committee – Migration of the Peoplesoft (WINS) instance over to Madison will take place by July of 2024, and ATP is going live in July of 2025 – these are the 2 major updates that will impact a ton of people on the back end. Sara Deschner is working to create an overall strategic plan for the next 5 years, with a year 1 goal of getting the Young Auditorium equipment ordered and brought up to par with an appropriate network specialist. ITS has also subscribed to EduRoam, which gives us the ability to log into Wi-Fi without having to disconnect to reconnect to log in as a guest, and to use more seamlessly while on any other system campus. Work is also being done to update the UW-W guest Wi-Fi. Data storage is being reevaluated, as our digital data storage has increased by over 265%. The goal is to streamline and identify a system retention process that can be rolled out across campus. Work is being done on an updated project prioritization process, to replace the dual current systems of Jira and ServiceNow. ITS is working to create a systemic repository in order to build a better idea of where technology is sitting on campus, and how to better define the needs of projects and demand while

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allowing efficient use of staff. There was a shift over to Administrative Affairs, and a split between ITS and LTC, which stayed in Academic Affairs.

Promotions – Becky Jones notes that an email just came from the Provost noting that this year's promotional amounts will be 2% raises in base pay for promotions from Lecturer 1 to Lecturer 2 and from Lecturer 2 to Senior Lecturer, and a 4% raise in base pay for promotion from Senior Lecturer to Distinguished Lecturer.

Meeting adjourned at 1:39 p.m.