

Academic Affairs Committee
Washburn University
2-28-22
Minutes

Present: Paul Byrne, Norma Juma, Scott Sainato, Delaine Smith, Stephen Woody, Kerry Wynn, Corey Zwikstra, Jody Toerber-Clark, Stephanie Lanning, Kelli Wietharn

Wynn called the meeting to order at 4:07 pm.

Minutes from the AAC meeting on 1-31-2022 approved.

Wynn began the discussion as a follow up to concerns expressed at the February 21, 2022, Faculty Senate meeting regarding enrollment and retention. Dr. Liedtke has been asked to provide more information to support his presentation.

Paul Byrne noted that fall enrollment has been on the decline for several years and was surprised it has taken this long to be addressed.

Delaine Smith would like to see a coordinated meeting with Dr. Liedtke where we could see his strategic plan for Enrollment Management.

Corey Zwikstra noted that Dr. Liedtke did not present data or evidence to support his presentation at Faculty Senate.

Jody Toerber-Clark inquired whether there was a recruitment plan for graduate nursing students, stating problems with current practice.

Kelli Wietharn noted that efforts are being made to move away from CollegeNET and use our current Recruit system for graduate applications as it would be less cumbersome for students and faculty would have better tracking capabilities. Recruit allows for marketing campaigns to be designed and executed but Strategic Marketing and Communications stated they do not currently have the resources to support the grad departments and marketing would fall to the programs.

Norma Juma stated that she believes that one of the contributing factors of our declining enrollment is the lack of online course offerings.

Questions were raised about the availability of online degree programs at Washburn.

Stephen Woody recalled from the February 21st Faculty Senate that Washburn University paid a consultant to analyze our university. What that group found? Were the findings shared at Faculty Senate?

Paul Byrne stated that Washburn University had received massive amounts of government funding due to the Covid-19 pandemic and would like to see how those funds were spent. He also asked why faculty did not have a voice on how those funds were utilized, stating that a portion should have been used for resources in our classrooms.

Delaine Smith stated that Nursing has been working on their online program and are able to now cast a wider net with how they are reaching students.

Kerry Wynn noted that while we need the availability on online degree completion options, we still have a large portion of students who prefer in-person learning.

Corey Zwikstra stated that Dr. Liedtke had previously mentioned that his Enrollment Management budget had decreased. Corey also noted how a Marketing line was added to the budget at some point and if that is under Enrollment Management, then the EM budget is going up.

Kerry Wynn responded that we could ask for more clarity and transparency regarding enrollment and retention data.

Kerry Wynn asked the committee what the next step should be?

Stephen Woody pointed out that the administration and academic sides are not talking to each other about enrollment or retention.

Corey Zwikstra stated that not only are the enrollment numbers declining he feels that Washburn University has an identity problem. He noted that Washburn University is trying to be everything to everyone and that he believes the message is scattered and unfocused in our marketing efforts.

The committee decided to create a collaborative document for concerns and questions. Zwikstra and Byrne agreed to compile the information in that document for the next meeting and/or Faculty Affairs Committee.

Stephen Woody – moved to adjourn the meeting, several seconded the motion.

Dr. Wynn adjourned the meeting adjourned at 5:00 pm.