

Members in Attendance

Daniel Casmier
Doug Zander
Jana Parson
Leonard Bates
Brad Bechard

Faculty, Staff and Guests in Attendance

Thomas Oakberg
Kate Peterson
Mike Walker
Mark Plante
Heidi Pasek

Note: *The Chair of the Curriculum Committee does not vote unless it will affect the result.*

I. Call to Order

Leonard Bates calls the meeting to order.

II. Information Items

This impromptu meeting was called to discuss the NWCCU's changes to the standards which proposes to leave out the language about academic freedom and about shared governance. Several other institute Faculty Senates' will respond to the proposed changes including Western. Heidi Pasek spoke about why the language may have been chosen to be left out of the standards from an accreditation level. The thought is that academic freedom is an eligibility requirement; so when it they are looking to make changes they are looking at it as three pieces. When there is an accreditation visit, the institute has to meet the 23 eligibility items, if you do not have these things then you cannot be accredited. Number 16 is the academic freedom eligibility on the NWCCU list. Dr. Pasek describes the eligibility as more of a check off list for a visit that can be verified. When it was both an eligibility and a standard the people who made the site visits would have to address it multiples times in the report, which made the reports extremely long and extremely broad. So NWCCU wanted to trim the list to make the reports that go back to the institutions more manageable and utilize more helpful feedback.

A response needs to be sent by the end of the month (Sunday March 31st) and can be done electronically. A draft was created as a response and Dr. Wolff gave some changes that she would like to see via email. This meeting is to discuss if the Faculty Senate would like to respond and any further changes to the drafted statement. The Faculty Senate agrees to respond and that it is important to have academic freedom in both locations.

It was opened for discussion on the feedback on any additions or changes to the statement and it was suggested to add on a last sentence explaining what the college and the Faculty Senate would like the NWCCU to do and stress how important it is to keep academic freedom in both locations. Dr. Pasek also mentions that it is very important to evaluators to have it and to be able to talk to faculty members about it when they site visit and that should be stressed in the statement. Dr. Pasek speaks to the standard looking at institutes policy saying that you have to have a policy, you have to adhere to the policy, it's approved by the governing force and there is a responsibility for the institute to uphold and protect that and that the standards on academic freedom is pretty broad and leans on the institutes policy to have more specific details. She also reads out the current standards which are as following:

Academic Freedom

2.A.27 The institution publishes and adheres to policies, approved by its governing board, regarding academic freedom and responsibility that protect its constituencies from inappropriate internal and external influences, pressures, and harassment.

2.A.28 Within the context of its mission, core themes, and values, the institution defines and actively promotes an environment that supports independent thought in the pursuit and dissemination of knowledge. It affirms the freedom of faculty, staff, administrators, and students to share their scholarship and reasoned conclusions with others. While the institution and individuals within the institution may hold to a particular personal, social, or religious philosophy, its constituencies are intellectually free to examine thought, reason, and perspectives of truth. Moreover, they allow others the freedom to do the same.

2.A.29 Individuals with teaching responsibilities present scholarship fairly, accurately, and objectively. Derivative scholarship acknowledges the source of intellectual property, and personal views, beliefs, and opinions are identified as such.

A faculty member suggested that a sentence is added to urge NWCCU not to remove the language for academic freedom and shared governance at the end and send the statement to NWCCU. The Faculty Senate as well as the attending faculty agreed to that change and to have the statement sent to NWCCU this afternoon.

VI. Adjourn

Meeting adjourns at 10:40 am