

**WESTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**  
***Executive Session* of the FACULTY SENATE**  
***Tuesday, 24 October 2017***

5:00 p.m.  
Capitol Rooms - University Union

**ACTION MINUTES**

Senators reconvened to continue the meeting in executive session.

V. New Business

- A. Follow-up Remarks Made at BOT Meeting of September 29, 2017  
(Ron Williams, Vice President for Student Services)

Chairperson Rock suggested that senators first give Vice President Williams an opportunity to either clarify his statements from the Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting of September 29 or go over what he actually said because sometimes reports do not translate accurately. He added that after Vice

however, that faculty and staff members did everything they could to help them and that they are leaving the University due to their own inability to study, financial challenges, family issues, or similar reasons.

Vice President Williams characterizes himself as a nice person who tries to be kind and respectful, and he did not mean his statement to the BOT to offend anyone. He thinks WIU has great faculty members ; he has worked closely with many of the senators around the table and thinks very highly of them. Vice President Williams expressed that he does not treat Chairperson Rock with respect because he is the Faculty Senate Chair or has a certain status on the campus but because 1) it is the right thing to do, and 2) he is a decent person and a nice colleague.

Vice President Williams stressed that he did not speak in absolute statements to the BOT and that his statement was more about humanity than anything else. He has gotten some feedback from his comments that speak to his point about civility; specifically, some faculty and staff have commended his courage to make the statement to the BOT because they have seen this type of thing occurring also, but they do not think there is anything that can be done about it. He said some people even told him they hoped he was going to be okay after making his statement, but he does not know why anyone should think otherwise. Vice President Williams said he is very comfortable speaking before Faculty Senate and has no fear that anyone will say anything horrible or shout at him. He felt bad after hearing from a faculty member at the President's Brown Bag luncheon that his comments to the BOT had hurt this individual's feelings because that was not his intention. Vice President Williams told senators his intention in making his statement was to elicit some knowledge about this issue at WIU because he believes that only faculty can interrupt this type of behavior when they see it in other faculty members.

Vice President Williams has been asked why he did not take his concerns to the Deans' Council or to Faculty Senate, but does not know that Faculty Senate can do anything about a faculty member who says nasty things to students. He does believe, however, that if a faculty member in the same department hears about this or sees this type of behavior, that faculty member could address it with his or her colleague. Vice President Williams stressed that he is not trying to harm anyone or call anyone out, but he believes that the incident last year where one faculty member made an inappropriate remark about a pregnant student that led to the student going to the Office of Civil Rights should remain in the forefront of discussion because it illustrates that it does matter if even a single faculty member is uncivil.

Vice President Williams stressed that his comments do not refer to students who leave the University because they have challenges but to those really great students who suffer in silence or leave because of their treatment. He suspects that this is often not brought up on student evaluations of faculty because some students may be fearful. He has had students tell him that a faculty member called the entire class idiots or used profanity in the classroom. He related that in one case a student came to him in tears because a faculty member wrote on her paper that it was so good that her boyfriend must have written it for her; Vice President Williams in this case told the student to write the professor a note to generate a written response for handwriting comparison so that the student would have some verification to share with the faculty member's chair.

Senator Allison asked Vice President Williams why he decided to make his statements public at a BOT meeting before the press. She related that a friend, who





heard,

student's perspective on a staff member and how that individual changed the student's experience at WIU. She believes there is a professionalism that everyone must exhibit to represent WIU. Senator Czechowski works closely with students in a studio environment, often late into the evening, and they sometimes complain about their professors, but she tells students to write a letter to their professor, the dean, or higher administration but not just to tell her about it. She thinks students should document their complaints and follow proper protocol; otherwise, they are just hearsay. Senator Czechowski stated that some faculty feel hurt this subject was broached at the BOT meeting while some other negative stories about the University do not get that sort of public discussion and while there are many good things that happen at WIU that are not publicized.

Chairperson Rock would like all senators to look over the minutes from the closed session closely before a vote is taken at the next Faculty Senate meeting r(r)-4(om)17( t)Acv9 tieTw 2.2(m)17( doTm)6(o t)6m