

West Virginia University Institute of Technology Faculty Assembly Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, February 6, 2025

Time: 1:01 - 1:50 p.m.

Location: Life Sciences 200

Chair: Cortney Barko

Secretary: Jemma Cook

Meeting Overview:

Dr. Barko called the meeting to order at 1:01 p.m. A quorum was present.

I. Approval of Minutes

- Minutes of the December 5, 2024 meeting were approved with no corrections.

II. Faculty Announcements and Achievements

Announcements:

- None reported at this meeting

Achievements:

- The Research Committee submitted a report to the Chair listing the following achievement:
 - John Hird is one of five finalists for West Virginia's 2024 Professor of the Year
- The Research Committee also listed the following publications by faculty members, including:
 - "Maximum likelihood degree of the Beta-Stochastic Blockmodel" in the journal *Algebraic Statistics* by

- authors including Christopher McClain
- “Randomization of problems in online assessments for various courses in mechanical engineering” in the proceedings of the ASEE 2025 conference by Shafique Khan
 - “EMDA-Net: Earth Mover’s Distances (EMD) influenced Attention-aided Neural Network for Medical Image Classification” in the proceedings of the 2024 IEEE 6th International Conference on Cognitive Machine Intelligence (CogMI), 28-31 October 2024 and the IEEE Explore, 16 January 2025 by authors including Somenath Chakraborty
 - “EcoSense: A Revolution in Urban Air Quality Forecasting for Smart Cities” in the journal *BMC Research Notes* by authors including Somenath Charaborty

III. Administrative Report

President T. Ramon Stuart

- Was not present.

Vice President of Academic Affairs, Dr. Tamara Floyd-Smith:

- Acknowledged Dr. Hird’s accomplishment
- Chairs’ budgets were lost in favor of school budgets following the reorganization of the Tech. Foundation funds may be tapped if needed for Faculty Development until Chair budgets are reinstated.
- Thanks to those faculty that attended Faculty And Student Teamup (FAST) lunch. Similar opportunities will be announced in the future.
- Ten total students are listed as Registered Not Paid (RNP) at time of meeting, but this is likely to lower.
 - Those students that are RNP are reported to the Chair,

but faculty may also check Navigate if they have questions about whether a student may be RNP

- Spring 2025 budgets is 102% of expectation. Thanks to those faculty and their successful efforts preregistering students.
- The Calendar Committee will be revived to avoid future issues that occurred this year such as final grades needing to be submitted the week of Christmas. The 2025-26 calendar is already published, but efforts will be implemented to avoid these issues for 2026-27.
 - Removal of Final Prep day anticipated.

Dr. J. T. Hird spoke regarding the Faculty Evaluation Process

- Faculty Evaluation Committees were getting in coordination following publication of the new Promotion & Tenure document
- In the 2025-26 academic year, school chair and FEC committee evaluations will be posted simultaneously
 - Faculty may contact Karen Skaggs if they wish to make a rebuttal. Notification of a rebuttal will be communicated to VP's office that will notify Chairs to read and react to rebuttals, if a reaction is warranted.

IV. Chair Report

Dr. Courtney Barko:

- There have been reports about changes to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion programs at Morgantown. WVU Tech is at this time only required to report on social justice issues. Currently waiting for this report to be review by the Governor's office.
 - As of right now there is not a focus on curriculum
 - A meeting with Morgantown to discuss possible changes given these efforts will be communicated to

faculty when it is scheduled at a time/place for them to attend

- Feb 13, 2025 at 1 PM there will be a meeting regarding use of undergrad teaching assistants as there is not a current written policy. This meeting will be recorded if possible. Anyone that works with or plans to work with undergraduate teaching assistants should attend if possible
- Academic Awards dinner was held with Caroline McKelvie as master of ceremonies
 - Dr. Leftwich was awarded the Golden Bear Empowerment Faculty Award
- Please submit Early Alerts via Navigate for those students that are not attending or not doing well in your classes to help with retention efforts

V. Committee Reports

ACF Report provided by Dr. Christopher McClain:

- There are continuing faculty concerns regarding inadequate compensation, PEIA cost increases, faculty evaluation procedures, lack of shared governance, library services, use of generative AI, student recruitment and retention, faculty retention, tenure at CTCs, campus carry implementation, family/disability leave for faculty, faculty credentials for teaching, dual enrollment costs, course sharing costs and ownership
- Statewide salary information
 - Faculty salaries have generally risen in pace with inflation, but has recently fallen behind
 - Growth slowest for full professors, some institutions offer periodic raises to compensate
 - Salary disparity disputes present within institutions wherein faculty are being compensated differently for similar work

- Chris Rasmussen appointed new WVHEPC Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs
- WV Electronic Resources Consortium (WVERC) update provided by Monica Brooks
 - 100% of public 4-yr institutions in WVERC and some private institutions
 - Resources included EBSCO journals and LexisNexis
 - Total cost = \$160k/yr divided by FTE across institutions
 - Additional database resources cost \$780k/yr shared among 4-yr institutions
 - WVERC to join Pennsylvania Academic Library Consortium, Inc. (PALCi) to increase resources and reduce costs and provide Rapid ILL and EZ-Borrow
- Legislative updates
 - Bill similar to last year's HB4654 to remove obscenity from library materials targeting LGBTQIA+ literature and other controversial topics expected this year. May impact students younger than 18 yr including dual credit students. Bluefield seeking parental consent for minors; Marshall checking ID cards at library entrances
 - Executive order from Gov. Morrissey requires state agencies to review DEI policies on basis that such policies provide preferential treatment based on race, sex, etc. Compliance with Title IX, accreditation, and grant funding must be considered
 - NCAA settlement underway with WVU and Marshall seeking policy adjustments to capitalize on changes to NCAA structure
 - Potential increase to PEIA premiums discussed
 - Proposed bill to address lack of pension plans for campus police discussed
- Corley Dennison reported on WVHEPC Academic Affairs
 - 60+60 transfer package initiative will define uniform Gen Ed requirements for students transferring from 2-yr

schools. Students would only need 60 additional hrs to complete degree

- Fewer than 1,000 students in WV transferring from 2- to 4-yr institutions. Current funding formula incentivizes completing associate's degree prior to enrolling in 4-yr institutions. Efforts to reduce barriers include uniform curriculum, course numbering, and structure transfer plan
- Dual Enrollment shows growth w 6500 students/semester
- Course sharing efforts expanding with review of struggling education course on autism and General Sciences Chemistry expected in Fall 2025
- OER Round 9 funding to be announced soon
- Workshop on Microcredentials scheduled for Feb 27-28 with goal of encouraging all institutions to offer these by Fall 2026. Funding formula needs review to reflect microcredentials and alternative degrees
- College-going rate declined from early 2000s-present from 54-47%. High school graduates declined from 12k-8k. Birth trends indicate this trend will continue for decades. Some institutions able to attract students from neighboring states, but insufficient to offset population decline in WV

Senate Report provided by Dr. Doug Terry:

- Report from Meeting of WVU Faculty Senate on 1/13/25
 - Chair Report, Dr. Diana Davis: University Promotion and Tenure Review Panel still seeking faculty volunteers from all campuses. Contact Chris Staples in Office of the Provost if interested.
 - VP for Enrollment Management, Steve Hahn:
 - 16.2% increase in applications over previous year (increase of 2.5k). Grad and profession applications also grew
 - WVU Guarantee launch: "Last dollar" in financial

aid initiative to cover tuition/fees for qualifying WV residents with family income $\leq$ \$65k

- Faculty to direct questions to Faculty Senate
- Students must be 1st-time freshmen enrolled in degree-granting program at any WVU campus, and complete FAFSA each yr (by Aug 1 for Fall 2025)

Brown Bag Report provided by Dr. Doug Terry

- 1st Brown Bag of the Semester to be held 2/18/25 at 1 PM in LRC 324
 - Dr. William Holly, Teaching Asst. Prof of History to present “The Mountain is Part of Us: Tourism, Community, and American Indian Sacred Land in Northern Arizona since 1969”

WVUe 191 Ad-Hoc Committee report by Dr. Kimberlyn Gray

- Asked to join similar committee on Main Campus, but time of meeting conflicts with teaching schedules. Someone that can join those meetings and is interested please contact Dr. Gray

VII. Agenda Items

A. Welcome Back Spring 2025 Semester

VIII. New Business

- Sodexo employee Tiff's niece Jasmine that works at Tech Spot suffered an injury. Dr. McClain has started a collection to assist her.

The meeting adjourned at 1:50 p.m.