

university

SENATE

April 18, 2007
SC 201

Meeting convened at 3:35 p.m.

Members present (alphabetical): Jamie Begian, Mark Bourque, Daryle Brown, Emilio Collar, Sara DeLoughy, Edward Duncanson, Abe Echevarria, Gancho Ganchev, Carol Hawkes, Karen Koza, Tara Kuther, Sam Lightwood, Susan Maskel, Allen Morton, Duane Moser, James Munz, Vijay Nair, Elizabeth Popiel, Imran Qazi, Karen Raftery, Jeffrey Schlicht, S. Alba Skar, Cigdem Usekes, Lori Wagner, and Rob Whittemore

Guests present: Pres. J. Schmotter, Linda Rinker, Ellen Durnin, Beth Amyot, Lionel Wm. Hawkins, Linda Vaden-Goad, Dan Goble, Victoria Kenausis, and Chuck Mullaney

Pres. Kuther – Good Afternoon. Before we get going Imran Qazi has made a suggestion to me and would you like to come up and speak?

Imran Qazi – Hi, I'm SGA President and I thought it would be appropriate if we could have a moment of silence for the students and individuals who were murdered at Virginia Tech. I appreciate it. Thank you.

I. Announcements

Pres. Kuther – Chuck Mullaney is here about the NCAA travel athletic representative.

Chuck Mullaney – I'm here to make you aware of a position that was created a few years ago and about you might not be aware. It's a faculty athletic representative. Back in September, 2004 Dr. Schmotter asked me to serve as faculty athletic representative which is a position required by the National Collegiate Athletic Assn. with participating institutions of which we are one. The faculty athletic rep tries to bridge the gap between academics and athletics, though it's a little bit more involved than that. I have no authority, I have no budget, I have no reassigned time, but I do have the (inaudible) of a twenty year faculty member who believes that athletics should be more integrated with the rest of the university and that faculty should understand and support athletics as a significant university activity in the same way as any other co-curricular activity. So what do I do? Coincidental with my appointment as faculty athletic rep (F.A.R.) as it's known in NCAA land, President Schmotter named the presidents' athletic advisory council, the ten member group consisting of faculty, student athletes and administrators who meet once a semester to discuss and review athletic issues on campus and to address any athletic/academic issues that may have had policy and programs. I Chair that council. The student athletic advisory committee, a group of student athletes from each sport meets every two weeks most of their work is community based. I attend their meetings as an Advisor. Thanks to Athletic Director Ed Farrington I sit in on all Athletic Dept. meetings. In addition I'm active in National NCAA meetings with other faculty athletic reps from other universities around the country. I work with Dr. Bernstein to assure collaborative student athletic programs. In short, though I'm still in a learning mode, I'm an advisor, a facilitator and a communicator of information and I would hope that this brief meeting with you will be the start of a relationship between the faculty

senate and the athletic department with me as your liaison. That's really all the time I want to take, you have a very busy schedule. I would like to ask President if I may pass out the very pretty brochures. We didn't pay for them, the NCAA did. I would ask you one favor, please don't chuck them in the basket. Put them on the side of your desk and who knows you may have an occasion to give them away. Thank you Tara for making this time available, thank you ladies and gentlemen. Can I just pass these around? Thank you.

II. MINUTES

1. MOTION TO ACCEPT DECEMBER 2006 MINUTES (MUNZ/LIGHTWOOD) PASSED WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS [R-07-04-01]

One correction warranted. The secretary will add Senator Munz name as he was present at the **December meeting**.

2. February, 2007 minutes: These were distributed just prior to the meeting. We'll vote on those in May. The March, 2007 minutes will also be available in May.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **CELT** – We have not received additional information, so that's on hold.
2. **Passport to Paideia** – You recall this proposal by Drs. Whittemore and Schlicht, Veronica Kenausis is here today.

Veronica Kenausis – you should have in front of you a written response from the General Education committee, I'm going to give you a minute or two to read it and then you can ask me any questions you may have about it. I will say that Rob Whittemore and Jeff Schlicht and I and the committee have discussed this at great length and there are still some questions that I think we all have about it. They have for us and we have for the program so that's why you see the response in front of you.

Sen. Nair – The second paragraph it says that the committee seeks feedback from each school, academic departments and so forth, what exactly does that mean?

Veronica Kenausis – we were going to leave that up the designers of the program, who would be Rob and Jeff to seek and provide that feedback. I think one of the issues that we discuss a lot in the committee is that we don't, at this point, with the first year experience coming up in the fall, we don't feel like we have the time to dedicate to studying this program as deeply as we would like to and I do think that Rob and Jeff are dedicated to doing that so we want to partner with them much more closely and getting the feedback that the committee feels it needs to make a decision to move forward with this. If this is going to live under the general education committee.

Sen. Nair – When it comes to the schools, it would seem to me that you would either contact the Dean or the PRC and I'm assuming that all the schools have a program review committee and probably that's an appropriate way to deal with the schools and the departments is fairly straight forward, you should contact the Chairs. The other implicated units, this is the concern Rob, if you were to (inaudible) I'm almost certain that somebody who did that would show up and say how come you didn't tell me about it. I'm not quite sure what that phrase means.

Veronica Kenausis – That was written by the committee

Sen. Nair – it doesn't matter who wrote it.

Veronica Kenausis – I believe that the people that are clearly implicated like the Registrar's Office and the Admissions Office. I know that they have sought feedback from those people already so I think we're just trying to come to some common ground at this point and I do think we found that common ground initially in our first year experience program because we all believe that this is an appropriate program to be integrated into that experience. The question now is how to move into the broader general education curriculum. Daryle is on that committee as well and so we have discussed it and there was some discussion about how it may affect students in different programs differently which was the impetus for asking for specific feedback from different schools so for example the nursing program Daryle brought up that there were many non-traditional students in that program and it would be more of a burden to them to attend six let's say in their sophomore year and their junior year, every semester and I think that we just needed to come to some conclusion that it was going to be appropriate and at what point is it appropriate for all students across the board?

Sen. Nair – Would CUCAS have anything to say about this?

Sen. Whittemore – CUCAS has had this for two months.

Sen. Nair – Oh, ok.

Sen. Whittemore – just to advise people Bill Hawkins did talk to me at length about this particular issue and this proposal which he thought was a good one, was that for non-trads or part timers they would have it done by the number of credits they have not by the time. So for example if they're not yet (inaudible) So that they wouldn't be in any one term, a part time student (inaudible). That was his suggestion.

Veronica Kenausis – for part time students. I think Daryle if you want to speak to it.

Sen. Brown – I'm just thinking as you're talking about this in several of our semesters the students are full time just by taking the nursing program. A lot of our students work full time, go to school full time, they work to pay school and most of them have families and it's just, when I look at it I am overwhelmed by the number of events that we're saying they must attend. They're just not that traditional 18-22 year old living on campus, going to school. Plus, our nursing courses, if we have a six credit course, it's not two or three credits like lectures during the week, we usually have a seminar of 3 hours, we have a clinical of six hours and we have two class times of two hours each per week so we have lots of credits, lots of hours that are kind of embedded that we have so life is not so simple and I know it was not just nursing, it was marketing that came up with this too. It's not that I don't believe in the concept, I truly do it's just I'm overwhelmed when I think how it's going to be implemented.

Veronica Kenausis – let's make that clear that the committee truly does believe in the concept and is very impressed by the proposal, there are just some questions about how it's going to fit into peoples' programs and I think also beyond that we're on a particular path now of integrating some of these things into course work so the faculty and committee makes it more (inaudible) if it's somehow integrated into coursework. So there are some basic questions I think the committee has about it being outside the coursework and whether or not it's meaningful enough or is it just something that the students have to fulfill without any feedback from the faculty members or advisors or whatever. I think that there were some questions as we move forward that we want to look into in terms of how meaningful it is for the students.

Sen. Echevarria – The first go around I did discuss this with my department. Now they have certain points to cover, could I suggest that we get the departments point of view to the Chairs so that they bring it to the meeting, they put it on the agenda of the meeting so we can fully discuss these points that you're delineating here. The Chairs meetings.

Veronica Kenausis – Rob, I can offer that a representative from the Gen Ed. Committee could possibly be there to discuss with the Chairs, too, so questions can be answered in a more expedient fashion instead of you finding answers, bring it to us, us having more questions, so there might be some synergy we can achieve by going together.

Imran Qazi – Yes, you mentioned that this would be based on how many credits so if it was a part time student it would be less, my question is we get state funding based on how much full time enrollment we have after the third week so I would not want students to get discouraged and take less credits. Did we get the student opinion on this? Did we speak to any student committees? This never came through SGA, I'm just trying to see what the students would say about this because we try to promote full time students, I would hate for this to be a draw back why a student might not want to go full time at this university

Veronica Kenausis – The last line of this from the General Education committee says that also requests that student feedback be included in the evaluation. Eli has been meeting with us with the Gen. Ed. Committee and there were some concerns about the number and types of events so we really need to get more forms of student feedback. The General Education Committee feels that there should be more formal student feedback.

Sen. Nair – I was going to raise the same point, the last sentence. I don't know how practical it is for the schools and departments to seek student's feedback. How would a department or school actually do that because I don't think that department meetings have students in it. It's a practical matter of when I saw that sentence it occurred to me – how would they do it?

Veronica Kenausis – I think the committee (inaudible) getting through their majors, the departments generally as far as our committee believes have closer relationships with the students that are majoring in those programs. So, for example, Paula Secondo is on a committee said she could very easily talk to the Chemistry majors and find out what their feedback was and she felt that she could do that. I don't know if that's true for all departments. Daryle said that she would be able to talk to some of her Nursing students, so it wouldn't be as formal as a survey of every single student in those programs, but we'll get a sampling. We might be able to work through SGA as well.

Pres. Kuther – So the request is to get feedback from all these bodies. Does it go back to Gen Ed?

Veronica – Yes.

Pres. Kuther – Is there a date whereby this stuff must be submitted or when it would be recommended or not?

Veronica – This is difficult because we don't feel like we're the driver of this train. In other words it wasn't our proposal to put forward and we don't want to restrain or, do you know what I mean, we're trying to partner with them but it really belongs to Jeff and Rob and we're trying to work together to find out. It really depends on how quickly they want to get this implemented.

Pres. Kuther – it just seems to me that it's wonderful to get feedback but, at least through my work in the classroom so whoever is conducting this I just seems to me that people need deadlines.

Veronica Kenausis – I do apologize for some of the delay I will take the blame I didn't understand that there was a formal response that was required because we have been discussing, but I did not provide a formal response. Rob, do you want to talk about deadlines?

Sen. Whittemore – In terms of the student prospective, one of the reasons we brought this to the senate two months ago was so that people would take it back to their departments and begin to get feedback, which we have had had. So, I think our sense has been up to this point a response

out of conversations that we having informally as well in the case of the SGA representative to the Senate or to CUCAS bringing it back and saying look this has come up, this is gonna make an impact on our lives, do we want to put another agenda and we would be happy to speak to it, if that's helpful we will. The other thing I wanted to say here is that I think, on first pass, this appears to be an honourous expectation, however, if the person who presented it has done a read and proposal and speaks about it, I think most people realize that we're not talking about necessarily going just to events, if somebody is reasonably active on campus they probably will quite easily do this. It is something that we notice, part of the idea comes the experience of, for example, the Music Department, that has their mid-day colloquia every week and it is a requirement of the student to attend those and they use very much the same technology we will be using, display cards, to a lap top outside the event. Their attendance is quite good. Other departments have approached us with requirements that they've had for the students that aren't credit bearing but they require portfolios, for example, or certain assignments the students must do just because they're part of a major, so there are some interesting experiences like that that have helped us. In terms of dates we were given (inaudible) we definitely wanted to have it and IT's work on it ready to go for the fall provided there was a general consensus that it was a good idea. It's more important that this fit us as a community than the idea just ride through. The railroad analogy worries me a little bit. The way this proposal has gone, because of some of the feedback is to now think of it in terms of a requirement to advance the junior status. So, it will be the first two years of the student experience here and after that time using again IT's technology, students would know when they've fulfilled the requirement. They'd also be notified when they (inaudible). So, that's an interesting change in the idea. With the permission of the General Education interests and other faculty we will then be able to decide should this extend to the four years or is this year sufficient? Those are some of the ideas we're having.

Sen. Nair – This is the third week of April now, we have just about a month left of the semester, If the General Ed Committee is to receive sufficient feedback, I can't see it happening this academic year. I'm addressing the issue of the deadline. If you were to have a deadline sometime this semester, I don't see what the committee would do if the feedback was not sufficient, (inaudible) the timeframe, the deadline comes and you don't have the kind of feedback you thought you would have, so again it's a practical issue of how to make it happen.

Veronica – let me reiterate that the General Education Committee is committed to integrating this program into that first year. So the program could conceivably get off the ground, not in as wide a distribution as Jeff and Rob have envisioned it but at least in that particular portion of the first year program. The discussion that we were having is that's all the committee feels like it can offer right now based on the information that we have and therefore we're concerned that this has a much broader perspective, we're just not able to go there right now because of the work being done on assessment in general education and also the ideas about what general education is going to look like it's a hard process to figure out what we're going to do.

Sen. Nair – My point is that the next Senate meeting is one month from today. If a deadline is established for these folks to respond, then the Gen Ed committee can predict the majority of these constituencies will be able to give meaningful or thoughtful responses in the period of time.

Veronica – it's a practical matter. The last meeting of the Gen Ed Committee is May 4th. So it would have to be before the fourth. We're not meeting after that.

Pres. Kuther – it sounds like since there's already a desire to include this to the first year experience next fall, at least there will be some preliminary part that we'll add and it certainly does take more time to go through the channels if this is going to be something that is permanent

and also that is required. It sounds to me that if we use next year as at least a pilot, continue to collect more information, continue it to the next semester, if needed.

Sen. Whittemore – UPBC, we're hoping to be on the agenda for both those committees at least to get their feedback

Pres. Kuther – So, it sounds like that we're on target to proceed next year

Sen. Ganchev – I have a concrete comment. Computer Science is listed under Communication and Media. It has to do with Media about as much as (inaudible)

Sen. Whittemore – So, you would recommend that physical (inaudible). None of these categories are fixed and remember that the only reason we designed them was that we were trying to limit the domains so that the icons or the thesis, unless programs had their own, would be relatively. We're not (inaudible)

Sen. Raftery – I wanted to give feedback, I brought it to the communication department and their feedback was basically a stating concerns that everyone else has stated about administration and control of how we credit the students for this and the information or the stuff that they wanted me to bring back to the Senate was basically that many of our faculty do already require our students to attend university events. Myself for one, we have what's called an event card, and they must attend these events to get credit in class. It is a specific requirement for a class so that's already built in. I know that in all of my classes it's a requirement. So, perhaps other departments have that requirement already established and that feedback can come to us. We've been doing this for a couple of months now and we're not getting a lot of new feedback. I'm hoping that this would be something that is new.

Sen. Lightwood – So, with all this talk about feedback, one thing that I would be curious to see as you listen and evaluate and adjust would be to have some sense of how your plan changes because right now this document that we have come from a couple of months ago and we've been hearing all this feedback and presumably adjusting and we don't have any sense of this and so it would be very nice to see how your vision is evolving. That would also take some time but it would be nice to see what you have in mind for the fall.

Dean Morton – I just have some brief feedback from the Ancell Chairs' meeting, we met last week. After pretty much what you've heard before about the non traditional students, but the more pragmatic issue is the old argument of Midtown vs. West Side campus and where will the activities be located? It seems like a small point, but for West Side students it's a very large point. The quality of opportunities is one of their concerns.

Sen. Whittemore – And when you say quality of opportunities that's to suggest that there isn't much going on the West Side Campus?

Dean Morton – I'm sure your plans already anticipated that. Yea, basically, that's exactly my point.

Sen. Whittemore – I think part of what we're hoping to happen is that because students would see it and their interest to get things going, it might encourage some of that but

Veronica Kenausis – Just one last point the difficulty right now is that the General Education Committee, this is proposed under the General Education Committee and this is proposed under the General Education curriculum and we're trying very hard to take it over, change it completely the way the committee would like to see it and trying to work to (inaudible) and I think it's taking much longer with the discussion and the feedback and so at some point we'll come out with something everybody is satisfied with. And it may take into account that people are already doing this, I think that's what we found with the FYE program, too, is that most everybody is doing this stuff already we're just making it more explicit for the university

community, not for separate programs, not for separate departments, but for the university at large. I do think we're going to be able to do something, I don't think that for the committee it's going to be as thick as rob and Jeff would like it to be.

3. Course cancellations – Dr. Whittemore had requested to bring this item up for discussion.

Sen. Whittemore – I think we're all familiar with the issue. The issue is basically this which is that we want our students to be able to have the courses that they see listed in the list of classes each term and we find that as a university we've never had a conversation that has been perhaps learning from the experience we've all had with this problem about keeping classes that are in the schedule of classes available when students come and sign up for them. There are, I know that there's a conversation that the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs has launched on this and I think that there are some interesting ideas that have begun to percolate, but I bring just the faculty perspective to this and this has happened more than once to me but this last term was particularly surprising because when we have upper division classes certain in our major area it often is the case that we'll have a smaller class than our lower division classes and yet we still have undergraduates that, in order to get to graduate school, have to show that they've taken those upper division classes and how to make sure they're available is a puzzle for us sometimes.. There are some ideas that I've heard people suggest. One is that we think about the timing when we delete classes, for whatever reason. The other is that we look practically at how , in fact, students are responding to the opportunity for classes and also myself just going to Old Main this first week of classes this term. The lines were 50 deep waiting to get into a class. First week of classes after some of these other classes had been cancelled. That raised an interesting question, in my mind had we ever thought and talked about having the first week of class being a time when, as is offered at other universities, students are in a sense going to classes, looking at syllabi, deciding whether they will or will not enroll. Now, as a State University I realize this raises all sorts of fiscal issues so that's why I think the conversation would be very interesting for us all as faculty. I, myself, have heard so much talk in the hall among faculty of concern and vexation about this, I just don't think we're getting anywhere, just by talking to ourselves. I know that the Administration is concerned; I know Linda Rinker said clearly, I believe that when the course the student should be able to count on it being there. Clearly we are still running up against (inaudible) One of the concerns I have is that in some departments there is a routine number of sections that are proposed for the introductory level classes often well ahead of the fact. So, faculty lined up, adjuncts and otherwise and maybe a big part of the pattern of the problem is coming out of those classes where you have 15 sections of intro and only eight can go in the spring class as opposed to the fall term when many of them will have gone. That suggests maybe some of the experience in some departments is causing a great deal of difficulty but then as they generalize to the rest of us and that may or may not be a good thing to do. My concern for myself was that I had a class that I think is important, as we all do, I had seven students enrolled at the time the cancellation came and those students were called by my department secretary before I knew that the course was being cancelled. She was doing what she had been asked to do, so I don't blame her at all, but all of those students looked for other classes. When we decided to let the class go to see what would happen none of them came back but in the meantime 14 others did. So eventually some of them dropped away. But had those other 7 students been in there plus the others that came I would have had a class of about 14 students. So again the way we're doing this, again, feels at best ad hoc. I also know from

talking to students, that some students for summer classes simply don't sign up in advance because they themselves are thinking about the money they have or might not and they wait until the summer term is literally upon them and at that point classes have been cancelled. I also think that the regular terms, some of our students for example in the spring, when I've asked them why didn't you sign up for classes earlier they say oh well, its spring and summer and I figured I'd just come back and take what was available. Again that's kind of an adaptive response that they've had but I'm not sure as an institution that's the way we want to be thinking About the way they're thinking. Incentives came up, for example, might there be an award for signing up for classes before you even enter the spring, or might that not be something we want to do, might there be a physical penalty for signing up late in the fall. I know that the Graduate School has adapted this approach, I'm not sure of the details of it but they found that was something they needed to do to make sure they had a sense of enrollments. So these are some of the issues, I'm sure you have others but as I look at current cancellation procedures I think there are some assumptions being made that have to do with simply tweaking,. Well maybe we'll cancel three days; we'll cancel two weeks before the term or a week we'll have an email go out. This feels to me like a good first step in thinking but it seems not to really be solving a problem about students who are routinely now signing up to wait. And finding that frustrating and maybe even in the culture of the students something that they've begun to assume that's just the way things work around here.

Pres. Kuther – I remember the discussion that we had about the Grad Council instituting the late fee, do we know and perhaps Dr. Morton or Dr. Rinker would know – did that actually improve registration?

Provost Rinker – for Grad School? No it did not but I can bring back some data. Do you want me to address all these different issues? When I arrived I looked at the Values and Visioning document that you all produced and the student voice was very clear as well as the faculty voice. The student voice was saying we want to be able to get our classes and we don't want so many cancellations and then I was hearing the faculty voice which was I want some predictability – I have to prepare for the class, I have to have some understanding of when I can teach it, I don't want to hear at the last minute it's being cancelled. So, those are the two voices that popped right out of the document to me. That said there was a sort of an influence from the system office about the add (inaudible) process and I think you need to hear more about that and I'd like to bring some people from our registrar's office who have trained on it now, which is a course scheduling process which Eastern University actually began to look at this particular process two years ago and what's great about it is it predicts the actual number of students and the courses that are needed in each discipline. Its computer driven, I mean technology driven and it would be helpful, you see, for you and the department to know how many courses you need for x number of students as they progress through their major. So, I've begun the work with both Mr. Hawkins and also Paul Prisco in the registrar's office to learn that process with the hope that eventually we can share this with you and roll that out but at this point in time we are really contingent upon, really being held back a little bit because they have a new section to the technology called platinum that's going to go live in May and we have to wait until it goes live in order to have all this technology brought to our campus. We don't know what's happening. Now, that aside, a couple of practices that we have tried to work on this year. The first was to try and make our decisions that is the Deans and I based on data. So, I try very hard to amass data from all of your schools, so the deans had data to look at what ran last year and what might run and what might not run. You probably heard some of that discussion and then secondly the

whole notion of canceling a class at some point, at a trigger point when a student can actually pick up another class. So, it's really not a true science here because we're trying to make available the classes but at the same time we don't want large numbers of cancellations which has been historically, as I've been told, the problem here. And I might tell you when I looked at summer school last year there were over 150 cancellations of classes and I made my commitment this year that we would work very diligently not to cancel that many classes, to try and put classes out there that students want, that students need and will run. And so to do that we had to use decisions based on data. What's gonna run in your department what isn't going to run and we did a five year run on courses just to look at it and incidentally Ad Astra will do all of what I've just told you and I don't have Jerry Wilcox do that kind of gathering of data Ad Astra's technology will do that data finding and it will be in your offices and available to you but at this point I can't even show it to you because I don't have all of the pieces put together from that particular technology opportunity. So, this year, to be very clear we tried to work on at least getting some predictability of what we can run within a window of about two weeks before school starts and we tried very hard as Deans to say well, there are these many students in this class and it looks like it could work or it looks like it won't work and then the deans were to go back and have a discussion with the chairs. In your particular case I really can't speak of what went down because certainly your Chair needed to be in that dialog and I'm very sorry that didn't happen and I hope a (inaudible) situation). That aside, the lever was sort of pulled maybe around the 3rd or 2nd week before school starts and in many cases we tried very hard the deans that is to let as many stand as possible but you and I have a problem here at Westconn, among many, one of the problems we're really heavy on the front side with numbers of courses that we need and the second problem that marries to this one is there's a long history of not having faculty replacements in the departments and you and I have a large adjunct faculty pool that we are reliant upon and in many cases they are teaching that front side, those beginning courses. So, that's the challenge, to manage all of that and then also on the upper division side sometimes it's harder to fill some of those classes. We've got to have better predictive patterns to know how our students are working through their majors, what they need and when they need it. In some departments you have it and some departments you don't and I'm hoping the technology will provide that for you and I offer to you the ongoing dialog so that the information that the Deans and I are doing are always shared with you as they are shared with the Chairs. I am here to answer your questions.

Change of tape

Sen. Raftery – I'm glad I'm hearing all of this. To address a couple of things Rob mentioned before and the particular students and how they adapt when courses are cancelled. I know that in our department we have in our curriculum pick one from column a and one from column b and you have your choices that you can fill in those blank spots. Well, if we offer a course and it gets cancelled, and then you look at that and say well, it didn't go last year and it gets cancelled this year students are just naturally not going to go to that course because they are going to assume that it's going to be cancelled. We also have situations where students cannot sign up early because of financial aid situations. I've had courses cancelled on many occasions and then students will say well I went to sign up for that course and I couldn't sign up because of financial aid so I was on the cusp and the course was cancelled and then I'll have 7 or 8 students that will say I needed that class and they couldn't take it because of that financial aid situation so if it comes to a self perpetuating cycle where we have students who want to take the courses and it

gets cancelled and then when it's looked at later on there's the question why should that class be offered if enough students aren't going to sign up for it.

Dean Vaden-Goad – I can add something there

Provost Rinker – Let me talk to both of your points. I will get back to your two points.

Dean Vaden-Goad – In a situation like that we don't look at it in a simple way at all I mean when Linda said that we look at a five year course history you know Katie and I in our office don't just say, well, you know let's just cancel them all, let's not look at it, let's go to lunch. We're really serious and careful about it. Basically, what we try and do is look at the schedule that's been presented and then look at about how many students you have right now. Do you have more students than you did before? Do you have more at the upper level than you used to? How many upper level classes does it look like your major seems to support in the summer? How many can you support of 098 and this or that or whatever. So, we really try hard to take a look at everything. We wouldn't say that particular course doesn't run in the summer we would say it looks like they can run about 4 upper level classes and about that many will work and it looks like if they run them all at the same time that won't work. So maybe if everything worked during the long semesters Tues, Thurs from the same time. It's things like that, so we look very, very carefully at it all and those are some of the issues and a lot of times I know we've come back to some of you and said gee, you know if you hadn't offered that at 8 in the morning, senior level class from 8-9 three days a week, it might have worked Tuesday and Thursday. Those kinds of considerations because we hear a lot of students, too. And what I think what Linda is saying and what we'd like to do is to see if we could really get better and better at scheduling. Scheduling wisely across the weeks, scheduling more wisely in the summers, could we get at that right mix so that you absolutely offer the courses that you need to offer that we enroll up to the number we need so that you don't have that problem anymore of not being able to run your upper levels. Sometimes the problem is we just don't have enough students at the upper level to make it. There are students out there who would love to know about the program, that's one of the things we've been doing is to try to work with the community colleges and certain areas where the students are there, like in Art, for example. Some of the community colleges they have students who'd love to be in our Art program, they just don't know we have them, or didn't or do. You see what I'm saying, it's more or less and that's what I think that Ad Astra I think will do to help us, I think the students will pop in their data and we have the kind of thing the courses that are in the program and the students need to take in order to graduate and that program using banner will put it together and say "well, it looks like you could probably run, you know, fifteen sections of this and... you know that kind of thing. So the whole idea is exactly really what you're saying is could we get closer and closer to being able to offer what's needed at the times and days of the week that people want it so you know we can teach the things we want to teach and take the courses we want to take. I mean, I think that's the whole idea. We worked, I mean I don't know how it happened, and I have no idea how it happened that you didn't know about it, I don't think that's difficult at all. Usually we talk with people over and over and over again so I know we talked with you several times. I have no idea how that happened, I can't even speculate. But that's not common, that's not typical with you even. I don't know, nobody here, I certainly don't and I think I can speak for everybody, my peers, is that we want to run the classes, we love the classes, we love to read the titles, I like the students in the classes having a great time learning things. I mean nobody, we're not on different sides of this, and we're just trying to make it work better and better.

Sen. Whittemore – I agree, I think what you just said there is really important, I think my concern and one of the reasons I wrote the long letter did to you

Dean Vaden-Goad – Get one to me, I don't think I

Sen. Whittemore – This one I shared with Katie, I guess. I don't like the tone with which we as a faculty talk about this issue. It's as if somehow it's being done to us. I don't think that's fair, and as you say Linda I don't think that's what's going on, but the feeling that people have is that that's what's going on. I'm trying to subvert that, I don't think that's healthy I don't think it's wise and I also think it leads to a kind of tension we don't need. As I was listening to just then it occurred to me that maybe Ad Astra will help us with this. The conversation, I think, needs to be at the level of having courses go. There's another level here from a faculty prospective that I think is relevant perhaps is that when a faculty member teaches large classes that it seems to me there should be some accommodation for them teaching a smaller one.

Dean Vaden-Goad – I feel that way, too. I think what we've been trying to do is put something together that would allow that sort of compensation, should it be within department, should it be within schools, should it just be in the larger university, and actually we did that, we've done stuff like that. Last summer, I think, we let a larger class offset a smaller class and we would make cases for running classes by saying we have this class here over by this number here we really need to run these classes for this reason could we do the following, and we did.

Provost Rinker – Sorry to hear that there is this tension going on but I'm not surprised to hear it because of what I've read in the documents when I first came on board. What I am committed to do is as Linda has clearly pointed out and she speaks for all of the Deans, as I do, is to work to make it work for our students and for you. Now, if I could just address you two points. Again, I need to highlight what Linda is saying – we do not address the making classes go and the cancellation of classes in any cavalier way. It's a very serious problem and I have to tell you from our perspective it's not money driven for us. It's driven because we want to get this thing right. So I want you to hear that. You can hold me to that and you can hold the Deans to that for the next year as we begin to work with you through it. The second point you raised was the financial aid issue. For what it is worth and I feel it's important to tell you I do understand what is going on in our financial aid office. It is sorely understaffed and I am very hopeful this year that I will have a staffed person to put into that unit because 1) they need and 2) its going to, I hope, improve customer satisfaction because that is my goal. A staff person comes it's married to improvement of customer satisfaction, student satisfaction because I'm dealing with issues every day, just about around the piece that you shared, students unable to get classes, financial aid hasn't come through. Just dealt with a student who wants to go to Spain who can't go to Spain because her financial aid hasn't come through and it won't come through until the end of the month. I say extend her time period; we'll work with that issue. I'm trying to tell you, again, we'll work with you some how, some way to get this in a better form, to make it feel a tad better. As far as Ad Astra, which is the name of what I was referring to, I want to bring it to Senate and to Chairs but I can't do that until it's all put together and working. So at least we know it's out there if this new product comes through in May we'll be ready in the summer to start doing some show and tell.

Sen. Nair – Rob's point – Every year, as long as I can remember from my AAUP perspective, I get calls from faculty using the same kind of phrases. The faculty believes that the student can be that way; something has been done to us. I think the sense of it is that (inaudible) you know somebody comes up with a number less than 9 forget it, and I'm pleased that you intend to make decisions based on information, it's a wise thing to do to have information before you make a

decision but I also think that it's probably a good idea to have a policy that drives this decision. What is our policy with regard to canceling classes? I don't think it can happen overnight, I think that once you have the data, once you bring this to us, the faculty, I think that at some point there has to be a policy developed with adequate consultation with the teaching faculty and other appropriate perhaps the Registrar's office or what have you, which will help people understand that there is a reasoning behind this. That's my suggestion.

Provost Rinker – it's a very reasonable suggestion and certainly I'll take that under serious consideration. I appreciate that, Vijay.

Sen. Maskel – in earlier meetings today we were told that when students register for summer school they need to pay within two days.

Provost Rinker – where did you learn that information?

Sen. Maskel – Katie Wiss motioned it at a meeting we had.

Provost Rinker – when they register they must pay within two days?

Sen. Maskel – for summer school, yes.

Dean Vaden-Goad – it must be, I mean if they register right now, it's just that they're up to the line.

Imran Qazi – if they register on Westconduit, if a student registers on line for summer courses, they have to register within 48 hours, correct. Otherwise there's a hold put on their account.

Provost Rinker – has that always been the practice?

Imran Qazi – Yes, since I've been on campus

Provost Rinker – that may be something we need to look at.

Sen. Maskel – that doesn't encourage students to register for summer classes in advance.

Provost Rinker – I understand your point very clearly.

Imran Qazi – If I could just add to that, speaking as a Graduate student, the late fee is not working, the reason the late fee is not working is a lot of our graduate students are teachers and they rely on funding that they might get from State because they work in public schools and they'll fund their graduate classes and they're willing to register after the late time just to be sure they'll get that funding because they're not sure if they're gonna get that funding and if they register before on Westconduit, most graduate students register on line, they know that they have 48 hours so that's why they're willing to sacrifice that late fee and that's why that late fee is not working for graduate students.

Provost Rinker – In addition to that, Imran, there are other student populations at the graduate level that are contingent upon the funding of other sources.

Imran – Correct.

Provost Rinker – So it just builds the population do not benefit from it at all, the concept is not working.

Sen. Whittemore – The more I talk to students this fiscal issue is always working for them; they will even choose to sacrifice \$60. because they have to face the reality of funding coming or not.

Provost Rinker – Yea, I mean it's coming in two directions from our budget office and then it's coming from the financial aid end of it and honestly I understand all of the concerns but there has to be some sort of middle of the road approach which obviously you have asked me to look at by virtue of giving me this job, so I will figure this out.

Sen. Ganchev – I think there are a lot more problems here. Ad Astra system will be able to tell which classes can run due to the numbers. The problem there will always be classes with low numbers (inaudible) I think I talked about that before but I would like to repeat it. I think we need to define what a student independent study means and start practicing student independent

studies because there always will be courses with low numbers because there are low numbers of students in the major.

Provost Rinker – Absolutely. I really do understand that need and students need to have that option. I was surprised when I came that we don't use independent studies as frequently as perhaps we could use it. That said, I still haven't uncovered all of that issue. I do want to reference one other issue, the one you raised, Rob, about the faculty in a particular department are running larger classes and there are some smaller classes. Can there be some consideration and balance there? Yes, there can and yes we can look at that and that goes back to a point that Vijay made that we probably now need to as we create what it is that we're doing, put this into the best practice i.e. policy. I hear you. I'll give you feedback.

Dean Vaden-Goad – One more thing I'd like to say, one of the things that I think that's been missing that we're instituting now will be letting the students know what day courses would be cancelled if there aren't some number, whatever that number ends up being, so that they know, because I think in the past they haven't known, they say gee, if I had known that I needed to register by a certain date, I would have done it.. So, a lot of times we've had that, they don't register really because they're waiting till the last possible second and then they're still waiting and we've thought oh they're not coming and we cancel and then they call crazy and say oh gee we want to take that class. I think you've got a date for each of the terms now and we'll advertise it so well that everybody knows and I think that will make a tremendous difference because they've got their patterns, people have patterns and they're waiting because they need to wait. But I think if they know that that they have to make a decision by a certain point, they'll do it.

Sen. Whitemore – Also is there a way of cutting or separating out a student signing up for classes without yet having paid their bill? That's a critical issue

Provost Rinker – It is a critical issue and it is something that the Deans have been raising and that's the piece that I have been in dialog with VP Amyot. Because our students work, it's amazing how many jobs they're carrying just to go to school.

Sen. Echevarria – You do have dates, presently?

Provost Rinker – We're working on them now, we've pretty much firmed them now. We've identified them now, so I'm pretty much ready to put them out.

Sen. Echevarria – I think you've touched upon the possibility that two weeks into August is the likely date? Or is it the first week in September?

Provost Rinker – You know, I want to give you the exact date, I want to give you the right date, I don't want to give it to you wrongly and I won't rely on my mind at this point in the afternoon. I'd rather give you the documents so you can certainly talk with me then, probably before the next Senate meeting, if that's acceptable to you.

Sen. Koza- Just one more thing and I don't know how many other departments this has happened, I know it's happened more than once in our department, the biggest problem that occurs with classes that get cancelled is that our students graduate both in January and in May and what happens is that there are required classes, especially the upper level classes for the major such as what you were saying, Rob, you know those upper levels that tend not to be as heavily enrolled. The ones that are graduating in January or in December really and they have that last upper level to take and they can't wait until spring to take it where typically you have that heavier enrollment, they're affected often times the most and we may have an adjunct that might be teaching it and when it's cancelled what happens now? We have students that need to graduate, it's an under enrolled class. There have been professors in our department, myself

being one of them that have picked up independent study classes so that these students can graduate so we give them that class that's required, but it's a different experience for them.

Provost Rinker – I have to tell you that it is my belief, my strong belief, that if students need to graduate they need to have the course and I know the Deans share that with me so it is now a position of mine that we will foster that now that can be done a couple of different ways, it can be done with a regular teacher, an adjunct or an independent study. It depends on the circumstances, the numbers of students; you know what the need is. But I have to also reiterate to you that our graduation rate here at Westconn is really not good and I tell you that because I'm very concerned about it. It did go up 2 points this year and I'm pleased to tell you that piece, but we need to do that and everything else to help our students finish so the Deans are there. I think you need to give us a chance, as you will, and we'll go there and fix it.

Dean Morton – Can I just add one point, we're talking about Ad Astra, I know a little bit about it but I want to talk about the (inaudible) information. Ad Astra gives you probabilities of classes running and not running so it's gonna tell you it's 50% or 60% or whatever, but we do a lot of talking about a lot of data and we know things like Karen talked about students aren't able to graduate, we have to bring their names to the forefront and say that I have at least 10 students that need to graduate so even if we have this tool we can't lose sight of the fact that we need to talk to our students and tell them what they need to know. Often when we cancel courses students will come up to me and they'll say well, if you would have given me one more day, I would have signed up for the course, I think we have to head them off at the pass and tell them sooner. The human touch is really important despite the fact (inaudible)

Provost Rinker – Allan makes a very important point as you will see when we finally have a chance to share the Ad Astra to you, it's a piece of technology but it doesn't take the place for human connection, and so it is very important to always look at that data and tell us that you need to have 4 students in whatever discipline to finish them and get them out in January, we'll do it. We'll figure out how to do it.

Sen. Koza – so, you can actually input that into the program?

Provost Rinker – You can.

Sen. Koza – so, before classes are cancelled it puts it in?

Provost Rinker – By chance, you know is up to error, there's always that possibility, that's the piece Allan was talking about you always need to stay on top of whatever that data feed is that you're looking at.

Sen. Koza – That's great

Sen. Whittemore – Thank you very much Dr. Rinker, Dr. Vaden-Goad, thank you for being here and the rest of you for your ideas and I do hope that you will each take this conversation back to your departments to let them know that there is serious conversation, there are attempts to make this situation improve and I look forward to being more confident. I don't like entering the term, you know every adjunct lives with this constantly, but it's very difficult to know that the first three four days before terms we may have to be scrambling to try to save something that you have looked forward to offering and feel it is an important part of the curriculum. There is a point at which this does begin to change the curriculum and that's something we all have a responsibility for I hope we'll be attending to it. Thank you.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Deans list for part time students

– Deans list for part time students, there was a hand out regarding this in your packets for this month. As I understand it Dr. Rinker has collected additional feedback and so the final draft or close to the final draft will be in your May packet and we'll talk about this in May.

2. Academic Leave Committee Annual Report – this was in your April packets.
Comments?

Sen. Nair – I have a comment. The last sentence it says the “New School of Performing Arts”, may I suggest we correct that to “new school of Visual and Performing Arts”?

Pres. Kuther – Ok, so the correction is to place “school” in lower case. Visual and Performing Arts, ok, so we'll correct that. Other comments?

V. OTHER BUSINESS

Sen. Whittemore – In light of this weeks' events that we're all thinking about, 2-3 years ago when I asked about this I was trying to think about how to spread word about events to students more quickly in terms of developing lists that they would actually receive and I discovered the university gives students a university e-mail address. The university does not collect students own e-mail addresses. When I asked the students about this they said oh well I never look at my Westconn email, I only look at my personal email. I realize there might be some privacy issues here, that was sort of the logic used to explain why people weren't collecting personal email addresses but it turns out that Virginia Tech, that's exactly what they do. So somehow they have a different way of thinking and they do collect all the student personal emails, they do put them on a list serve so that they can communicate with them quickly given the fact that students routinely check their own emails. I was wondering as a university we can think about this, maybe even get somebody to really examine if there really is a personal or privacy issue or if that's just sort of the culture that we've developed here. I do believe that there should be a more efficient way to communicate with students quickly, I think it is advisable that we act some way responsible about it.

Imran Qazi – I just want to comment on it, I don't think its privacy issue. As far as the Student Government, all our emails are on the Westconn home page, if that was the case they would never allow us to do that.

Sen. Maskel – I don't know why, I can explain this, but we were told in the Advisement Comm. Meeting at the Registrar's office they are extremely against personal emails because we suggested that at Advisement meeting, they said we'd have to speak to someone in the Registrar's office to find out why.

Pres. Kuther – Does anyone have a motion regarding how we should proceed with this? Clearly, we need to call in outside help should we want to continue this.

Sen. Echevarria – The President sent out an email regarding a conversation session that he is going to hold, he has a timeline for it. So if you haven't checked your emails that might be a good forum to address this issue.

Pres. Kuther – Ok, so the president is holding a forum, do we know what the date is?

Unidentified - Monday

Pres. Kuther – Check your emails. Excellent suggestion. Any additional comments, suggestions?

VI. Motion to adjourn

Motion to adjourn [Munz/Qazi]

Meeting adjourned 4:50pm

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Popiel – Senate Secretary
Linda D' Aurio – Recording Secretary

SENATE RESOLUTIONS

**MOTION TO ACCEPT DECEMBER 2006 MINUTES (MUNZ/LIGHTWOOD)
PASSED WITH TWO ABSTENTIONS [R-07-04-01]**