PRESENT: Alon (for Walsh), Andreopoulos, Barrow, Bernstein, Bhat, Bliss, Chabayta, Cruz Paul, Diamond, Dinan, Duffy, Ellis, Falk-Romaine, Finnegan, Garfinkel, Godar, Healy, Kearney, Kelly, Kim, Korgen, Lee, Levitan, Martus, Mathew, Natrajan, Ndjatou, Nyaboga, Nyamwange, Parras, Pavese, Perez, Rosar, Sabogal, Schwartz, C. Sheffield, Slaymaker, Snyder, Steinhart, Tardi, Verdicchio, Wagner, Waldron, Weil, Wicke

ABSENT: D’Haem, Mbogoni, McNeal, Swanson

GUESTS: Adeniran, Ambroise, Bolyai, Burns, Cohen, Daniel-Robinson, Fornarotto, Fuller, Fuller-Stanley, Goldstein, Gritsch, Hahn, Kubeyinje, Liautaud, Martinez, Martone, Miller, Noonan, Olaye, Potacco, Rabbitt,Refsland, Rosengart, Schrader, D. Sheffield, Trelisky

PRELIMINARIES: Chairperson Parras called the Senate to order at 12:31 PM. Martus and Pavese moved acceptance of the Agenda, which approved unanimously.

The draft minutes of the October 23, 2012 meeting, were moved and seconded by Snyder and Slaymaker. Since many senators were unable to read them prior to the meeting, Martus and Pavese’s motion that acceptance be postponed until the next meeting was approved unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS: Kelly gave advance notice of the New Jersey Campus Compact Faculty Institute for Service Learning and Civic Engagement to be held on March 8, 2013.

President Waldron gave an update on the Provost Search. Four finalists will be on campus on Tuesday, December 4th, Monday, December 10th, Tuesday, December 11th and Thursday, December 13th. The open meetings for the entire campus will be held each day from 3:30-4:45. The first one will be held in the Library Auditorium, the rest in Ballroom A. Martus asked if there were any feedback mechanisms, to which Waldron replied that there will be an anonymous online survey. To Finnegan’s question about reviewing the candidates’ credentials, Waldron said they will be posted online soon. There were more than 100 applicants from across the nation and seven were interviewed by the Committee. All of the finalists are from out-of-state.

CHAIR’S REPORT: Parras reported that the Provost has approved the Senate resolution on transfer credits and that he reiterated that the departments define the major.

Martinez has resigned from the Blue Ribbon Task Force, and Tina Lesher has been named to replace her. Kelly commented that different departments have different concerns about advising, and it seems to her that there may be an over-representation of members from departments that are not eager to keep advising. Waldron and Parras noted that the deans and the colleges made the recommendations for membership.

VICE-CHAIR’S REPORT: Falk-Romaine said that the final report from the last Ad Hoc Committee on Administrative Evaluations will be on the Agenda for discussion at the December 11th meeting.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES LIAISON REPORTS:

Godar, the Senate liaison to the Educational Policy and Student Development Committee, reported that four items were discussed: the Enrollment Management report, the Cleary (crimes on campus)
report, the new doctoral program in Counseling Psychology, and the NSSE report. The first two have already been disseminated to the campus community. In the discussion of the new program, the Board members indicated that they were seeking realistic budget estimates for all new programs and that they would not reject programs simply due to negative income in initial years. The NSSE report may have flaws, as some student segments may be underrepresented, particularly students who work, who may be the most likely not to reply.

Finnegan, the liaison to the Finance, Audit and Institutional Development Committee, reported that KPMG’s Fiscal Audit found no irregularities, and that WPU is in a favorable debt position (especially vis-à-vis our peers).

Institutional Advancement raised almost $4,000,000 last year, a 13% increase over the previous year. Their goal for this year is $4.1M. Social media are being used to contact alumni with the message that you are a student for a short time, but an alum forever. Undergraduate donors increased to over 5% -- higher than the national average of 4.2% -- and that the goal is 6.2%. The cost of raising money is approximately 50 cents per dollar raised. The goal is to reduce that to 25 cents. Verdicchio asked how the 51% compares with peers. Waldron said that it was 77 cents when she arrived and that the goal is to reach the national norm of 25 cents.

Tardi asked about a financial aid audit, but Finnegan said the topic was not raised at the meeting.

Kelly raised the issue of allotting room (not board) awards to strivers, not just high achievers, as a method of increasing retention. Korgen asked if there were research supporting this. Martone agreed with Kelly and said that approximately 50% of incoming students live on campus. He added that in order to appeal to more graduate students in this high rent area, residence halls have been renovated, and 7-9 more graduate students are now living in the dorms. Waldron and Martone noted that the campus culture is being changed to encourage students to give to the University, as in a Senior Gift. Our students are very generous in contributing to others – the homeless and disaster relief, for example – too all but ourselves. Bliss noted that it’s not the amount that you give, but the fact that you give that sets students in place for future fundraising. Kelly suggested that working students be surveyed about union membership and other affiliations.

ADVISEMENT AND REGISTRATION COUNCIL RESOLUTION: Martinez and Godar moved the Council’s resolution, noting that changes in advisement should be presented to the Senate before being implemented, and that such changes should not be done during the summer. Godar and Korgen amended by adding that such plans should be presented to the Senate for discussion “during the academic year.” The amendment was approved unanimously, as was the amended resolution.

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT: Cohen presented and commented upon the PowerPoint she used at the Town Hall Meeting. Among the points she highlighted: Fall 2012 enrollment is down by about .8%; undergraduate enrollment is stable, but graduate numbers fell by about 200 students. There is more diversity. The six-year graduation rate has increased from 46.5- 47.5%, largely due to the 120 credits graduation requirement. First year retention is up from 75.9 – 77.2%. Her department is tracking students over the summer to stop attrition. Transfer students now outnumber new admits: 1367 to 1240. There is a trend throughout New Jersey of students attending community colleges (which have experienced increasing enrollments) then transferring to four year institutions. EOF enrollments are stable at approximately 100/year.
When Cohen stated that the Sponsored Student Program had been eliminated, Tardi asked why this was done to the most successful group, graduation-wise. Cohen replied that that group’s retention rate approximates that of the entire student population, and that resources are being provided to support all students. Tardi added that part of that group’s success was its small size, careful monitoring and ongoing support – why take this cohort out? Cohen disagreed and said that having a special group will not improve retention, and that what we call the students is not important: we must help them all.

Steinhart asked what sort of strategies were planned to keep students over the summer. Cohen replied that the entire University must stay connected with students, not just her department. Faculty advisors, the Advisement Center and others must provide support. She also noted that new tuition bills and dismissal for academic standing also contribute to the attrition. Kim challenged Cohen’s numbers, but Cohen responded that her statistics are in line with the University Fact Book and that the State gets it numbers from the colleges.

Kelly said that it doesn’t matter what we call students, it’s what we do with them. She called upon WPU to honor its historic mission as a public institution and to identify best practices. She suggested that perhaps a longer grace period before deregistering students might work, especially since when this is done early it causes class sections to be cancelled – only to be restored later on or resulting in very large classes. She called for smaller, more meaningful analyses rather than just big ones. Cohen said that the registration process has been liberalized and that since 60% of our students take at least one remedial class, we must work with all students, not just a few hundred in special programs.

Verdicchio said there is good news – we’re getting better-prepared students and the Sponsored Students used to make up 28% of our student body – but there is bad news, too. Graduate enrollment has declined precipitously from 1700 to about 1000 students. We are becoming an undergraduate institution but are calling ourselves a university. We need a clear plan for graduate enrollment. Cohen said that our new Director of Graduate Admissions is making many improvements, but all New Jersey graduate programs are suffering since more and more employers and districts are no longer providing tuition assistance. She admitted that the process is cumbersome, but many people are working to improve it as quickly as possible.

Barrow asked if there is federal money for increased work study programs and special education programs. Schwartz said that we need quiet dorms. We are losing students to Montclair due to financial aid and dorm problems. Cohen said that if students have extraordinary circumstances, send them to her.

Finnegan and Cohen began to discuss some figures as time ran short. Finnegan and Kim’s motion to continue the discussion at the next Senate meeting passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The Faculty Senate adjourned at 1:47 PM.

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday December 11th at 12:30 PM in Ballroom C.

Respectfully submitted: Bill Duffy, Secretary

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