



Board of Trustees
Academic Affairs Committee

February 8, 2024

11:00 AM

President's Boardroom, Horace Mann Center

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing will also take place at the following link: <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/live>

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| 1. Call to Order | Trustee Martin, Committee Chair |
| 2. Approval of Minutes a. December 13, 2023 | Trustee Martin, Committee Chair |
| 3. Items for Information a. Update: Spring 2024 Enrollment b. Update: Recent Dean appointments | Dr. David Caruso, Interim Provost |
| 4. Items for Action a. Approval Master of Arts in History b. Approval of Honorary Degree Recipient | Dr. David Caruso, Interim Provost |
| 5. Items for Discussion a. Academic Advising | Dr. David Caruso, Interim Provost |

Attachments:

- a. Draft Minutes of December 13, 2023
- b. Spring 2024 Enrollment supporting documents
- c. Motion: Master of Arts in History and supporting documents
- d. Motion: Honorary Degree Recipient, Mary Lou McDonald and supporting documents



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Academic Affairs Committee

December 13, 2023

Minutes

Presidents Boardroom, Horace Mann Building

A live stream of the meeting for public viewing also took place on YouTube.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Committee Chair Dr. Robert Martin, Vice Chair Dr. Gloria Williams, Secretary William Reichelt, and Trustees Daniel Currier, and Board Chair Ali Salehi, ex-officio member, Trustee George Gilmer (9:15am)

MEMBERS PARTICIPATING REMOTELY: Trustee Madeline Landrau, Trustee George Gilmer (at start of meeting)

Also, present were Westfield State University President Dr. Linda Thompson, Provost Dr. David Caruso, and Dean of the School of Health, Natural Sciences and Human Services, Dr. Ziblim Abukari and Dean of the School of Business, Mathematics, Computing & Sustainability, Dr. Rebecca Morris.

Committee Chair Martin called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM and a roll call was taken of the committee members participating as listed above. It was announced that the meeting was being livestreamed and recorded.

MOTION made by Trustee Currier seconded by Trustee Reichelt and Trustee George Gilmore to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2023, meeting.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Trustee Williams | Yes |
| Trustee Reichelt | Yes |
| Trustee Currier | Yes |
| Trustee Gilmer | Yes |
| Trustee Martin | Yes |

There being no discussion, **ROLL CALL VOTE** passed motion unanimously.

Provost Remarks: Provost Caruso expressed his appreciation for his colleagues in Student Affairs that create a vast number of activities for the students which provide positive experiences when they are not in the classroom. These experiences enhance their academic achievement.

There are areas that need to be addressed as noted in the NECHE Accreditation report by January 2025. Academic Affairs is working on making improvements in the following areas:

Student Learning and Academic Program Assessment

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) is for undergraduate degree programs (major) only. Outcomes address the key or most important things a graduating student should be expected to know or be able to do in a particular degree program. There should be between 5 and 10 learning outcomes for each program. Each SLO should clearly measure only one aspect of knowledge or behavioral skill. The metric for a successful outcome should be high and we should not expect that 100% of students are successful. For example, “88% of graduates can demonstrate appropriate implementation of a particular skill.” could be an appropriate indicator of student success. The assessment is run by the faculty themselves since it is part of their contract, and the data is turned into the office of Institutional Research and Assessment. The Executive Director of Institutional Research and Assessment, Jeffrey Xavier, recently joined the leadership team of our department and he has a lot of experience and training in program evaluation research, which is what SLO is. He is a support for the faculty as well as the Deans and the Provost office. The faculty have been given the new structure and will be supported during the process.

If the assessment shows that the students did not achieve a standard, the faculty can then go back and make changes such as modifying the curriculum. This step is called “Closing the Loop”. Since we will have record of the steps that we followed and how we improved, we will be able to present this information to NECHE. The focus is really on the program and the effect it has on the students not on the achievement. The model we will be using to obtain this information every year will make it easier to follow each time it is done. It’s a system that is in place to help the faculty with deadlines to ensure the process continues throughout the academic year. NECHE expects the results to be made public.

Concentrations

Over the years the faculty have found it to be advantageous to add concentrations to the majors. It’s a way to lure students to a particular major if they are unsure of their career path. It can be a way of recruiting potential students or even be a reason students remain in school to explore their education options.

Our presentation of the field of studies always lists majors, concentrations and minors, which shows the students that we have lots of programs to offer. Concentrations are typically 2-5 classes that are added to the major or can be an elective for any major and it will be listed on the student’s transcript. Students can show that they have more in-depth knowledge in their major because they have taken certain concentrations. Some students don’t take any concentrations as they may not know what direction they want to take in that field. If a particular concentration is popular, it may lead to the creation of new programs/majors which is then brought to the Board of Higher Education for approval.

NECHE suggested reviewing the list of concentrations since we have so many. If there is low interest in certain concentrations, then a decision in the coming years might need to be made to eliminate courses. This would need to be done by the Deans, faculty working with their department Chairs and the incoming Provost. We would have data to support these decisions.

GCE Restart/Organizations

The elimination of the College of Graduate and Continuing Education (CGCE) has not been effective for several reasons including that graduate and continuing education programs are distributed across the four schools. To establish effective and efficient oversight and management, Provost Caruso proposes to establish a Division of Graduate and Continuing Education (DGCE) which will provide leadership for the core functions. The leadership team will focus on program development and will be held accountable and responsible. This team will consist of a Dean to oversee the Graduate and Continuing Education programs, Administrative Assistant to the Dean, Director/Asst. Dean for Continuing Education and Director/Asst. Dean for Lifelong Education and two Administrative Assistants for Assist. Deans. These positions can be funded from the (DGCE budget) Currently there are Interim Deans in place, and it will be up to the incoming Provost to decide how to make these positions permanent. Funding is available for these positions already.

Certain offices will remain responsible for “back office functions” not only for Undergraduate but for Graduate students such as Student Accounts/billing and Registrar. Admissions for DGCE will be with Enrollment Management. Collaboration with these offices and the DGCE will be important for this to be effective.

A comprehensive study was done by two faculty members of Graduate and Continuing Education which was requested by the President to gather information and feedback from the faculty to see if putting the DGCE back in place would be supported. Their assessment showed the need to bring back DGCE, which is used by many universities throughout the country. The faculty have been asked for feedback on whether this structure and these functions will adequately support the work that they need to do.

MOTION made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Gilmore to approve the granting of Faculty Emeritus effective December 31, 2023, to Mr. David A. Laing, Physical Education. **Motion passed unanimously.**

There being no further business, **MOTION** made by Trustee Reichelt, seconded by Trustee Williams to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**
Meeting adjourned at 10:04 AM.

Attachments presented at this meeting:

- a. Draft Minutes of October 11, 2023
- b. Student Learning Outcomes Assessment Template
- c. Report on Concentrations
- d. Academic Leadership of Graduate & Continuing Education
- e. Motion – Faculty Emeritus
- f. Faculty Emeritus Motion supporting letter

Secretary’s Certificate

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the approved minutes of the Westfield State University Board of Trustees Academic Affairs Committee meeting held on December 13, 2023.

William Reichelt, Secretary

Date

| Academic Year 2023-2024 | | |
|--|---|---|
| Enrollment Data for Registered Students - Undergraduate Full/Part time and Graduate | | |
| | Fall 2023 Census as of 9/29/2023 | Spring 2024 Census as of 1/26/2024 |
| Undergraduate Full-time Students | | |
| New First Years | 797 | 19 |
| New Transfers | 213 | 75 |
| Returning/ Reenrolling | 45 | 23 |
| Continuing Students | 2148 | 2733 |
| Visiting | 6 | 4 |
| Total Undergraduate Full-time | 3209 | 2854 |
| | | |
| Undergraduate Part-time Students | | |
| New Second Bachelor's | 10 | 3 |
| New Transfers | 6 | 46 |
| New First Years | 96 | 2 |
| Returning/ Reenrolling | 51 | 63 |
| Continuing Students | 325 | 355 |
| Quick Admits | 270 | 226 |
| Housing Only Students Registered | 16 | 17 |
| Undergraduate Certificates | 3 | 3 |
| Total Undergraduate Part-time | 777 | 715 |
| | | |
| Total Undergraduate Students | 3986 | 3569 |
| | | |
| Graduate Students | | |
| First Time Graduate | 225 | 107 |
| New Post Baccalaureate | 21 | 7 |
| Continuing Students | 383 | 554 |
| Graduate Certificates | 3 | 6 |
| Quick Admits | 50 | 54 |
| Total Graduate Students | 682 | 728 |
| Total Student Enrollment for Spring 2024 | 4668 | 4297 |

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| New First Years | New Incoming first year class. |
| New Transfers | New transfers in their first semester at WSU. |
| New Second Bachelors | Students entering their first semester for a Second Bachelor's Degree. |
| First Time Graduate | Graduate Students enrolled in their first semester in the graduate program. |
| New Post Baccalaureate | New students enrolled in the first semester Post Baccalaureate Program. |
| Returning/Reenrolling | Matriculated students who Stopped Out for a period of time and returning the university. |
| Continuing Students | Matriculated students that continue from the previous semesters. |
| Quick Admits | Non- Matriculated students who pay to take a course in a semester. |



Board of Trustees

February 8, 2024

MOTION

The Academic Affairs committee recommends approval to the full Board:
The granting of a Master of Arts in History effective February 8, 2024.

Dr. Robert Martin, Chair

DATE

Master's Degree Program change:

The History and Philosophy Department propose changing the current Masters in Education, History, non-licensure degree to a Master of Arts in History.

Current program description:

The program is designed is to provide qualified students with the opportunity to pursue graduate-level training in American history. Students in this program may be teachers seeking an advanced degree, or others whose primary interest is in receiving a master's degree with a concentration in history. The academic goal of the program is three-fold:

1. to increase the students' knowledge of the facts of American history,
2. to provide the students with a familiarity with questions of interpretation of major aspects of American history,
3. to help students develop expertise in historical research and evaluation.

This program does not lead to teaching licensure.

New program description:

The program is designed is to provide qualified students with the opportunity to pursue graduate-level training in the study of history. While students in this program may be teachers seeking an advanced degree, a background in education is not required. This program is designed for people whose primary interest is in receiving a master of arts degree in history. The academic goal of the program is three-fold:

1. To increase the students' knowledge of the facts related to historical developments, including the significance of important events, institutions, people, cultures and ideas throughout the world,
2. to provide the students with a familiarity with questions of interpretation and methods of study of major aspects of history,
3. to help students develop expertise in historical research and question design as well as evaluation of primary and secondary historical materials.

This program does not lead to teaching licensure.

New Program admissions and course of study

Master of Arts in History

Admission Requirements

Admission decisions are made by the department's graduate program coordinator and graduate committee members.

- Bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university
- At least 18 semester credit hours in history or related humanities courses as assessed by graduate advisors.
- A cumulative average of 3.0 in history.

Program Requirements

- Completion of 30 credits;
- Six graduate credits reflecting coursework appropriate to the degree may be transferred from other graduate-level institutions, at the discretion of the department's graduate committee;
- Satisfactory completion of a master's thesis which must be approved by the thesis director in consultation with at least one other member of the graduate faculty. Only faculty members who teach graduate courses may participate in the evaluation of the completed thesis.

Specific Requirements

a) History Content - 24 Credits

Completion of eight 06xx-level courses in history. A minimum of three-credits each must be completed in World or United States History.

Note: Students may take multiple sections of 06xx-level courses provided the topic is different (e.g., HIST 0650 Topics in World History: Latin America or HIST 0650 Topics in World History: Asia)

b) Research and Analysis - 6 Credits

Research and analysis, as evidenced by completion of six graduate credits as follows:

HIST 0698 - Thesis Research I Credits: 3

HIST 0699 - Thesis Research II Credits: 3

Note: Students will form a thesis committee of at least two graduate faculty members consisting of the thesis director and another graduate faculty member.



Board of Trustees

February 8, 2024

MOTION

The Academic Affairs committee recommends approval to the full Board:
The granting of the Honorary Degree to Mary Lou McDonald effective February 8, 2024.

Dr. Robert Martin, Chair

DATE

Mary Lou McDonald

Mary Lou McDonald is Leader of Sinn Féin and Teachta Dála for the Dublin Central constituency. Mary Lou is married to Martin and they have two young children, Iseult and Gerard. She is proud to represent the people of Dublin Central where she has a reputation for hard work and championing the needs of her constituency both locally and nationally.

Prior to becoming Leader of Sinn Féin in February 2018 Mary Lou was Deputy Leader of the party. Following her election to the Dáil in 2011 Mary Lou was Sinn Féin's Spokesperson for Public Expenditure and Reform and on her re-election in 2016 Sinn Féin's All-Ireland Spokesperson for Mental Health and Suicide Prevention. She was a prominent member of the Public Accounts Committee between 2011 and 2017 holding Ministers and senior civil servants to account. She has also served on the Joint Oireachtas Committees for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Future of Mental Health.

She was an MEP for Dublin from 2004 to 2009 and during her time in the European Parliament Mary Lou was a prominent member of the Employment and Social Affairs committee and Civil Liberties committee.

Educated in Trinity College, Dublin, the University of Limerick and Dublin City University she studied English Literature, European Integration Studies and Human Resource Management. She previously worked as a consultant for the Irish Productivity Centre, a researcher for the Institute of European Affairs and a trainer in the trade union sponsored Partnership Unit of the Educational and Training Services Trust.

Mary Lou's Contact Details:

Email

marylou.mcdonald@oireachtas.ie

Dáil office

Leinster House
Kildare Street
Dublin 2
Telephone: (01) 618 3230

Cabra Constituency Office

58 Fassaugh Ave
Cabra, Dublin 7
(01) 868 3934

North City Constituency Office

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

December 19, 2023

Members of the Honorary Degree Committee

I am excited to write you about my desire to recognize Mary Louise McDonald, Deputy Director of Sinn Fein in the Republic of Ireland. We have invited her to commencement to present her with an honorary degree at our commencement on May 17, 2024.

Mary Louise McDonald of Dublin, Ireland has served honorably as Leader of the Opposition in the Irish Parliament, President of the Sinn Féin political party. She participated as Teachta Dála for the Dublin Central constituency, was a member of the European Parliament. She has proven invaluable to the deliberations and policy-making as the leader of Sinn Féin and serving her constituency. Mary Louise was a prominent member of the Public Accounts Committee between 2011 and 2017 holding Ministers and senior civil servants to account. She has honorably served on the Joint Oireachtas Committees for Public Expenditure and Reform and the Future of Mental Health. I admire her dedication and enthusiasm for Irish unity, ending partition, national freedom and social justice has received notable attention and has framed her devotion to combating poverty, racism and social inequities within her community. I believe her background and activities align with Westfield and ask that you join me in recognizing this amazing person.

Warmly,

Linda

The Horace Mann Center (413) 572-5201
333 Western Avenue (413) 579-3030 (f)
P.O. Box 1630 westfield.ma.edu
Westfield, MA
01086-1630