I. Call to Order
Chair Kelly Madole called a special session of the WKU Senate Executive Committee to order on Monday, July 23, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. in the Wetherby Administration Building. A quorum was present.

The following members were present:
Francesca Sunkin, Darbi Haynes-Lawrence, Pitt Derryberry, Eric Reed, Patricia Minter, Charles Borders, Guy Jordan, Kelly Madole, Mac McKerral, David Zimmer, Gordon Emslie, John Gottfried

Alternates present were: Yvonne Petkus for Mary Wolinski

II. Old Business
1. WKU Colonnade Program Implementation Committee
   - The SEC approved the Colonnade Implementation Committee appointments.

III. New Business:
1. Chair Kelly Madole passed chair responsibilities for the Faculty Senate to Mac McKerral
2. A New Academic Calendar Concept for WKU
   - Provost Emslie:
     ○ This is not an official proposal and not set in stone
     ○ This is work in progress and for discussion
     ○ Definitely NOT a fait accompli
     ○ Goal is to present the idea at the August convocation, which will prompt broader discussion
     ○ A committee was formed to discuss the concept and no real strong reasons emerged that it could not be done.
     ○ The idea has been presented to the deans
     ○ It will be presented at the Board of Regents retreat (informational only)
     ○ Provost seeking input, feedback, and said the concept needs tweaking.
     ○ The bi-term concept would be an option, not mandatory
     ○ Provost Emslie spoke to Elizabeth D. Capaldi, provost at Arizona State University, where a bi-term schedule operates in tandem with a semester schedule.
   - Questions asked, points made during the SEC discussion:
     ▪ Capaldi (ASU) advised letting faculty endorse the concept (or not) with their teaching schedule choices, not forcing it upon them.
     ▪ At ASU the standard teaching load is a 2/2, unlike ours
     ▪ How will “optional” be defined by unit, class, etc.?
- Why is this being considered at all?
- Minimal research exists on the concept
- Potential for real immersion in a subject
- Pedagogical advantages if done properly
- Advantages for movement to graduation, reducing costs to students
- Positive budget implications
- An option for those who want to accelerate their graduation and pay less or take less time, but those who want a traditional program can have it.
- Retirees and part-time instructors can teach more hours per semester
- Time issues: 3-hour course about 2,240 minutes. Many options for how to arrange this time; Could be 80 minutes 4 days per week, or some other arrangement
- Same-student comparisons show GPAs average higher with bi-term
- Faculty reporting dates, commencement dates, etc., will not change.
- Winter and summer still considered overload — no added workload
- Studies show good student response to bi-terms
- Downside: missed class days have greater impact on performance
- Provost challenged a comment that bi-terms will result in less in-depth study (SEE REPORT)
- Labs and studios tend to work well with this system but there could be pressure on labs/studios, and faculty assigned to them
- Students, particularly those in skills classes, can benefit from meeting every day — repetition, habit building, etc., but upper-division classes, practicums, etc., require more out-of-class
- Must be a class-level decision (at least in some disciplines)
- How will the tuition and fees work? Per credit hour?
- Could lead to negative perceptions of the university, could hurt WKU’s reputation and recruiting (a University of Phoenix model)
- Doesn’t seem to offer valid benefits
- Doesn’t sound like it will increase student engagement; seven weeks is a very short time period to really engage students
- Could students and faculty teach both within a term, or would they have to do one or the other?
- How does this affect faculty research publication output?
- GPA does tend to rise with this system, but is learning increased?
- Research shows that students have higher performance in subsequent classes
- Can we focus on other means to increase graduation rates?
- Tuition and cost considerations were not the driver but have become part of the discussion
- There is already bi-term option in practice (particularly at South Campus)
- Why would we make this change at all if it weren’t going to be campus-wide?
- Wouldn’t it present pressure on faculty who don’t want to change, when other classes are offered this way

○ Going forward:
  ○ More discussion needed
  ○ Should emphasize “optional.”

- A motion was made and seconded to take a straw vote on whether the bi-term idea is ready for presentation to the full faculty. Motion passed.
- STRAW VOTE: Is the proposal ready for presentation? 4 yes, 4 no, 2 abstentions
- Provost Emslie asked how he should move forward and how he should improve the presentation before moving forward? Responses: too many unanswered questions, too vague; presenting this at the August convocation would make it sound like a fait accompli; need to take more time with this, which is an idea of a magnitude larger than the General Education reorganization; need time to consider the ramifications

Motion to adjourn passed

Respectfully submitted by John Gottfried, Secretary