In September 2014, the University Senate passed a resolution creating an ad hoc committee on e-devices in the classroom. Ann Atkinson, Jamie Begian, Matthew Dabros, Donald Ferguson, Dan Goble, Chin-Wen Huang, Kiely Hultgren, Jeanette Lupinacci, Elisabeth Morel, and Elizabeth Popiel were appointed to the committee. The committee’s charge was to (1) elect a chair; (2) conduct a wide survey of e-device policies at other universities and obtain published policy statements from AAUP and other relevant organizations and agencies, as appropriate; (3) summarize and report its findings to the University Senate; (4) solicit input from faculty, staff, and students via several open forums; and (5) propose a policy to the University Senate.

Below is a brief description of the steps the committee took to fulfill its charge:

1. Elect a Chair
   A. Matthew Dabros was elected chair at the committee’s first meeting in November 2014.

2. Conduct a wide survey of e-device policies at other universities and obtain published policy statements form AAUP and other relevant organizations and agencies, as appropriate
   A. The committee limited its survey to the AAUP and the Comparison Peer Group chosen by President Schmotter on October 22, 2013: Christopher Newport University, Fitchburg State University, Framingham State University, Frostburg State University, Keene State College, Plymouth State University, Rhode Island College, Rutgers University (Camden), Westfield State University, and Worcester State University.
   B. Although these organizations have, in general, established acceptable use policies for university computing resources, they have not typically promulgated policies regarding the use of personal e-devices in the classroom. The exception is Rutgers University (Camden), whose policy focuses in part on balancing instructor discretion in the classroom, student freedom in the classroom, and relevant state and federal regulations.

3. Summarize and report its findings to the University Senate
   A. Matthew Dabros reported these findings to the University Senate at its January 2015 meeting. In addition, he stated that the committee would hold open forums on this issue and was preparing a survey to be distributed to students, faculty, and staff that would guide the committee in drafting the policy.

4. Solicit input from faculty, staff, and students via several open forums
   A. Surveys on e-devices in the classrooms were distributed to students, faculty, and staff on April 27, 2015. Faculty identified a number of (sometimes discipline-specific) benefits and problems associated with e-devices, and 88% supported a policy that would permit instructors to establish their own policy on e-devices in the classrooms so long as that policy was stated on the class syllabus. On this latter point, 50% of students reported that they found having a policy regarding e-devices in the classroom on instructors’ syllabi
helpful, 12% found this policy to be unhelpful, 32% were indifferent, and 7% had never received such a policy.

B. The committee held two open forums on e-devices in the classroom. The first was held on Wednesday, September 30, 2015 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in SC 202, and the second was held on Thursday, October 1, 2015 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in CC 212. In addition, Matthew Dabros solicited input from the Student Government Association by appearing before that body at its meeting on October 23, 2015.

5. Propose a policy to the University Senate
   A. Based on its examination of policies articulated by other relevant organizations; its survey of faculty, staff, and students; and the feedback it received from the Open Forums, the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on E-Devices in the Classroom proposes the following Western Connecticut State University Policy on the Use of E-Devices in the Classroom:

   “It is each instructor’s responsibility to establish a policy on the acceptable use of e-devices for his or her courses and communicate that policy to students on the written syllabus at the beginning of each semester. Instructors should be aware that Federal and/or state law may require the use of e-devices in the classroom as an approved accommodation through AccessAbility Services.”