

### Grades

As a result of an ASG resolution to modify the grading system by using plus-grades (A<sup>+</sup>, B<sup>+</sup>, etc.), but not minus-grades, the Academic Rules and Requirements Committee of the Academic Council has discussed a resolution to use both plus- and minus-grades. The Committee will vote on this resolution at its next meeting.

The WP/WF period now runs from the 6th week of the semester to the 8th week. The Academic Rules and Requirements Committee has voted to recommend to the Academic Council that this period be extended to run from the 6th to the 12th week.

### Alteration of Change-of-Grade Policy

The Senate passed a resolution, presented by Ron Seeger, asking the President to direct that any proposed changes in policy regarding academic rules and requirements be referred to the Faculty Senate.

This resolution was prompted by the action of the Council of Academic Deans in altering the change-of-grade policy without consulting the faculty. (The alteration in the policy was made because, in certain cases, the change-of-grade power had been abused. The faculty was not consulted because the alteration was considered to be a bookkeeping, rather than an academic, matter.)

Vice-President Davis informed the Senate that he will advise the President that, in the future, requests for such policy changes should be sent to the Academic Rules and Requirements Committee of the Academic Council, and also to either the Chairperson of the Faculty Senate, or to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Senate.

### Academic Freedom and Book-Banning

Harry Robe reports that a representative of the Kentucky Education Association who was present at the last COSFL meeting suggested consultation between the KEA and the higher-education community on the subject of academic freedom and book-banning. Teachers in the public-school system are experiencing pressure on the creation-evolution issue.

### Evaluation of Administrators

COSFL has passed a resolution that university faculty members should evaluate administrators regularly.

At the request of President Zacharias, Dean Elmer Gray is collecting information to document practices for evaluating administrators on other campuses.

### Football Funding

The President has informed the Senate that the deans and Vice-President Davis have noted the Senate's comments (requesting that academic programs be



funded at a parity with the football program) vis-a-vis the increase in expenditures on varsity football, and have made no recommendations. He assured the Senate that the Board of Regents studied the football funding question from every perspective and made its decision only after thorough debate of the issues.

### "Distinguished Professor" Title

The President concurs with the Senate's recommendation to establish special faculty positions that recognize and reward distinguished performance; the current development policy has provisions for positions that confer special status on faculty members.

The deans and Vice-President Davis have recommended that action on the Senate's proposal to establish the position of "Distinguished Professor" be postponed. Being considered are means to establish special positions by raising private funds; suggestions regarding ways to improve our effectiveness in fund-raising activities are invited.

### Privileges for Retired Faculty Members

The Professional Responsibilities and Concerns Committee has made an interim report on this subject. Among the perquisites already available to retired faculty are library privileges, faculty discounts at the bookstore, access to recreational facilities, enrollment in classes with faculty scholarships, credit union privileges, discounts on tickets to University athletic events, the dental and out-patient services available to non-retired faculty members, and campus parking privileges.

Other possible benefits being considered by the committee include office space, secretarial help, part-time teaching (up to quarter-time), discounts on tickets to cultural events, and establishment of an Office of Retired Personnel Concerns.

### Fulbright and Other Honorary Grants

The Senate passed a resolution that faculty who receive appointments as Fulbright scholars bring not only honor to themselves but reflect credit on the University. If they take a leave of absence rather than a sabbatical to accept such an appointment, they are not allowed to count the time served as Fulbright Scholars toward the years needed to qualify for future sabbaticals, in effect penalizing them for bringing this recognition to the university. To eliminate this inequity, the Faculty Senate urges that non-sabbatical Fulbright scholars be allowed to count the time of their leave toward qualifying for a sabbatical. (Fulbright here is being used as a kind of generic term for various other grants that faculty may be awarded from foundations such as Rockefeller, Carnegie, Ford, Guggenheim and the like.)

### Faculty Vitae

In order to avoid unnecessary and duplicative requests for vitae, the college deans have agreed to establish centralized systems for recording and updating faculty vitae similar to the Potter College system, which uses the College's word processor. New vita requests may still be necessary should special grant, research, or honors opportunities require a format different from that routinely employed at Western.



### Summer School Survey

The Faculty Status and Welfare Committee has sent a questionnaire regarding summer school programs to 33 neighboring institutions of higher education. The questionnaire dealt with such matters as the duration of the summer session, the academic credit given for it, the average teaching load for summer assignments, and the salary scale used. Twenty-one of the questionnaires were returned. The tabulated results have been distributed to members of the Senate. Faculty members interested in reading the report may obtain it from their senators.

### Committee Appointments

Peggy Keck has been appointed to the Insurance Committee. President Zacharias has requested nominations of faculty members for service on the committee to study incentives for early retirement.

### Thanks to Buckman

Joan Krenzin read the following letter to the Faculty Senate:

The Faculty Senate has requested that I express their collective appreciation for the work you have done as Faculty Regent for the past nine years. To that I want to add my personal vote of thanks for a job well done.

Through your establishment of an advisory committee, through your discussions with the Faculty Senate, and through your conversations with faculty members, you have done an excellent job of eliciting faculty opinion. Your comments and votes at board meetings have always seemed to represent well the faculty views.

The faculty was pleased to note that your representation did not falter when faculty views were unpopular. Certainly a special thank-you is due for some rather difficult battles you had to lead early in your tenure in office.

We appreciate the many extra hours you have put in in reading large quantities of documents, attending Regents' meetings held off-campus, attending meetings of all the faculty regents in Frankfort, reporting to the Faculty Senate, and listening to the many concerns that have been brought to you by individual faculty members.

You have served us well, and we thank you for it. We wish you the best of luck in your future endeavors.

The Senate responded with a standing ovation. After the Senate meeting, a reception was given for Buckman at the Faculty House, to honor him for his 9 years of service.

### Article

DREAMS, IDLE DREAMS.....

E. Margaret Howe

It was probably raining on December 10th, 1981, when the Registrar sent a memo to all academic Department Heads stating that the Council of Academic Deans had approved a revised procedure for change of grades and exceptions to the class



drop/add schedule. The memo indicated that from spring of 1982 the procedure would require the signature of the Department Head in addition to that of the Instructor. The rationale given on the memo was that this would "improve communication" and "provide for greater consistency among units within the university".

As rain slowly drains to the riverbeds, so this information slowly filtered to the academic departments. By the beginning of the fall semester of 1982 some faculty were starting to ask questions. These questions were posed at the October 14th Senate meeting and appeared in the minutes as follows--

1. Why was the change necessary?
2. Why were procedures that affected faculty made by the Council of Deans without consulting the Senate Academic Affairs Committee?

Answers to these questions have not been forthcoming so one can only dream....

Why was the change necessary? Well, there must have been some abuse of the system by faculty to necessitate this direct intervention. Let us suppose that a tearful student informs his professor that the D grade he so clearly deserved stands between him and his chosen career. He has three times been placed on academic probation (in itself an issue which should be addressed) and is now destined to lose the benefits of a university education, not to mention the grant money involved. Overcome with compassion, the professor agrees to change the D to a C (after all, the student did his best) and the appropriate form is filed with the registrar. Clearly this violates the rights of all other students who genuinely earned a C. Certainly it should be discouraged. And if this kind of thing has been widespread it should be exposed.

One wonders, incidentally, from what sources of information this data might have been gleaned. Surely the large number of grade changes alone did not lead the Academic Deans to such conclusions? That aside, one would have to conclude that faculty cannot be trusted to act responsibly in this area. So, like unruly puppies, they must be leashed in by a strong hand (that of the Department Head) without their actually being told what the reason is for such restrictive action.

But what if the large increase in grade changes was due, after all, to other kinds of pressure? Is there the slightest chance that a Department Head - or even a Dean - might pressure a faculty member into changing a grade? Perhaps the change of this one grade would qualify a student for a university award, or for a particular graduate school.... Has anyone ever heard of an athletic coach who brought influence to bear in this area? Athletes after all must maintain a certain academic standard in order to retain a scholarship.... And if this is so, will the addition of the signature of the Department Head be of any significance whatsoever? Of course, as no-one ever did communicate the reasons for the initial concern, it is not possible to pass any meaningful judgement on the corrective measure taken.

And now to the second question--why was the measure not placed before the Senate Academic Affairs Committee - or, for that matter, why did it not even go through the Academic Council? Again one can only dream, but is it just possible that this policy was imposed "from above" because it was strongly suspected that the measure would not be approved by the faculty - or at least not until a much



clearer statement was forthcoming concerning the nature of the abuse? And if that is a correct assumption, the implications are far-reaching. Are faculty consulted only on issues concerning which they are likely to assent with the prior judgment of administrative personnel? Are they precluded from participation in the discussion of issues which it is thought they are likely to oppose?

It seems to me that on March 17th, 1983, the sun finally began to shine. The Faculty Senate has committed itself to furnish recommendations on policies and procedures relating to faculty responsibilities and to academic freedom. Accordingly, on this date the Senate approved a resolution which reads as follows--

"Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate asks the President of Western Kentucky University to direct that any proposed change of policy regarding academic rules and requirements be referred to the Faculty Senate."

If the President so directs, we might now expect that in the future faculty will be informed of such issues long before policies are implemented. This opens up the possibility of action when it is necessary - and action counts for a lot more than idle dreams.



**FACULTY SENATE**  
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**NEWSLETTER**