
FACULTY SENATE NEWSLETTER

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MEETING SUMMARY



Faculty Status and Welfare

Barry Brunson reported that the 10-month payment option is still under review. The latest news is that faculty insurance would be in effect for the full year even if faculty members elected to receive their salaries over ten months rather than twelve.

Barry's committee has also been considering the perennial problem of parking. As usual, most complaints involve faculty dependents taking up spots that teachers would prefer to occupy themselves. Barry was ready to present two motions concerning parking, but the meeting swept by him before he could get them on the floor. One is a "moral gesture," which simply asks the President to remind faculty who let dependents use the second car to park in faculty slots that their behavior is inconsiderate. The other is a plan that goes well beyond mere ethical persuasion.

According to this second motion, the university should issue different colored stickers to faculty with only one parking sticker and faculty with two. For people with one sticker nothing would change, but people with two stickers would also get a third token to clip to their rear-view mirrors. Cars with such "fleet" decals would be legally parked only if the rear-view mirror token was in place. This way a person could continue to drive a second car on occasion, but only if he brought along the detachable rear-view mirror permit, leaving the other car off campus. Police would look at each car sporting a "fleet" decal to see that the detachable token was in place. If it wasn't, they would ticket the car for parking in an improper zone.

The idea, of course, is to leave faculty eligible to register two cars if they need to, but to limit them to parking only one of them at a time on campus. Barry's motion will undoubtedly come up for a vote at the next senate meeting, January 17. If you have strong feelings about it, please attend and make them known.

Finally, Barry said his committee supports Western's proposed Early Retirement Option, but has several questions regarding details of the plan. The fourteen questions Barry presented are given below with the senate discussion of Early Retirement.

Professional Responsibilities and Concerns

Margaret Howe said her committee is still looking into scholarships for academic merit and will have a report at a future meeting. Another current concern is the Purdue Cafeteria Evaluations, especially the university "core" questions, which have attracted a lot of fire. Many faculty feel these five questions--especially the egregious last two, which ask if the course is among the best the student has ever taken and if the instructor is among the best he has ever known--are nearly worthless; but several department heads still use them to evaluate teaching.

Aside from objections to these questions qua questions, it is possible to doubt their effectiveness as "core" items. Because the results of Purdue evaluations are known only to the faculty members evaluated and their department heads, no "core" items can produce a university-wide comparison of teaching effectiveness, so it is hard to see a need for such items in the first place. And in fact there really is no university "core.". Some departments have their own core items, which may or may not include some or all of the university choices. More interestingly, a considerable number of Western faculty do not come under the Purdue system at all.

As Margaret pointed out, the common notion that no one can avoid the Purdue evaluation is wrong. In fact, she herself did not return the preliminary data sheet to Purdue this year and so got no forms for the courses she is teaching. Next spring, when you and I are hesitating to open the fatal envelope, Margaret will have nothing to fear--in her case there won't be an envelope. According to Jay Sloan, approximately 10% of Western's faculty, about 40 teachers, did not return their preliminary forms and so did not participate in Purdue last year. Not only that, but about 5% of all the classes for which evaluation forms were issued were never heard from again. If evaluation forms are not returned, there is no fall-back system. The class in question simply escapes evaluation.

It was such loopholes and flaws that caused Margaret to move recently that the university abandon the costly Purdue system and develop its own teaching evaluation procedure. This time, she moved that the core items be dropped. The motion carried by a hand vote.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Tom Coohill told the senate that a recent meeting of the Associated Student Government formally supported the senate's October resolution in favor of a freeze on athletic budgets. Incidentally, David Lee and his group are still working on the athletics issue. In particular, they are trying to get a complete breakdown of athletic costs, trying to determine whether good athletic teams really draw students and general alumni support, and trying to assess the effect of Western's athletic emphasis on the rest of the university. Anyone with something to contribute should contact David (3841). There is more on athletics below, under "Western and the NCAA."

NEW BUSINESS

Perhaps appropriately, December's theme was Western's proposed Early Retirement Option, substantially the document printed in last month's newsletter. On hand to answer questions and lead discussion were Vice President Haynes, Jim Tomes, and Bob Pulsinelli.

Dr. Haynes led off. He pointed out that the typical faculty member brings home only about 70% of his contract salary and under Western's plan special retirement people might have more actual dollars to spend than they had when they were full-time employees and subject to the whole battery of deductions. Eastern Kentucky's plan is more liberal, paying 50% of previous salary rather than 37.5% for half-time teaching in semi-retirement, but Western's incentive is adequate and more in line with what the university can afford and still finance new positions on the entry level.

Another way of looking at Western's 37.5% salary for teaching six hours a semester is to realize that this reduced teaching is less than half a full-time load, since many of the additional chores full-timers undertake would not be expected of people on early retirement.

The Council of Deans made one alteration to the plan as originally proposed. The eligibility requirements were dropped, making everyone continuously eligible to apply for early retirement, though obviously such a move would make better financial sense for older faculty than for others.

The floor was opened for questions, most of which focused on issues raised in the Faculty Status and Welfare Committee's list of concerns, which had been distributed earlier. Here are the committee's questions, each one followed by what seemed to be the consensus answer.

- 1) Could we have a concise statement about eligibility? As the plan is presently amended, anyone is eligible to apply. Acceptance in individual cases will necessarily be influenced by the university's interests and current priorities.
- 2) Why is Western's incentive part-time salary lower than Eastern's? Because 37.5% would allow early-retirees to approximate their earlier salaries and be more in keeping with what the university could afford. Early retirement is not a plan to reduce faculty. Most retirees would be replaced by entry-level faculty, though not all would be in the same area as the faculty members they replaced. Western's salary proposal would allow better than Eastern's for these replacement costs and at the same time allow more people to participate. Besides, some schools with the same basic plan pay as little as 30%.
- 3) Is it illegal to prepay salary due after June 30 of the retirement year to maximize benefits? No. In fact the 10-month payment option now under study would do this automatically.

- 4) Why are eligibility requirements more stringent than existing KTRS policies? They no longer are. Under the current version of the plan, anyone is eligible to apply.
- 5) Will Western provide a "financial impact study" for people interested in applying? Sure.
- 6) Is life insurance continued during the five-year period? No.
- 7) Will Social Security benefits be reduced because of "post-retirement" teaching? Yes, but probably very little.
- 8) If Social Security deletes the five lowest paid years in determining benefits, wouldn't these part-time, post-retirement years hurt? Probably not. It's likely that 37.5% of a retiree's final salary is still higher than the five lowest paid years of his or her working career.
- 9) Does KTRS supplement Medicare? Yes. If the retiree is too young for Medicare, how good is the KTRS plan? It's better than Western's for most things, but it might pay less for a really catastrophic illness.
- 10) Are KTRS deductions continued while one is teaching part-time? Yes.
- 11) Will this plan raise general KTRS rates? Yes, but not much in view of the size of the pool.
- 12) Is it fair to give summer school priority to potential early retirees? Maybe not. This issue would be best handled on the department level.
- 13) How much money will Western save by this plan? Probably not a great deal, maybe none. Where will the money be spent? On replacement faculty, but perhaps in different programs.
- 14) Are Social Security deductions continued while one is teaching part-time? Yes.

Discussion continued, especially regarding the 37.5% part-time teaching salary in Western's plan. Larry Elliot eventually made a motion that the senate recommend the figure be raised to 50%, like Eastern's. The motion passed by hand vote just before a quorum was lost and the meeting adjourned.

An Unfortunate Acronym

Tom Coohill submitted this resolution from the Faculty Senate of Ohio University reported in this week's New Yorker;

1. The Retirement Incentive Program is henceforth to be known as the Early Retirement Incentive Program (E.R.I.P.) to avoid what some considered an unfortunate reading of the original acronym.

Spring Study Day?

Joan Krenzin tells us that the Spring Schedule Bulletin is in error. Classes will be held on May 1st and 2nd. There will not be a day off for study as there was this semester.

Western and the NCAA

In the recent debate over Western's athletic budget, several faculty members showed uncertainty about just what the university's situation is with regard to athletic spending. John Minton was good enough to write up a description of Western's present NCAA membership status and the policies that have led to current athletic budgets. As Dr. Minton's letter makes clear, NCAA regulations are responsible for much of Western's athletic spending, which will not change greatly unless the university should drop an expensive sport and replace it with a cheaper one or should change its membership status, either by dropping to a lower division or deciding on a split membership. The rules specifically allow schools to be Division I in basketball and Division II or even III in football, as long as Division I requirements are met in other sports.

Here's Vice President Minton's letter:

Western Kentucky University has traditionally competed in the highest division possible in the sport of basketball. The NCAA membership is organized into three divisions: Divisions I, II, and III. In Division I, the institutional football programs are divided into I-A and I-AA.

The NCAA regulations state that "an institution desiring to be a member of Division I shall sponsor a minimum of eight varsity intercollegiate sports involving all-male teams or mixed teams of males and females in Division I." It further states that "an institution desiring to be a member of Division I that has affiliated its women's program with the NCAA shall sponsor a minimum of six varsity intercollegiate sports involving all-female teams effective September 1, 1986," and it further states that this number shall be increased to eight varsity all-female teams effective as of September 1, 1988.

Since the organizational divisional structure was formed, Western has traditionally participated in Division I in all of its sports except football. Initially, there was no Division I-AA for football and, therefore, Western and the Ohio Valley Conference competed in Division II in their football programs. When the NCAA divided Division I football into two divisions, I-A and I-AA, Western, having a Division I program in all other sports, elected to follow a I-AA program, as did the entire Ohio Valley Conference. This decision was approved by the Board of Regents and, therefore, became a policy of the University. In 1982 the Board of Regents, after evaluating the football program, reaffirmed its commitment to Division I-AA football and to the maintenance of a

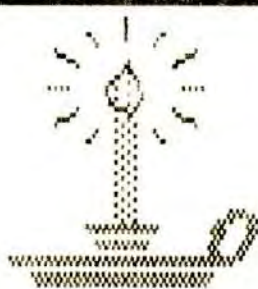
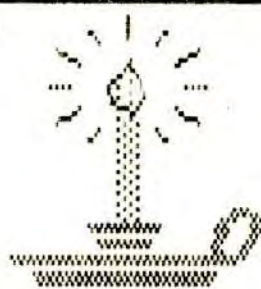
competitive program in that division.

Each of the NCAA divisions has criteria that must be met in order to be classified in a specific division. In order to remain in Division I, an institution is required to schedule a high percentage of its games with Division I participants. For instance, in basketball a Division I member cannot play more than four basketball games against teams that are not members of Division I. In I-AA football, a team is required to schedule more than fifty percent of its games against teams in either I-A or I-AA competition.

The NCAA establishes a maximum number of grants-in-aid that can be given in a particular sport. In I-AA football, the limit is 70 full grants-in-aid. In accordance with Board policy, Western is committed to be competitive in I-AA and is authorized to award the NCAA annual limit of 70 grants-in-aid. Western offers the NCAA limit in football and men's basketball; and since the women's basketball program has just recently been brought under NCAA rules, Western is committed to move that program to the NCAA limit. In all other sports, Western does not reach the NCAA maximum.

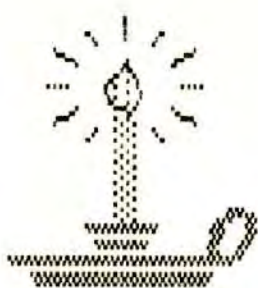
In addition to the grants-in-aid requirement, in order to compete in Division I, the NCAA has set a minimum standard on the number of individuals who must participate in an event and also a minimum number of events in which the institution must participate in order to remain in Division I.

During the past few years, Western, along with several other institutions, has supported a reduction in the I-AA grants-in-aid limit, and last year the NCAA Convention approved a reduction of the I-AA grants-in-aid from 75 to 70. It is unlikely that a further reduction will be enacted. However, there is a proposal that will be voted on at the NCAA Convention in January to reduce the Division I requirement of eight varsity sports to six for the men's and women's programs. There is a good possibility that this will be passed.



MERRY

CHRISTMAS!!





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