MEMORANDUM

TO: Ms. Michelle Hollis  
Chair University Senate

FROM: Barbara Burch  
Provost and Vice President  
For Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: May 10, 2007 University Senate Minutes

I endorse without exception the actions of the University Senate at its May 10, 2007 meeting.

/lsw
WKU UNIVERSITY SENATE MINUTES
May 10, 2007

I. Call to Order
The regular meeting of the WKU University Senate was called to order Thursday, May 10, 2007, at 3:52 P.M. in the Garrett Ballroom by Chair Michelle Hollis. A quorum was present.

The following members were present: John All, Mustafa Atici, Johnathon Boles, Scott Bonham, Charley Borders, Barbara Burch, Stuart Burris, Mike Carini, Eddy Cuisinier, Jerry Daday, Judy Davison, Terry Dean, Richard Dressler, Freda Embry, Tim Gilbert, Anthony Harkins, Kathleen Hennessey, Michelle Hollis, Kate Hudepohl, Skylar Jordan (SGA), Heather Johnson, Kaveh Khatir, Debbie Kreitzer, Dominic Lanphier, Scott Lasley, Sherry Lovan, Karen Mason, Terrence McCain, Laura McGee, Andrew McMichael, Patricia Minter, Richard C. Miller, Thanh Lan Ngugen, Laurin Notheisen, Holly Payne, Katharine Pettit, Katrina Phelps, Keith Phillips, Heidi Pintner, Eric Reed, Julie Shadoan, Vernon Sheeley, Nevil Speer, Peter St. Pierre, Saundra Starks, Carol Stowe-Byrd, Santanta Thapa, Michelle Trawick, Tom Tutino Judy Walker, Carol Watwood, and Jacqueline Wofford.

Alternates present were: Denise Gravitt for Greg Arbuckle, Jim Lindsey for Jeff Butterfield, Shiu Y. Mak for Deana Groves, Niko Endres for Joe Hardin, Aaron Kindsvatter for Cynthia Mason, Doug Smith for John Musalia, Cassandra Pinnick for Jeffrey Samuels, Bob Reber for William J. Tallon, and John Martin for Mary Wolinski.

The following members were absent: Mike Binder, Marty Boman, John Bonaguro, Robert Bowker, Tim Brotherton, Janice Chadha, Walter Collett, Robert Dietle, Nancy English, Sam Evans, Janice Ferguson, Blaine Ferrell, James Gary, Jerry Gotlieb, Jens Harlander, David Lee, John Long, Timothy Mulin, Roger Murphy, Dan Myers, Johnston Njoku, Gary Ransdell, Sherry Reid, Angela Robertson, Krist Schell, Bud Schlinker, Peter Sepanski, Don Swoboda, Stacy Wade, and Jeff Willis.

II. Minutes
The Minutes of the April 18, 2007 meeting were approved as read. Dr. Burch endorsed the minutes without exception.

Douglas Smith, on behalf of the College Caucus from Potter College, made a motion of privilege to censure the way Dr. Burch handled her decision on plus/minus grading; especially her relationship with the university senate and the rest of the faculty over the last three and a half years. The motion was seconded.

Dan Myers asked what the motion to censure was; Douglas Smith clarified that it was not a motion of “no confidence”. Andrew McMichael clarified what a motion of censure was: He said it is a reprimand over a specific incident; it basically says we
are unhappy with the way that a specific situation was handled and it does not address anything else other than the plus/minus grading issue.

Dan Myers asked if it was Potter College and Douglas Smith responded that it was the Potter College Caucus of the University Senate. He also stated his reasons on why he didn’t like the way it was handled: 1) the vote of the university senate was disregarded, 2) that the research was not funded, 3) that the vague questions without solid issues behind them, etc. He stated that we have dealt with many things in trying to put forward the plus/minus grading system, leading up to 60% of the Senate voting for it, and it has still been disregarded. Andrew McMichael requested that the censure vote be a ballot vote if there was no further discussion.

Dr. Burch responded prior to the vote, saying that she intentionally did not to respond to Andrew McMichael’s faculty-all email, which she thinks is part of this. She feels a need to respond personally to a few things. She said she is not inclined to get into a campus debate about things that were said which is untrue. The idea that the research was not funded was simply not true. Any piece of research that was asked for was funded by the Provost’s Office. The truth is that nothing more was asked for.

The faculty handbook talks about collegial governance. That means that decisions at different levels are made. She regrets that she could not support the 60% view of those who voted, but if the Senate feels that merits censure, then fine. She said that she feels that somewhere someone has to accept responsibility for the fact that the only research done after the move to research, was what was funded by the Provost’s Office, which was done by Institutional Research and Prepared by Institutional Research. If there were other forms of research requested, this is the first that she heard of it today. She did not respond to anything else said in the email.

Douglas Smith responded that he (Douglas Smith) and Dr. Burch worked out a draft; a plan to do the research that included both the part that was done by institutional research, and a part that was going to be done by the Academic Quality Committee. This included a survey of the students and a survey of the faculty, which was going to be funded. Dr. Burch stated that she never heard of the Academic Quality mentioned again and she thinks anyone in the room knows that she has not turned a single request for support of research for any other initiative the Senate has asked for. She said her feeling is that if you are going to carry out a research study, it is the obligation of the Senators who are supporting it to initiate it. Nobody ever said another word about it and she was never contacted about it again. Douglas Smith said that he would assume that this will be considered in a joint process where the University Senate and the Provost would hammer something out to do, and that it would not be up to the University Senate to come to the Provost “head in hand” to get the funding for it.

No further discussion took place prior to voting. The motion in favor of the censure proposed passed with a divided vote: 29 senators voted yes, 24 senators voted no, and 3 people abstained.
III. Reports

a. Chair

Michelle Hollis, Chair of the Senate, reported that she met with a coalition of Senate faculty leadership from around the state on April 21. They talked about a few different things that are happening around the state, including salary adjustments. At NKU, adjustments were around 6%, and faculty being promoted were at an 8% increase. Morehead had a 2-4 billion dollar deficit, so their salary adjustments could be affected by that. The faculty requested a 4% with no cost of living, instead of a 1% cost of living with 3% for merit. At this point, they do not know what will happen with that. Kentucky State is getting a 3%, EKU is getting 3.5% increase and a one-time merit bonus is available for this year.

Forums were held around campus to determine how merit pay was going to be distributed. Murray was contemplating a 2.5% cost of living with a 1% merit increase. KCTCS is giving a 3% with a merit bonus of $1500-2500. WKU’s merit pool is supposed to be around 4%, so we are faring well with everyone around the state.

At the coalition, they also talked about summer pay. WKU fares really well compared to all of the schools around the state, with exception to EKU, which gets 10% of their earned based salary for summer school. NKU gets 3%, Morehead gets 2% per credit, WKU is 8%, Murray is 7.5%, at Kentucky State, there is a flat amount based on rank, which ranges from $1800-2300 per course.

As a result of the contested Regent election, it was brought to Michelle Hollis’s attention that one of the violations was faculty member eligibility. According to KRS 164.321, only faculty with rank of Assistant Professor level or higher is eligible to vote. Since the Community College starts at Instructor level, Michelle Hollis contacted Senator Guthrie and asked to take this to legislature and have it amended to read “all full-time, tenure-track faculty are eligible to vote” He agreed to do that. This will be brought forth in January. While it will not impact the upcoming Regent election, it will impact future Regent elections. She also took this to the April 21 coalition of Senate Faculty Leadership Meeting to see if there is interest on other campuses to have this amended. Since WKU is the only school with a community college attached, it does not really matter if the other campuses adopt it or not; can have a separate paragraph because we are different.

Michelle thanked the Senators for the opportunity to Chair the Senate, stating that it has been both an honor and a privilege to represent the Faculty. She said that it was her hope to fulfill the duties of this position to the best of her abilities and she hopes that she has accomplished that. She said that the experience has been uplifting, rewarding, and eye opening all at the same time and that she has learned a lot and has grown professionally as a result of having this opportunity. She concluded by saying that she appreciates all of the support that everyone has given her.
b. Vice Chair
The Vice-Chair, John All, was not present. There was no report.

c. Faculty Regent
Dr. Dietle resigned at the previous meeting as Faculty Regent. Because of the concerns that were voiced regarding the recent Faculty Regent election, there was no Faculty Regent representation at this meeting. Therefore, no report took place.

d. Provost
The Provost, Barbara Burch, stated that we are tracking enrollment very carefully this year. She suggested that each department has information on students who may be enrolled in the program, who may or may not have had an opportunity to enroll for fall. Some departments have specific plans to follow up on that. We are behind where we were last year but Dr. Burch is optimistic that there will be a turn around. She urges the Senators to the extent that you have an opportunity in meeting with students, or perhaps finding some who may need extra help in deciding what they are doing or thinking about programs next fall, to do that.

There are three commencements coming up and hopes that the faculty will be at one of those commencements if possible.

She concluded by wishing everyone a wonderful summer.

Denise Gravitt asked if Dr. Dietle will be regent. Dr. Burch stated that there is no acting Regent and that Julie Shadoan is currently representing the faculty.

IV. Standing Committee Reports
a. University Curriculum Committee
Julie Shadoan, Chair of the University Curriculum Committee, presented a standard report. There is some new programming that was approved at the UCC level last month and the UCC appreciates having quorum today so it can be voted on. She then moved for approval of the consent agenda. The course proposals passed unanimously as presented without discussion.

b. General Education
Patricia Minter, Chair of the General Education Committee, stated that the General Education Committee met on April 12 and has several items for consideration. She moved for approval. The items on the agenda passed unanimously as presented without discussion.

c. Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities
Nevil Speer, Chair of the Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee, was not present. There was no report.
d. Committee on Academic Quality
The Chair of the Committee on Academic Quality, Andrew McMichael, stated that there was no report.

e. Graduate Council
Tim Gilbert, the Chair of the Graduate Council, made a motion for support and approval of the Graduate Council agenda items for University Senate consideration. There was one friendly amendment; Physics 591 should be changed from Physics CBE Detection A Remediation Laboratory to Physical Principles of CBE Detection and Remediation Laboratory. This is a correction both in Lecture and its accompanying labs to have the correct name on it. The consent agenda passed unanimously with the friendly amendment with no discussion on the items.

V. Old Business
There was not any old business.

VI. New Business
There are three items under new business. The first is a proposal to bring a Chief Diversity Officer position to campus. You should have received a proposal that was put together by a committee that started with the Engaging the Spirit Conference. That committee worked throughout the academic year researching benchmarks, national trends, and things as far as diversity officer positions go. That proposal is what this committee came up with. It is not a final form. That committee will not have any part in producing whatever the final form will look like.

From what Michelle Hollis understands, there are two committees on campus that will be working on creating the job description for that position. Dr. Ransdell wants this position to happen and he said he would like the Senate body to endorse it because he plans to move on it in early fall.

This does not need a second on it because it came through the Executive Committee. Michelle Hollis clarified that we are voting on whether or not we need a person of this caliber at this institution. The committee that presented this asked that it be a person who would sit on the administrative council. This will ultimately be Dr. Ransdell’s call though.

Andrew McMichael asked if we are supporting what is in the proposal or just to give general support to Dr. Ransdell creating some other form of a diversity officer that is not yet clear. Michelle said she is asking to support the idea of a chief diversity officer on campus. The committee felt this was a good time to bring this forth in light of hiring a chief international officer. They think that bringing them both aboard around the same time would help with the initiatives that this campus stands for. It was not an attempt to take over the Office of Diversity Programs or the Equal Employment Office. It was hopefully that it is something where all of the people already in place will report to this individual and it will be a campus-wide effort to work on diversity, not just as far as students, but as far as faculty as well.
When asked where the money is coming from to create this position, Michelle Hollis stated that she did not know. Doug Smith stated that he supports diversity here on campus and would welcome making sure that there was a diversity person that met with academic council. The number of Vice Presidents being hired in all sorts of positions on this campus is large and this is a real concern. He is willing to voice support for another diversity officer but is not sure he is willing to support another Vice President.

Dr. Burch said that she will do anything to enhance diversity. She clarified that Dr. Ransdell is interested in doing whatever he can to give more focus and attention to diversity as it affects many parts of campus. Diversity is not just in one division; it is in everything we do and it has multiple definitions. She believes that Dr. Ransdell is inviting the Senate to express their feelings about it. This would be about someone who has a broader diversity role and bring some focus and some direction to it. He wants to know if having someone with broader responsibility is of value. He has never said what the title will be. The intent was that someone who is in this position would bring some sense of focus, direction, and some cohesion that would ultimately have a greater impact on our achieving diversity goals of the campus. There was no matter of title. Regarding funding, there are finite dollars and any decision of funding one thing over another is a decision of priority. Dr. Burch said Dr. Ransdell will look at the funding dimensions of it and she is sure that this will be a decision of the best way Dr. Ransdell thinks it can happen.

Michelle Hollis clarified “vice president level” as what the committee that presented this proposal wanted. They want this person to report to the president, sit on the administrative council, and collaborate with all divisions. Scott Bonham feels it is a good idea but it is so broad and vague and he wants to know how this person would be different from the current officer; he wants to know how this person would compliment rather than duplicate. He also stated that it is hard for him to support the position when he doesn’t know what he is supporting. Michelle Hollis stated that the Chief Diversity Officer does different things at different institutions.

John All made a motion to table discussion until the description is formed; the motion was seconded.

Michelle Hollis stated that Dr. Ransdell said he will act on it in early fall. Andrew McMichael suggested postponing the table. Michelle Hollis said that the proposal presented was a result of the committee – it is not in a final state and the Diversity Committee and Kentucky Committee will work together on details. We are just vetting on whether or not we endorse the idea of having a chief diversity officer on this campus.

Denise Gravitt said we need more diversity on campus; we have no control over the position, and agrees not to postpone it. John All stated that he feels the proposal as it is put forth is very vague and he wants it to be tabled.
Michelle Hollis reminded the Senate that Dr. Ransdell said that the charge of the Senate is not to make decisions of budgetary implications. Julie Shadoan does not want to postpone but does want to create an ad-hoc committee to represent the Senate. Hollis said we can have Senate representation. Dr. Burch stated that Dr. Ransdell wants to move soon. He is not wed to moving now but does want to have something that will create an impact.

There were 6 in favor of postponing indefinitely. The majority opposed postponing indefinitely. Julie Shadoan made a friendly amendment to the current proposal that would include the current proposal that would include developing an ad-hoc committee to address this issue with the president. The motion was seconded.

The Senate voted unanimously in favor of the initial motion (supporting having a diversity officer) with amendment (having Senate representation). The vote of supporting a diversity officer as amended passed.

The next item was faculty compensation for study abroad resolution. Jerry Daday had a question about the second line of the resolution; J-term is based on enrollment, and this does not apply in the summer. It is not the same scale. Eric Reed said he is happy to amend that to reflect this accurately. Dan Myers asked if it is dealing only with WKU faculty-led programs offered for a credit at WKU; Eric Reed said yes. Eric Reed stated that summer abroad courses are much more work and should be a guaranteed minimum of $4000. Debbie Kreitzer agreed that these courses are much more work and that being paid on a sliding scale depending on enrollment does not make it less work. For a 15-student trip, it would be $167 per student to come up with $4000. A faculty member should be compensated accordingly for a 3-credit course.

Dr. Burch agrees that study abroad is a lot of work and that we should be able to pay the same for study abroad as for any other 3-credit course. She asked the international study abroad council members to consider talking about this. They have been empowered to set policies and directions for study abroad and internationalization. They have recommended the same pay level. Until the past few years, WKU did not pay for study abroad at all. Then they went to $1500, this will be increased to $2500 or $3000. There is relatively little money to support study abroad and internationalization. It is a pivotal point in time where internationalization study abroad has been agreed upon as a valuable experience for students and there is a 5-year commitment to funding.

This comes with conditions; we have to find a way to increase the salaries, number of study abroad opportunities, and number of students participating all at the same time. We do not collect tuition from students; they get a tuition scholarship. There is a $50 fee that goes to a pool that goes to faculty costs associated with study abroad. There is also a need-based stipend up to $500 for January and summer. The pay level will be increased in the summer and fall.
Dr. Burch agrees about getting the pay level equalized but wants to keep the number of students enrolled up. She concurs with the need to equalized pay levels but this will need to be done incrementally. She suggested getting additional counsel from the International Studies Council and to develop a plan that will increase support for study abroad that will include more compensation for faculty. She wants to include increased compensation without extra tuition being charged.

Last year there were 27 faculty members involved in some kind of study abroad and the average class size was less than 10. To ensure safety considerations, one additional faculty member or graduate assistant is an added expense. Dr. Burch suggested that it is more complicated than it seems. Laura McGee from Modern Languages stated that she wants a clear timetable put in place. The compensation is minimal and for a university that wants to become more international, this must change; the planning that goes into the programs, the liability that faculty takes upon themselves, it is crucial that we offer quality programming with appropriate compensation. The pay is way too low for the study abroad courses at this time.

Andrew McMichael stated that he feels the proposal in front of us is for faculty to be paid the same. We are not concerned about how to get the money, but we want faculty who study abroad to be paid at the same rate. Laura McGee feels what is given is helpful – a little more per student per head means faculty should be paid more.

Dan Myers revised the wording; he proposed a friendly amendment that eliminates the last paragraph and replaces with “University Senate resolves that compensation for faculty members who teach study abroad courses be increased significantly and our wishes without constraining what is going on now...". The friendly amendment was seconded and voted on. The motion with friendly amendment passed unanimously.

Eric Reed spoke on the study abroad experience. His proposal asks the Senate to develop some sort of review procedures for study abroad offerings. The Curriculum Committee should take this up and create some review procedures. The Senate will have some overview responsibility for study abroad offerings. He wants to ensure academic quality and feels the current structure does not ensure this. The proposal is necessary because our current system does not ensure academic quality when it comes to course equivalencies. The study abroad courses are supposed to be equivalent to the syllabi on books but they have very little to do, if anything, with the courses that are on our books. He feels that this is cheating the students by doing this. This is the real issue with this proposal – ensuring academic quality. He wants to have a serious discussion and table it until the first senate meeting of the fall semester.

The resolution was seconded with no discussion; the senate voted unanimously in favor of tabling discussion until the fall.
VII. Announcements
Kathleen Hennessey (SGA) through many student nominations, SGA Voted Professor of the Year: Allen Hall (Gordon Ford), Kathy Abel (CHHS), Michael Smith (Ogden), Janice Brockman (BGCC), Jeanine Huss (College of Education and Behavioral Sciences), and Bart White (Potter). The Advisor of the Year Recipient was Michelle Taylor (College of Education and Behavioral Sciences). The winners will be honored in a banquet next fall.

VIII. Adjournment
A motion to adjourn the meeting was seconded. The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:10 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Pintner, Secretary