

## **WKU UNIVERSITY SENATE MINUTES**

May 8, 2008

### **I. Call to Order**

The regular meeting of the WKU University Senate was called to order Thursday, May 8, 2008, at 3:45 P.M. in the Garrett Ballroom by Chair Julie Shadoan. A quorum was present.

#### **The following members were present:**

Cathy Abell, Nedra Atwell, Johnathon Boles, Scott Bonham, Barbara Brindle, Barbara Burch, Stuart Burris, Jeff Butterfield, Walter Collett, Eddy Cuisinier, Jerry Daday, Judy Davidson, Terry Dean, Constance Edwards, Michele Fiala, Douglas Fugate, Jim Fulkerson, Andrea Grapko, R. Reagan Gilley, Denise Gravitt, Kim Green, Anthony Harkins, Michelle Hollis, Kaveh Khatir, Aaron Kindsvatter, Joan Krenzin, Yanmei Li, Jim Lindsey, Nathan Love, Sherry Lovan, Karen Mason, Andrew McMichael, Patricia Minter, Sharon Mutter, Jane Olmsted, Holly Payne, Ken Payne, Heidi Pintner, Sherry Powers, Matt Pruitt, Jeff Samuels, Julie Shadoan, Vernon Sheeley, Carol Stowe-Byrd, Heather Strode, Rico Tyler, Christopher Wagner, Carol Watwood, Jacqueline Wofford, and Zhonghang Xia.

#### **Alternates present were:**

Yvonne Petkus for Kristina Arnold, Tom Hunley for Niko Endres, David Zimmer for Dan Myers, Janice Chadha for Sandra Starks, Tadayuki Suzuki for Luella Teuton, Randy Kinnersley for Stacy Wade, and Beth Plummer for Richard Weigel.

#### **The following members were absent:**

Mostafa Atici, Mike Binder, John Bonaguro, Richard Bowker, Janice Chadha, Uma Doraiswamy, Sam Evans, Tim Evans, Blaine Ferrell, James Gary, Jens Harlander, Kathleen Hennessey, Roy Howsen, Heather Johnson, Skyler Jordan, Mary Kovar, Debbie Kreitzer, Dominic Lanphier, Scott Lasley, David Lee, Richard C. Miller, Timothy Mullin, Roger Murphy, Steve Nagy, Thanh Lan Nguyen, Katharine Pettit, Mark Pickard, Keith Philips, Gary Ransdell, Sherry Reid, Angela Robertson, Shane Spiller, Tammie Stenger-Ramsey, Louis Strolger, Don Swoboda, William Tallon, Samanta Thapa, Michelle Trawick, and Paul Woosley.

#### **The following newly-elected at-large member for 2008-2009 was present:**

Kathleen Matthew.

### **II. Minutes**

The Minutes of the April 17, 2008 meeting were approved as read with no additions or corrections.

### **III. Reports**

#### **a. Chair**

Julie Shadoan, Chair of the Senate, had no report.

**b. Vice Chair**

The Vice-Chair, Denise Gravitt, had no report.

**c. Faculty Regent**

The Faculty Regent, Patricia Minter, reported that the Board of Regents met on April 24<sup>th</sup> and approved the tuition increase which is going on the agenda for the CPE. Minter hopes that the 9% will go through for a variety of reasons.

23 faculty positions were lost and this greatly affects our mission statement, especially in terms of education and international reach. This is of great concern to several of the Board Members.

The Board of Regents members were informed of the dismissals of the two Vice Presidential Positions (two positions were eliminated from the Administrative Council: VP for Student Affairs (Dr. Gene Tice) and the Associate VP for Public Relations (Bob Edwards). The total savings from this cut is one VP position, which is about \$150,000 net. The rest of the money went toward promotions as four people absorbed previously held duties from the eliminated positions. While this means at least four people will be getting raises bigger than \$500, some of these people are taking on huge responsibility (almost doubling their current duties). Minter pointed out that these four people are surely not the only ones taking on additional responsibilities. We will all be teaching more students because our faculty/student ratio is going up. We will be teaching more, we will be doing more service to cover for those colleagues who no longer exist, and for the colleagues who we will not be hiring from the open lines. We will all be doing more, and we will be doing it with fewer resources (fewer dollars available for professional development, for travel, and for student workers). The staff colleagues are seeing very real cuts and are doing more with less. Minter is less than pleased with the President's response to this and is greatly disturbed.

Tamela Smith and Patti Minter presented the President with the Senate Resolution that stated that no funds should come out of the Health Insurance Reserve to fund the Wellness position or any other positions. The faculty does not want these funds to be used for any reason other than health insurance. When McMichael asked the President about this in the public forum, Ransdell stated that no reserve monies will be used to fund any positions, Wellness or otherwise. Minter was very surprised that the President is asking the benefits committee to take money from our self-funded health insurance administrative cost (the annual administrative cost related to our health care program) in the amount of \$191,000 pulling three positions (the Wellness Position, the Assistant Benefits Manager, and half of the Benefits Manager position) off of the ENG budget (the hard money budget) and fund it through Health Insurance Administrative overage. Minter thinks this is a trick to move things around and get around the promise to not use our self-insurance funds for positions. The President wants to take the \$191,000 that he would generate from moving these positions off

base budget into funding through administrative overage and then he would create 2 ½ faculty positions with that. Administrative overage goes into the reserve fund. This is a creative way to fund positions out of the reserve fund. This had been placed in front of the benefits committee where a lively debate ensued. It is tabled until Tuesday's Benefits Committee meeting. Minter has explained that the faculty views this as an abrogation of his promise to us. Any overage goes right into the reserve fund. As we don't raise premiums and we don't raise the university contribution, then the administrative cost goes to zero. Minter asked our two financial people on the Benefits Committee, the Internal Auditor (Warren Irons) and Controller (Jim Cummings), what this means. If it is not funded through reserve, then the cost is passed onto the employees in premiums. Minter wrote a memo to the president asking him to pull this and he declined. She quoted what had passed through the Senate.

The Staff Council met on Wednesday and they are not happy about this either. They are offended that the offer was made to fund faculty positions. They are troubled that in a year where people are losing their jobs (and they are only getting \$500 raises) that there would be something that would move people off base budget and possibly pass the cost of jobs onto the employees.

On June 17, 2005, after the Senate urged him to do so, former Faculty Regent (Dr. Dietle) and former Staff Regent (Pat Jordan) brought a motion before the Board of Regents. Quoted from the minutes, "Dr. Dietle moved approval of the 2005-2006 combined budget and faculty/staff compensation report with the provision that the funding for the position of Wellness Coordinator from the Health Insurance Reserve Fund would be for one year only (2005-2006) -- because it was already on the budget. In the future, the funding for this position will no longer be drawn from the Health Insurance Reserve. It was passed by unanimous vote." Minter stated that now, in hindsight, we should have said, "now and in perpetuity, you will never fund anything from anything involving insurance", but Minter never thought that this would have been necessary.

Minter welcomes any help that the Senate is willing to give. She will continue to fight against breaching the Self-Insurance program, because it has generated a healthy reserve on this campus, it is fiscally sound, and it provides quality healthcare and security to all employees.

Senator McMichael asked how many times and how many resolutions do we have to pass to make it clear that we do not want the health insurance funds to be used in any way than they were intended.

Minter said that in difficult times, wants and needs need to be separated. She used the \$500,000 in signage as an example, stating that aesthetics should not be put ahead of academic quality and academic mission. She stated that this is the time to make sure that the inside is stable.

Senator Samuels stated that he will bring another resolution up during new business.

The reserve is locked up in a foundation account and it requires the vote of the Benefits committee to be touched. While Minter applauds the President's attempt at alleviating the faculty crisis, she feels this is not the way to do it.

Minter wants to hear anything and everything that the faculty has to say.

The budget meeting will be held on June 27 and the third quarterly meeting of the Board of Regents is July 17 & 18 (this is the financial retreat). The Benefits Committee Meeting is Tuesday at 2:30 and it is an open meeting.

**d. Provost**

Barbara Burch, the Provost, stated that the council staff is inclined to recommend an 8% tuition increase instead of 9%. The President is in Frankfort making every effort to keep it at 9%. The 1% differential is \$32 per semester according to Ann Mead. The reduction would be roughly \$1 million campus-wide and 16% of Academic Affairs.

Dr. Burch then gave some brief comments regarding the cuts in Academic Affairs. Of the vacant non-tenured faculty lines, there were some tenured lines that were cut out of the 23. No current individuals in tenured and tenure track positions will lose jobs. There were very few staff cuts. No direct professional development support was cut, but no lines for professional development were cut. Dr. Burch feels the Deans did an incredible job and were diligent to try to consider the impact on basic program foundations. They were sensitive to do whatever they could recover from in the most likely manner. The cuts will reduce class sections, numbers of sections, and increase faculty/student ratios.

We need to continue working on targeted growth because if we drop in numbers, it is another form of a budget cut. If we do have growth and collect more tuition revenues than budgeted, those new dollars will go back first to Academic Affairs.

Dr. Burch said she will answer any questions.

The \$500 increase in summer stipends applies only in the summer. This is a separate budget and it has enough money in it.

Dr. Burch hopes the faculty is ready for graduation; there are three ceremonies. The graduation for the Academy is Saturday at 1:30.

**IV. Standing Committee Reports**

**a. University Curriculum Committee**

Andrew McMichael, Chair of the University Curriculum Committee, moved for approval of the newly-posted consent agenda. SEC 490 Student Teaching was pulled

from the UCC Agenda and DID NOT go to the University Senate. The course proposals passed unanimously as presented without discussion.

**b. General Education**

No report was presented.

**c. Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities**

Nedra Atwell, Chair of the Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee, stated that for anyone who wants to continue working on the Faculty Handbook, there will be a meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup>, Room 421 of Tate Page Hall at 1:00.

**d. Committee on Academic Quality**

No report was presented.

**e. Graduate Council**

Sherry Powers, the Chair of the Graduate Council, made a motion for support and approval of the Graduate Council agenda items for University Senate consideration. The consent agenda passed unanimously with no discussion on the items.

**V. Old Business**

Sharon Mutter met with Bob Cobb last week to see if the new SITE evaluation form would give any problems with SACS accreditation. There was a question as to whether there would be a potential problem if the evaluation is administered intermittently; according to Bob Cobb, SACS just needs evidence that we are assessing our faculty. If special items such as the American Democracy Project needed to be evaluated, a special item can be added to the evaluation form. Cobb raised questions about logistics of administering the new system. Mutter will keep the motion tabled until our next meeting in September so the committee can work out some of the logistic issues. For example, some courses have situations with students at multiple levels taking the same class from the same professor at the same location; they would require separate packets and they would be scored together. Then it all has to be tabled into one report. Mutter wants to generate a list of specific questions and ask ETS because she wants to get answers to her questions before adopting it. The resolution will be withdrawn and she will bring it back when it is ready.

The new resolution attached to the agenda from the Executive Committee concerns allowing a representative from the University College to have representation on the Senate. The motion by Dr. Olmsted was seconded by Nedra Atwell. The Senate charter will have a permanent representative from University College, but since it is still being worked on, it has to be in the form of a resolution. The resolution was approved unanimously.

Senator Samuels brought forth the Self-Insurance Plan Resolution. The motion was seconded by Andrew McMichael. Much discussion centered around the proper wording of this Resolution to make it completely clear that the Self-Insurance monies should be used only for what they were intended. A motion by Denise Gravitt to call

the question followed. The Resolution with friendly amendments in its final form was voted on: "Be it resolved that the University Senate states its unequivocal opposition to the use of any monies within or designated for the health insurance plan for any purpose other than insurance. This includes those monies from the insurance reserve, the insurance excess, the health insurance administrative overage, and the premium fees." The Self-Insurance Plan Resolution was passed with only one opposing vote.

**VI. New Business**

Andrew McMichael stated that he had an unpleasant experience with the faculty representative to the CPE from Murray. McMichael, whose service with the University Senate will be ceasing after this year, stated that he hoped that next year someone from WKU will represent them on the CPE. Chair Shadoan suggested that the SGA and the leadership of the Senate meet to discuss this. Johnathon Boles said they will meet next week and will suggest three names to the Governor.

**VII. Announcements**

Chair Shadoan announced that the 2008-2009 Senate needs someone in charge of convening committees to get a lot of membership.

Johnathon Boles announced that he will not be returning to the Senate because he was elected SGA President. He added that several faculty have been in touch with him about plus/minus. Though he apologized for the lack of time to complete and the incorrectness of the SGA survey, he asked the Senate to respect the view of the SGA.

**VIII. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Pintner, Secretary