

11-10-1997

## UA3/9 Transition

WKU President's Office

Gary Ransdell

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty and Staff  
FROM: Gary A. Ransdell  
DATE: November 10, 1997

As I officially begin my duties today I want to communicate with all of our faculty and staff with two primary objectives--first, to let you know how pleased I am to be back at Western and to be working with each of you to help Western become a stronger university, and secondly, to let you know about some of the activity which has captured my attention in recent weeks and which will be our focus in the weeks ahead.

Having stated the first sentiment on many occasions and in frequent media accounts, I will move on to the second and the focal point of this communique.

The transition is complete. I have enjoyed the opportunity to get briefly acquainted with the Faculty Senate and Student Government. I have met three times with our vice presidents and other key officers. I have met with community leaders and our local legislative delegation. I meet this week with the Committee on the Status of Women on Campus and on November 25 with the Staff Advisory Council.

In the next few weeks, I will engage day-long agendas in Glasgow, Louisville, Owensboro, Elizabethtown, Henderson, and Somerset. In January, I will do the same in Frankfort, Lexington, Russellville, and other key communities. A Board of Regents' retreat is set for December 4 and 5. I will be meeting with each academic and administrative unit on campus as well as each residence hall group and most student organizations over the next several months.

Regarding the Board of Regents, I am pleased with a proposed new committee structure. The Board committees will include an Executive Committee (major policy issues, legal matters, auditing, personnel, and athletics), an Academic and Student Affairs Committee (academic and student life policies, sponsored research, enrollment management), a Budget and Finance Committee (budget, accounting, facilities), and an Institutional Advancement Committee (development, alumni relations, public affairs, governmental relations). Final definition of these committees and Board/staff roles will be defined between now and the January meeting of the Board.

The Board has also commissioned an Institutional Review. An independent review team comprised of five leaders in higher education--all from other states--conducted its review in October. A formal report is expected in late November. This report will form the basis for much of our planning and decision making in the months ahead. Using this report and the objectives of recent higher education legislation in Frankfort, and with your help, we will define our vision for Western, refine our mission, and update the two primary planning elements currently in place--the Western XXI Plan and the New Level Plan. There is no need to start over or consume the campus with a long, arduous planning process--the building blocks are in place. Our task will be to insure timelines, relevancy, and accountability. I plan to create a President's Advisory Council made up of successful constituents who provide guidance for our planning and implementation process.

Our priorities in the coming biennial legislative session are to secure our rightful leadership role with the new Council on Postsecondary Education, to secure due funding from new CPE revenues, to finalize plans for the proposed Technology and Communication Building, to get some much-needed deferred maintenance money, and, if possible, to make progress on a new facility in Glasgow. We also plan to solve our safety problems on University Boulevard.

Of particular satisfaction during my transition has been the announcement of the \$20 million federal grant for our Training and Technical Assistance Services unit. Congratulations to Colleen Mendel and her colleagues in our Head Start program. This is the kind of national prominence to which all of our academic and service programs should aspire. I am also pleased that Jim Ramsey has agreed to return to Western next summer to lead a proposed new Center for Public Policy Studies. This will allow him to become fully engaged in teaching and research.

It is clear that Western has great potential. We have many challenges, but we have great people. We, the campus community, are one team working together to provide the best educational and campus experience possible for our students. We are one team trying to improve the quality of life in our area of this state. I am honored to be part of the Western team--your team. Thank you.

GR

c: Board of Regents