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## UA3/8 Memo: Administrative Change

Thomas Meredith  
*WKU President's Office*

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WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

November 19, 1992

MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty and Staff

FROM: Thomas C. Meredith, President



The purpose of this memo is twofold. I will offer concluding remarks concerning the turmoil of the past year, and I will relay several positive actions of late that will point us to the future.

The past twelve months have been very stressful for this university and for all of us who have committed our lives to it. Not only did we suffer the largest budget cut in the history of the institution, which resulted in no increases in compensation, but we also struggled to deal with many questions that were raised about internal financial policies and activities.

A number of long-standing policies were shown to be in need of change. Adherence to strict interpretations of regulations were not being practiced. In too many cases, we were not running the university as tightly as we should have been.

Although a number of changes had taken place under this administration prior to last year, more should have been done and much quicker. I must take responsibility for these shortcomings, and I sincerely apologize to you. Several matters of judgement on my part have been called into question during this painful process, especially those relating to the President's Home. I can assure you that in using hindsight it is obvious that I should have done some things differently. Again, I apologize.

I cannot turn back the clock or wipe the slate clean. I can assure you, however, that the nineteen recommendations approved by the Board of Regents cover the concerns raised as well as other topics. Copies of the recommendations are in the library. I can guarantee you that my hand is now firmly on the wheel of this ship and that you will not be disappointed in the results. All that I ask from you is your participation, cooperation, and support as we jointly work to help this great university resume full speed ahead under these new policies. You have a commitment from me to make you proud of the leadership of this administration.

I want to now address a number of positive initiatives and activities from the University Budget Committee, the administration, and/or the Board of Regents.

At its October 29, 1992, meeting, the Board of Regents approved the 1993-94 budget priorities as recommended by the University Budget Committee. The top priority involves improving compensation for faculty and staff. Second is improving benefits. The third priority calls for improvement in the recruitment and retention of minority faculty, staff, and students. Fourth is the placement of a computer on the desk of every faculty member.

A special committee, representing all constituencies on campus, has been appointed to study wages and salaries at Western Kentucky University and will present its final report to the Board at its January 1993 meeting. The committee, chaired by Dr. Jim Ramsey, will address three questions: (1) what is the current wage and salary status on our campus, (2) what should be our goal, and (3) what is the plan for reaching that goal? This committee will address wages and salaries for every position on this campus. I look forward to receiving its plan.

We are not where we want to be in terms of compensation or resources to support our daily operations. However, I am confident we can get there by developing a plan to do so and by making the required commitment. The Board of Regents and this administration are ready to make such a commitment.

A special Task Force on Minority Recruitment and Retention, that I appointed recently, submitted its report which was distributed to the Board of Regents at its October meeting. Copies are available in the library. I appreciate the work of this group, chaired by Dr. Jerry Wilder, and look forward to the implementation of the committee's work. Details concerning this project will be forthcoming in another memo soon.

We are confident that our students now have more access to computers than students at any other institution in our state. It is time for the next step to be completed. The Board has approved funding for placement of a computer on the desk of every faculty member who will use one for the purpose of enhancing our teaching, research, and service activities. A committee, with wide representation, will develop the plan for implementation. We are optimistic that computers will begin arriving before this year is over.

In other matters, Western's development activities (private fund raising) continues to enhance our academic activities. The recently completed annual Phonathon surpassed last year's total of \$166,000 in pledges by garnering \$196,000 in pledges this year. Our thanks to Ron Beck for his excellent leadership on this project. Over \$100,000 of that total is earmarked directly for academic departments. Another portion is directed into the Academic Excellence Fund and another segment goes into the University Development Fund for funding your proposals. As an institution, we are barely scratching the surface in this relatively new area for our university. We'll announce new future plans later.

The "Leadership for the 90s" program continues to go well. I am confident that we will soon see the results of this important project.

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On October 23, 1992, Western inducted the first Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame. The inductees reached the pinnacle of their chosen fields, and they each gave Western credit for providing the foundation for their success. They helped to remind us just how important our mission is to so many people.

Since the beginning of this administration, faculty and staff have been placed on more and more committees of substance that impact the decision making on this campus. I am pleased to announce the establishment of the Facilities Planning Committee, which will make recommendations concerning the institution's two-year and six-year capital construction plans.

There are many positive things to say. Our future is extraordinarily bright in spite of the budget cut. State revenues are up, we are hopeful that we will avoid further budget cuts, and private giving is on a positive path.

I plan to send memos like this on a regular basis in order to enhance our communication. I also stand ready to meet with you individually, as a department, or as some other group to discuss the future of this institution. I would look forward to these meetings and to hearing your input.

Please join me in looking to the future as we work together to make this great university an even better place at which to work and to learn.

TCM:lf

cc: Board of Regents