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UA11/1/1 On Campus Interviews

WKU University Relations

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Western Kentucky University
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Item 1 On Campus Interviews

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Description: Audiotape interviews of Robert Haynes and Joseph Millichap by Sheila Conway. There are partial transcripts of the interviews which were used as press releases.

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On the job last week, Dr. Robert Haynes, vice president for academic affairs, talked with “On Campus” about what he sees as major concerns facing him in his new position.

“WKU faces what higher education in America is challenged with today: accountability. We’re going to have to be accountable to the state and to the people and to ourselves,” says the former vice president for academic affairs at the University of Houston, appointed VP for academic affairs by the Board of Regents May 12.

“We’re going to have to manage our resources wisely to promote quality,” he says. That’s an easy word to say, but very difficult to define. It involves having a professional faculty, one which pursues some degree of research, some of which may lead to publication in scholarly journals, and some which may be more practical, some that may make teaching more effective. Western’s faculty is pretty much there,” says WKU’s VP.

On other concerns, Dr. Haynes commented:

*About faculty salaries: “They’re low here, and it’s hard to compete. That will give us a problem getting top-notch leadership. Sooner or later the campus is going to have to address the issue of ‘how much do you play to market conditions in setting salaries?’ Universities in the country have pretty well given in to the marketplace. It will be my job to guide and explain to faculty members that quality faculty in certain fields are going to really cost.”

*On getting good students: “We must develop an overall body of students who are prepared upon entering Western to do college-level work. Western must provide leadership across the state, particularly where our feeder high schools are, to try to make students recognize they need to take college-preparatory classes, and that their schools must provide those classes.”

Two things about that, he says. One involves giving students enough lead time to get prepared for college, and secondly, a “harder question”: “How much can a single university provide?” Western’s new VP says Kentucky schools haven’t worked together enough yet to work on the student competency problem.

“I think Kentucky’s talking about it, as they are everywhere, but we’re not in the forefront. It’s going to take political leadership.

“It’s going to take some more financial resources, but the University’s going to have to at some point stop crying financial resources and build its own case of how it’s going to use its resources effectively.”

*On Campus: “I want to try to get to know the faculty. One of the difficulties in administration is that we sit up here and our calendar gets filled up with talking to each other. I want to meet in the fall with at least the major academic units, and just listen . . . .

“And if I’m not invited, I’ll just invite myself. I’ll find the student center, and I want to just wander in the Faculty House and see who’s there. People tell me the mornings are the times to go. I’m going to get my bearings and see what’s going on.”
Dr. Joseph R. Millichap, chairperson of the University of Tulsa English faculty, has been selected to head the English department this fall.

Millichap, a graduate of Notre Dame University, replaces Dr. James Flynn, who asked to return to full-time teaching effective next month.

A specialist in American studies, Millichap has headed Tulsa’s English faculty since 1979. He was a visiting professor at the school of communications at Ithaca College in 1983, and he has been a Fulbright professor at Turku University and Abo Academy in Finland.

“I think Western Kentucky University is a very attractive place in every way. The English department is doing all the right things, and there are some real possibilities for excellence,” Millichap said, indicating the university’s commitment to emphasize writing across the curriculum offers opportunity for service to the university community as well as surrounding community.

“I feel we can expand programs to be of value to the region and the state, to the public schools and in the area of extended education. We have potential to contribute significantly to the cultural life of Kentucky,” he says.

Millichap directed Tulsa’s literature program, the composition program and the Writing Center and says his most significant accomplishment during his term as chair of English involved creation of a Comprehensive Writing Program which recently won recognition from the National Endowment for the Humanities in terms of a development grant.

Millichap has a bachelor’s degree from St. Peter’s College and master’s and Ph.D. degrees from Notre Dame, and in his 19 years of college teaching he has taught more than 30 different courses in writing, literature, film, communications and humanities. He also has offered business and technical communication and creative writing, and most recently he designed film courses ranging from an introduction to advanced seminars on film and fiction.

WKU’s new department head has a vast number of writings, including books, articles, essays, poems and short stories.
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