PRESIDENTIAL SELECTION PROCESS HIGHLIGHTS OCTOBER SENATE MEETING

Discussion of the presidential selection process and of the work of two ad hoc committees dominated the October 12 meeting of the Faculty Senate.

Senator William Buckman, Faculty Regent, reviewed the presidential selection process, particularly emphasizing that part of the process which will follow the screening committee's narrowing the number of candidates to twenty. (A similar review appears elsewhere in this newsletter.) Senator Buckman also discussed the possible expansion of the screening committee to include minority representation. Student Regent Steve Thornton was recognized in order to explain his proposal for such expansion, which he planned to offer to the Board of Regents. (This proposal, which elicited vocal opposition in the Senate, was approved by the Regents on October 21.)

In addition to verbal updates on the work of the standing committees, the Senate heard presentations from two ad hoc committees. Senator Marion Lucas writes in this newsletter of the report he presented for the Committee on Administrative Structure. After some discussion, the vote on accepting the report was postponed pending the rewriting of some ambiguous passages.

The second presentation, by Senator Charles Henrickson, came from a committee on faculty evaluation which is formally an Associated Student Government committee; at the request of the A.S.G., the Executive Committee and the Chair appointed Henrickson and Senators Mary Ellen Miller and Phillip Duff to serve on it with three students. These appointments were made in May, and the committee has since been studying evaluation methods and forms. The A.S.G. committee hopes to develop a form for use in a faculty evaluation in the fall of 1979; the Senate was asked to authorize a request for funds to do so, the A.S.G. having already approved such a request. The Senate as a body, however, has taken no action on faculty evaluation, and the letter of request included substantive details beyond the funding request. Since many senators felt such details require discussion and action by the Senate, the committee was asked to revise the request before a vote is taken. That revision is currently being made.

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MEETING THE COMMITTEES: The Committee System of the Faculty Senate

To enable the Senate to handle the large number of matters of interest to the faculty without subjecting itself to interminable meetings, seven standing committees have been established. Ad hoc committees are set up whenever there is an issue of such magnitude that it would overwhelm the standing committee to which it would normally be assigned. Each college as well as Academic Services is represented on each committee; however, because of the difference in faculty size among the colleges, some senators serve on more than one committee. The membership of committees often includes non-senators, chosen for their knowledge in a particular field.
MEETING THE COMMITTEES: The Committee System of the Faculty Senate

In future editions of this newsletter we will give detailed information about the work of Senate committees, highlighting a different group in each issue. This month we would like to present for your information a brief sketch of the committees including name, chairperson, and an example of an issue recently handled by each.

The Executive Committee is led by Senate Chair Tom Jones. It meets bi-weekly to discuss policy issues relating to the role of the Senate within the University and to set up the agenda for the monthly meeting. Other members of this group are Phil Constans, Charles Henrickson, Joan Krenzin, Greg Lowe, Marion Lucas, and Paul Riley.

The By-Laws, Amendments and Elections Committee is headed by Linda Pulsinelli. It has conducted the elections for faculty regent and faculty representatives to the presidential screening committee.

Jim Parks is chair of the Faculty Status and Welfare Committee. This group, at the request of President Downing, is currently studying the University's policies on promotion and rank.

The Fiscal Affairs Committee, led by Don Bailey, recently distributed information on the percentage of its budget that each college of the University spends on instruction (including faculty salaries) as opposed to administrative costs.

Mary Ellen Miller's Institutional Goals and Planning Committee is presently involved in a study of enrollment projections for Western and the nation's universities in general and how these figures might affect our jobs in the future.

Don Butler's Academic Affairs Committee will be studying ways to establish liaison between the Senate and the recently reorganized Academic Council.

The Professional Responsibilities and Concerns Committee, chaired by Albert Petersen, has considered questions relating to the University's grievance procedure and the possibility of establishing an office of ombudsman.

At present two ad hoc committees are active. Marion Lucas, chairperson of the Committee on Administrative Growth, discusses the findings of his group in another section of this newsletter.

The recently established Communications Committee, headed by William Walls, is charged with keeping the faculty informed on the activities of the Senate. This newsletter will be the principal instrument for achieving that goal.

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THE WAY WE GROW by Senator Marion Lucas

More than a year ago a subcommittee of the Faculty Senate's Committee on Administrative Structure began a study which eventually became an attempt to compare the growth of faculty, administration, and student body of WKU with that of Western's benchmark institutions. While the attempt at comparison with other schools has not been an unqualified success, some useful information about our growth has emerged.

In looking at figures drawn from unscientific studies such as we attempted, one should keep in mind that the university's personnel is constantly changing as assignments differ from semester to semester and even week to week. Yet, painstaking analysis of available university categories of individuals might help us to understand more thoroughly the growth of the university.

The greatest growth of the teaching faculty occurred in the 1960's with the largest percentage increase in the early years of the decade. (Teaching faculty includes all those who spend more than half their time engaged in teaching and/or research.) In the past twelve years (1967-1978) the teaching faculty has increased slightly over 55 percent.

The size of the principal administrative staff lagged behind in the early 1960's but began to increase rapidly by the late 1960's. (The category of principal administrative staff includes the president and his staff; the vice presidents and their staffs; deans, assistant and associate deans and their staffs; department heads; directors; and the professional non-faculty, excluding dorm directors. No secretarial, clerical, maintenance, food service, or public safety employees are included in the category of principal administrative staff. About twelve positions listed as principal administrative staff are currently funded externally.) The years of greatest increase in the principal administrative staff were 1968-69---1969-70 when the growth was about 21 percent. From 1967-68 through 1978-79, the increase in the principal administrative was about 69.8 percent. Currently, Western has one individual in the category of principal administrative staff for each three persons categorized as a teacher. The two causes most often cited by upper echelon administrators for the growth of the principal administrative staff are: (1) improved services for academic support, and (2) ever-increasing Federal requirements being placed on the university. Some teaching faculty attribute a portion of this growth to overstaffing and unnecessary expansion.

The student body at WKU was in a period of rapid growth in the 1960's but leveled off by the end of the decade. Between the fall of 1967 and the fall of 1978 the undergraduate FTE student population has increased slightly from 8,622 to 8,757. This is an increase of 135 FTE undergraduates for a 1.6 percent growth. During the same time period, the number of FTE graduate students increased from 300 to 1,253, or a 31.4 percent increase.

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A DECIDED FIRST by Senate Chair Tom Jones

I have had the pleasure of serving as Chair Pro-Tem of the Congress of Faculty Senates since its first meeting in mid-summer, as the leaders of all eight institutions of higher learning in Kentucky have met three times, now, to discuss issues, share reports, and reflect upon the possibilities for COFS.

At the last meeting on October 13, the group agreed to set aside attempts to arrive at a constitution which might be ratified by the various faculty bodies, and instead to continue meeting as the Congress of Faculty Senate Leaders (COFSL) in order to provide a tempting forum for gubernatorial candidates in this coming election year.

It may not yet be terribly meaningful, but it is a decided first, that--always at least seven, sometimes eight--leaders of the faculty bodies of higher education have met. Each time the attendees have vigorously agreed that the meetings have been worthwhile. The next meeting is set for December 8.

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FACULTY REGENT BUCKMAN DISCUSSES PRESIDENTIAL SELECTION PROCEDURE

The Board of Regents deals with many issues that affect the faculty directly and indirectly. I am pleased that my colleagues on the Board have reelected me to the Executive Committee and have appointed me to both the Finance Committee and the Academic Committee. These committee assignments enable me to influence policy decisions and to present a faculty point of view.

I could write a volume concerning faculty teaching loads, the enrollment situation, budgetary concerns, administrative evaluations and so on. However, it appears to me that my colleagues are much more interested in the process of selecting the Fifth President of Western. Specifically, what will be the faculty involvement in this selection process?

A Presidential Screening Committee of fifteen has started the screening process. Four members of that committee are faculty members. This committee will turn over twenty names to the full Board of Regents. The following is from the approved minutes (pages 4-6) of the September 24 meeting of the Board.

a. Advertise for application and nominations. Screen the pool to a list of twenty (20) persons for submission to the full Board of Regents. Submittal is to include the committees' suggestions and a compilation of information on the individuals involved. It is specifically understood that the Board of Regents reserves authority to call up its consideration any applicant or nominee of its choosing and/or to search for other prospects for screening and consideration. Each member of the Board shall be fully and completely informed. Each shall have access to all records and materials and may participate as he desires.
b. Require that confidentiality be maintained within those involved.
c. Authorize that, as to the twenty (20) persons, arrangements may be made for designated Board members and others the Chairman might designate to visit on their campuses, in their offices and communities. Such visits are to provide an opportunity for personal judgment and assessment of the individual prospect and the spouse and family, if any, and the degree of acceptance and esteem held among the university faculty and community of present locale. Each person visited would be told that an invitation to the Western Kentucky University campus to participate in various public meetings will be extended in the event of further consideration.
d. Provide that the entire board would then reduce the list of applicants to five (5) and then invite these finalists to the campus. These individuals would visit the campus and meet publicly with the Faculty Senate, student groups, administrative council and staff, alumni or members of the community, and the entire Board. All of these meetings would be conducted in public, with those present being encouraged to ask hard and penetrating questions. Not only will the Board receive very useful information about the individual involved, but the Board would be in a position to make personal observations and judgments as to the ability of the individual to relate and communicate with the various interest groups.
e. Specify that the entire Board would then consider the finalists and make the ultimate selection for appointment.

The faculty will have a voice through the faculty members on the screening committee, in the visitation of candidates, and in the finalists' going before the faculty group. The vote of your Faculty Regent will also be significant in the determination of the next President.

I recognize that the past history of selection of presidents in regional universities makes many people skeptical of the selection procedure and raises questions as to whether it is indeed open. Although no group is completely satisfied with the selection process, it represents most groups and is acceptable to the groups represented. I personally look forward to this procedure and to the paramount decision.

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A THANK YOU NOTE

The Communications Committee would like to express its thanks to Michael Taylor of the Art Department for designing the Faculty Senate logo which appears for the first time in this newsletter.

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HELP WANTED

Senator Don Butler, Chair of the Senate Academic Affairs Committee, urgently requests your help. What issues do you feel this committee should be considering? Send your list of concerns to the Senate office (IWFAC 268), or call Senator Butler.