FACULTY SENATE NEWSLETTER

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FACULTY SENATE TOUCHES ON A VARIETY OF ISSUES -- Pat Bowen

The November meeting of the Faculty Senate opened with remarks from Chair Don Bailey. Included in these remarks was the reading of a letter from Harry Snyder (printed elsewhere in this "Newsletter") responding to the Faculty Senate resolution asking that funds removed from the University during the recent budget cut be returned when possible.

A plan of development in a coordinated effort of John Sweeney, the University's Director of Development, and the College Heights Foundation, was presented to the Board of Regents at its November meeting. Senator Bailey announced that his copy of this document will be available for study.

Senator Bill Buckman was "introduced" as the newly reelected Faculty Regent, at which time Senator Bailey informed the group that the By-Laws, Amendments and Elections Committee will study the possibility of a public forum for subsequent elections.

As a follow-up to previous discussion on the subject, Senator Pat Bowen, reporting for the Executive Committee, announced that Mr. Bivin, the University Attorney, has been asked to write an opinion concerning the disposition of the 1978 Administrator Evaluation. Senator Bowen also reported that there had been considerable discussion about voting procedure in the recent Faculty Regent's election, and as a result, the By-Laws, Amendments and Elections Committee will study possible uniform procedures to be followed at the various voting locations in future elections.

Senator Joe Glaser, chair of the Academic Affairs Committee, outlined the items his committee is currently studying: patterns of grade distribution at the University; a statement regarding the stability of major and minor program requirements for students who have declared their program choices; and the impact of Western's recruitment and handling of underdeveloped students. Comments about these concerns are welcomed. This committee's concern about graduate examinations has been forwarded to Dean Gray and the Graduate Council.

Senator Bob Blann reported that although response to the Institutional Goals and Planning Committee's questionnaire was not overwhelming, enough information was gathered so that a more structured and detailed questionnaire can be developed. His committee expects to have the new survey ready by February.

The Professional Responsibilities and Concerns Committee has developed the first draft of an Evaluation Procedure Information Sheet which will be used by that committee to gather data about evaluation procedures from administrators who evaluate faculty performance. Senator Joanne Powell reported that this information, in the form of a frequency distribution, will be sent to department heads and the Faculty Senate. The purpose of the study is to identify the various forms and procedures used across campus for faculty evaluations.
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Senator Larry Hanes requested as part of new business that a brief report be made concerning information collected by the Faculty Status and Welfare Committee during its study of dental insurance coverage for the University community. The summary will be published in a future "Newsletter." Also under new business, Don Bailey agreed to investigate and report at the December meeting the status of the promotion policy passed on from the Faculty Senate to the president late last spring.

Senator Bill Buckman expressed his appreciation to the By-Laws, Elections and Amendments Committee for the professional manner with which the Regent's election was handled. He stated he was pleased by the large percentage of faculty turnout for the election. Senator Buckman then asked that the Senate investigate a due process procedure for faculty grievance concerning tenure. Senator Bailey agreed that this topic should be brought before the Executive Committee for assignment to a standing committee or an ad hoc group.

Senator Bailey announced the tentative date for COSFL's next meeting: December 6 at Northern Kentucky University.

Senator Pat Bowen briefly reported on a meeting she attended, representing the Faculty Senate, concerning work/study student employment. As a result of the recent congressional passage of the Higher Education amendments of 1980, work/study students employed at institutions of higher education must be paid minimum wage ($3.10/hr), retroactive to October 1, 1980. This rate increases on January 1, 1981 when the minimum wage becomes $3.25/hr. Because the amount the student can earn in a given school year, and the amount the University has budgeted for work/study pay have already been established, it is more than likely that the number of hours the students may work will be cut.

Senator Bowen also announced that Senator Connie Foster, Faculty Senate Secretary, and her husband, Tom, are the proud parents of a son, Michael Thomas. Before adjourning the meeting the Chair reminded everyone to check with their respective department heads concerning the new guidelines for travel, specifically the meal allowance for a night-time, off-campus course.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR -- Don W. Bailey

The first few meetings of Senate IV have been brief. In large part this is due to the fact that many of the major problems of interest to the faculty have been dealt with with some measure of success by previous Senates. However, many areas of concern are still in existence, and some seem to offer no ready means for solution.

Senate III sent a promotion policy document to the president. That policy has been subjected to scrutiny by Vice-President Davis and the Council of Deans and is now back on the president's desk.
COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

A committee appointed by the president has submitted in draft form (to the president) a statement of policy governing both internal and external consultation by university personnel. Faculty members involved in regular consulting activities may want to review the "finished" statement when available, as current plans are that the opportunity will be afforded the Senate to make any suggestions it wishes before presentation of the document to the Board of Regents.

The practice of recruiting "underprepared" students and developing expensive programs for their benefit is being studied by the Senate. Several possible dangers to be avoided as well as benefits to be gained are apparent. The dangers range from the impetus to grade inflation to make the programs appear successful, to the questionable positioning of funding outside the departments where the subject matter is actually faced. The question must be raised as to whether or not counseling of these students may be assumed to equip them to pass subject matter with the same relative ease exhibited by better equipped students. Perhaps some few students will be "rescued" by this effort. Chances are that class performance standards are more likely to be lowered rather than underprepared students upgraded.

SYNDER RESPONDS TO SENATE RESOLUTION

In its September meeting, the Senate passed a resolution expressing "great concern to the Governor and others involved with the state government over the great loss of funds..." and asking "for restoration of these funds if in any way possible." (See September "Newsletter" for full text of the resolution) Senate Chairman Don Bailey recently received the following response from Harry M. Snyder, Executive Director of the Council on Higher Education. We present it for your information.

October 6, 1980

Dear Dr. Bailey:

Governor Brown has asked me to respond to your September 24, 1980 letter regarding the loss of higher education funds.

The administration has committed itself to the restoration of these funds if the revenue picture improves. If it does not improve, it will make it more important than usual that higher education priorities be established in the 1982/84 budget review. We have already started the process for the next biennium and would welcome support from each and every institution.

Thank you for your interest and concern.

The letter was signed by Harry Snyder and carbon copies were sent to the following: Senator Walter Baker, Senator Frank Miller, Representative
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Buddy Adams, Representative Jody Richards, Representative Bobby Richardson, Dr. Donald Zacharias, Mr. Tom Jones, and Dr. William Buckman.

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COMMITTEE REPORTS
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ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

The Academic Affairs Committee continues to pursue a varied group of projects involving subjects ranging from grade distribution patterns to guaranteeing student rights vis-a-vis changes in program requirements. The members of the committee -- Jim Bingham, Pat Bowen, Norma Schira, Marvin Albin, Joe Glaser, and Jeff Crisp -- welcome any advice on these or other academic concerns that the faculty would care to offer.

On one particular matter we positively need the advice and direction of the faculty. One of our long-standing projects has been an inquiry into program accreditation, but we have found that the value of accreditation and the requirements involved can vary widely and unpredictably from one academic field to the next. Some forms of accreditation, we found, are not worth having, others impose impertinent or unrealistic standards, others are astonishingly expensive. We would like to encourage each program that would benefit from accreditation to pursue it, but there is no way to make blanket recommendations in this area. We hope that anyone who feels that his own department or area would be helped or improved by accreditation will contact a member of the committee and pass along the relevant information.

-- Joe Glaser

PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONCERNS

As I reported before, some faculty members have expressed to this committee (PRC) a desire to know the specific criteria used in their personal evaluations. This committee had set out to analyze the evaluation forms currently in use to find out what similarities and differences exist and to share the findings with the Faculty Senate. Preliminary investigation indicated varied procedures in the use of the forms. Therefore, we have developed the first draft of an Evaluation Procedure Information (EPI) sheet which is intended to identify the frequency of specific procedures and practices used in the evaluation process.

Members of the PRC committee will make appointments with the administrators who evaluate faculty performance. The administrator will be given a copy of the EPI to fill out for his files while the committee member fills out a copy for study purposes. All answers will remain anonymous as only the name of the college is used on the answer sheet. Then, a frequency distribution will be sent to the department heads.

When the study of this information is completed, a report will be made to the Faculty Senate.

-- Joanne Powell
IF I RAN THE HILL...

... no exams in courses would be administered at times other than regularly scheduled class periods and final exam periods.

... faculty advisors would be required to meet with each of their student advisees at least once during every semester.

... students would not be permitted to register for classes without having their class schedules approved and signed by their officially assigned faculty advisors.

... I would attempt to ascertain which of the means of hand-drying which are offered in many lavatories is more energy-efficient and/or environmentally preferable. If such a determination is possible and is made, I would remove either the warm-air blower or the paper towels, according to the findings.