NEW CHANGE OF GRADE POLICY CONTINUES TO RAISE QUESTIONS

Nancy Solley, Frank Kersting, Ed Dorman

Reports from Standing Committees

Executive Committee:

Senator Uveges reported that the Senate has been requested to conduct a self-study for the Southern Association. The ad hoc committee appointed to conduct this study consists of Phil Constans (Chairperson), Del Hayden, Jo Ann Harrington, David Coffey, and Robert Turek.

Glenn Lohr has been appointed to represent Western on the COSFL committee created to consider improving the state universities' insurance packages.

In response to a request by Emery Alford that the College of Business Administration be represented on the Institutional Goals and Planning Committee, Barry Griffin, of the Department of Finance and Quantitative Business Analysis, has been appointed to that committee.

As many faculty members have expressed concern about the time-table for the self-study, a request was sent to Vice President Davis to move back the deadlines. In response to this request, the deadline for departmental reports to college deans has been moved back three weeks, to December 17.

Academic Affairs Committee:

Senator Schneider reported that, as Chairperson Joan Krenzin had requested that this committee explore the possibility of dissatisfaction among faculty about the revised change-of-grade policy, the committee members had informally questioned faculty members in their own departments about this matter. They found no dissatisfaction with either the new policy or the procedure followed in formulating and adopting it. {For additional discussion of this topic, see page 2.}

Committee on University Committees:

Senator Weigel reported that the following persons have been appointed to the Faculty Advisory Committee to the Vice President for Academic Affairs: Al Bedel, Carolyn Boles, Mel Borland, Joe Glaser, William Kummer, Laurin Notheisen, Earl Pearson, and Dorothy Reeves.

The committee has also nominated three faculty members for one position on the University Traffic and Parking Committee.

Senator Weigel thanked departmental senators for returning the committee preference questionnaires and requested that those who had not yet done this please return them to him, care of the Department of History.

Faculty Status and Welfare Committee:

Senator Philhours explained the revised Report on Trends in Faculty Salaries. Departmental senators were requested to post copies of this report in their departments.
Professional Responsibilities and Concerns Committee:

Senator Mason reported that the response to National Higher Education Week was disappointing, in that only twelve requests for lists of open classes were received. Among others, a group of twenty-five high-school students participated.

Faculty Senate Self-Study Committee:

Senator Coffey explained that this committee needed to know the opinions of faculty members with respect to two areas:

(i) What is the purpose of the Faculty Senate?

(ii) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the Senate?

(A questionnaire devised to obtain this information is appended to this issue of the Newsletter. Departmental senators are requested to encourage the members of their departments to fill out and return these questionnaires.)

Unfinished Business

Senator Pauline Jones presented for a second reading four amendments to the Constitution (printed in the September Newsletter): VI BAE 001.1 - 004.1 9/9/82. All four passed.

Senator Truty-Coohill reminded the Senate that, in the May meeting, Joe Glaser had presented for first reading a recommendation that Western adopt some form of Institutional Progress Testing, and that, after some discussion, Senator Schneider had moved that this issue be postponed so that his committee would have more time to study the problems that would arise in the implementation of such a proposal. Senator Truty-Coohill asked for a report on the status-in-committee of this study, and for a clarification as to the nature of the problems needing to be resolved. Senator Schneider replied that he had obtained a copy of the final report from Faye Robinson, but had not studied it yet. He assured the Senate that the matter had not been dropped.

Senator Seeger raised several questions about the new change-of-grade policy, requiring the department head to sign the change-of-grade form, and about the procedure by means of which the policy was adopted. He said that he thinks it to be critical that no person other than the faculty member teaching the course be allowed to assign grades to students taking the course, and requested to see the directive that changed the policy. In reply to a question from Chairperson Krenzin, Vice-President Davis said that the change was intended to be merely a housekeeping matter -- not a signification of the department head's approval of the grade assigned. Senator Uveges emphasized that, apart from questions about the new policy itself, there was concern about the nature of the procedure followed in adopting it. Senator Schneider stated that the Academic Affairs Committee had found no dissatisfaction with this procedure in its informal poll of the departments represented on the Committee. Senator Howe pointed out that there were departments not represented on the Academic Affairs Committee, and that members of some of these departments were distressed both by the new policy, and by the procedure followed in adopting it. She moved that the Academic Affairs Committee pursue this matter further, looking into the reasons for the change of policy, and why a decision that affects the faculty was made by the Council of Deans without going through the Academic Council. The motion was carried by a show of hands.
New Business

Senator Pauline Jones presented for a first reading a proposed amendment to the Constitution, VI BAE 006.1 10/14/82: that the following addition be made to s III C 4,

... Vacancies in at-large delegations shall be filled by the individual receiving the next highest vote in the at-large election of the college in which the vacancy occurred. In the event no individual on the ballot is eligible under the provisions of s III A 3, a special election shall be held in that college.

{s III A 3 reads in part, "No department shall have more than one at-large senator until all departments in the college have at least one senator serving in an at-large capacity."} The amendment was designed to eliminate a problem that arises when the recipient of the second-highest number of votes in the college is from a previously-represented department.

Senator Murphy addressed the manner in which changes have been made in the Blue-Cross Blue-Shield Insurance Coverage. He said that the Faculty Status and Welfare Committee was concerned that decisions to make changes in coverage were made without consultation with faculty and staff. He proposed the adoption of the following motion:

The Faculty Senate requests that when changes in rates and coverage are being considered, the University Insurance Committee notify the faculty and staff of this fact through This Week at WKU and arrange to hold one or more open hearings to give interested persons opportunities to comment and make suggestions before final decisions are made.

Report from COSFL

* COSFL HONORS TOM JONES *

At the September 25 meeting of COSFL, Wayne Bell of Murray State and Steve Smith of the University of Louisville moved that Tom Jones be thanked by COSFL for his excellent service to the faculties of the Commonwealth in a letter to be sent to the Western Kentucky University Faculty Senate, Board of Regents, and the local news media. The motion passed.

Tom Posey of Murray State and Tom Cate of Northern Kentucky University moved that

In recognition of Tom Jones as founder of COSFL, that he be named Chair Emeritus and be invited to any and all meetings of COSFL.

The motion passed by unanimous voice vote. After expressions of thanks by Mary K. Tachau of the University of Louisville, Steve Smith spoke of Jones' contributions and how they have benefited faculty across the state. Smith then presented Jones with a gavel bearing the inscription, Tom Jones, Founder of COSFL, 1979-82.

New officers elected at the meeting are:

Chair: Steve Smith, University of Louisville,
Vice-Chair: Tom Posey, Murray State University,
Secretary: Harry Robe, Western Kentucky University.

Considerable discussion was given to the recent program review at the University of Louisville, which resulted in the firing of a number of tenured faculty members.
(The number is uncertain and has been variously reported as 5, 6, and 11.)
An ad hoc committee is to be formed to study the procedures which should be followed in program reviews that result in "program reduction" and dismissal of tenured faculty. This committee is to report at the next COSFL meeting, on October 23.

Another topic receiving a great deal of discussion was the problem of obtaining the best possible insurance package for the eight universities. At the present time, Murray State and the University of Louisville are self-insured. The state of the economy may make it impossible to improve on the insurance that we now have.

Announcements

Senator Grice reminded the Senate that the Student Development Foundation Phonathon will take place during the period October 17 - November 4, from 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm on the third floor of Downing University Center, across from the Bookstore. At the September meeting, the Senate adopted a resolution to offer its encouragement and to participate actively in the Phonathon. Senator Grice again urged that faculty participate in this effort. Chairperson Krenzin also requested that faculty members drop in for anything from a few minutes to half-an-hour in order to help out and to visibly demonstrate their support.

The Communications Committee has been requested to remind faculty members that the Newsletter is not restricted to material written by members of the Committee, but is open to all members of the faculty as a forum for articles of interest specifically to faculty members. Submissions are, of course, subject to editorial review, and can be made to any member of the Communications Committee (listed below). Examples considered to be inappropriate for the Newsletter would be articles on such topics as The Faculty Senate and the Grail Legend: Archetypal Patterns in Celtic Mythology; Thesis, Antithesis, and Senathisis (What Hegel Really Meant); and, of course, Anti-Senatism in Imperial Germany. Committee members to whom manuscripts may be submitted, and their departments, are:

James Ausenbaugh.......................Journalism
Thomas Coohill.......................Physics and Biology
E. Margaret Howe.....................Philosophy and Religion
Frank Kersting.......................Teacher Education
Nancy Solley.........................Library Special Collections
Patricia Trutty-Coohill.................Art

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FACULTY SENATE SELF-STUDY QUESTIONNAIRE

In order to prepare the Faculty Senate's report for the Southern Association we need some information from faculty members. Will you please complete this questionnaire and return it to your Senate representative within two days after receipt.

According to the constitution the purpose of the Faculty Senate is:

"The Faculty Senate at Western Kentucky University is an elected body of representatives from the faculty whose functions are to provide a forum for the concerns and interests of the university-wide faculty community, to furnish advice and recommendations with reference to policies that pertain to the faculty and to make available to the University the expertise of the faculty on appropriate matters...The Faculty Senate functions as an official representative voice of the faculty on any university policies which the President may refer to it for consideration and opinion, or which it determines should be brought to the attention of the President, or to the Board of Regents through the President."

INDICATE THE RESPONSE THAT MOST NEARLY REPRESENTS YOUR OPINION

1. Did you know the purpose of the Senate before reading the above statement? Yes  No

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2. I think the above statement expresses the appropriate purpose of a faculty senate.

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3. I perceive the Faculty Senate is accomplishing its stated purpose effectively.

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4. Overall the Faculty Senate performs a significant function at WKU.

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5. I feel the Senate is representing me effectively.

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6. I am adequately informed about Senate activities by my representative(s).

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7. The Newsletter is a valuable source of information for me.

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3. Listed below are some areas of concern of the Faculty Senate:

   This is an appropriate function. The Senate is accomplishing this function effectively.

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9. List below any other concerns you think the Faculty Senate should be addressing.


Please return within two days to your Senate representative.