The senate's March meeting opened with announcements. Since Tom Coohill is going off the senate this year, the body will need a new chair, to be elected at the April 23rd meeting. Anyone interested in the job should consider sending a statement of his or her qualifications and priorities to Joe Glaser (Cherry Hall 135, 5763), who will see to it that these statements are included in the special issue of the Newsletter for April 18. Deadline for submissions is April 11.

After the April 23 meeting of the senate there will be a reception for retiring faculty in the Faculty House. Everyone is invited to come.

The April 11 meeting will focus on Edmund Hegen's committee report on workload assignments and research and creative activity, which had originally been scheduled to be the theme for March but had to be deferred when the meeting ran late.

Committee on Committees

Joan Krenzin reported that her committee has compiled what it recognizes to be an imperfect listing of memberships on University committees. All departmental senators have a copy of this list of committees and committee members, and Joan hopes it will be widely reviewed so errors can be caught and the rosters brought up to date. Anyone with suggestions or emendations should contact Joan (2159).

Professional Responsibilities and Concerns

Margaret Howe had several developments to relay to the senate. The Affirmative Action Committee which was formed at the recommendation of her group is establishing investigative policies. They will soon be contacting faculty for information on affirmative action issues.

The PRC Committee is working with Ronnie Sutton and others toward a report on academic scholarships at Western—how they are publicized, awarded, and overseen. Anyone with suggestions or special information in this area should contact Margaret (5751).
The committee is also working with Vice President Haynes and department heads across campus to review the forms used in annual faculty review. Their aim is to bring these forms into line with university policies on promotion and tenure or at least document the differences that exist for a report to the senate. Again, Margaret would like to hear from anyone with suggestions to make about this PRC inquiry.

Another PRC project is the way tenure is awarded at Western. People with individual grievances have contacted Margaret, and the committee is looking into the situation. Of particular concern are recent cases of awarding tenure to incoming faculty (department heads and academic administrators) without faculty concurrence and deans' reversing tenure committee recommendations in apparently high-handed fashion. Margaret would like more information on these matters also.

COSFL

Harry Robe was off doing jury duty, so Mary Ellen Miller was drafted to give the COSFL report. She reminded the senate of the statewide meeting in Frankfort April 19 and 20, and asked anyone interested in attending to contact Tom Coohill or Harry.

Mary Ellen also distributed a preliminary draft of the charter for the new Association of Western Faculty. Departmental senators were given enough copies of this draft to distribute to their colleagues, so you should already have seen it. If not, contact your departmental senator.

It might be well to add here that last month's report of the demise of Murray's health plan proved greatly exaggerated. It was apparently because of their searing indignation that the Murray people went overboard in describing the injustice they had been done. The injustice itself seems to have been that their health benefits were reduced to much the same level as those of Western's faculty.

NEW BUSINESS

Bob Otto rose to offer the resolution that fueled discussion for the remainder of the meeting and forced postponement of the senate's announced theme for March. Bob was upset that for the second year in a row the university had seen fit to ignore the senate's recommendation against merit increases in lean years. The resolution itself was given a severe editorial mauling by the senators, especially John Parker and the redoubtable Joan Krenzin. It emerged at last not only shorn of its whereas's but split in two. The surviving resolutions were "Faculty should be formally involved in the process which affects their compensation"; and "The present plan for determining Faculty salaries is unacceptable."

Discussion began with a look to the future. Not only did the university decide to devote half of its new salary money to merit increases this year, Bob darkly alleged, but rumor has it that next year raises will be 100% based on merit.
Vice President Haynes acknowledged that a 100% merit plan had been discussed, but he maintained that the matter was not decided. The problem, he said, was that the senate's resolution against merit increases was not very helpful. It was passed at the end of January meeting when the body had barely a quorum, and it was passed without much discussion, so the thinking behind it was not clear. Maybe next year the senate's arguments will be made plain. At any rate, he was prepared to listen to a fuller ventilation of the subject, though he couldn't promise that he would be persuaded.

Tom Coohill weighed in with the observation that the issue is not just merit increases, but merit itself—how is it determined? At present the opinion of the department head seems to be the only telling factor, and this arrangement is open to abuse. More points of view than one ought to go into deciding whether or not a person is meritorious.

Dorsey Grice, ever practical, wanted to know what form faculty involvement in the raise-deciding process would take.

Tom thought that the Faculty Regent should be on hand when the issue of raises is dealt with on the university level, insuring that faculty points of view are represented at that critical time.

President Zacharias pointed out that the Faculty Regent is already involved at the Board level, when decisions from lower levels of the organization are finally ratified or rejected. He went on to toss out some ideas of his own that seemed rather more radical than those of the faculty senators. There are really two levels of decision-making to be considered, he said. Perhaps the faculty could place a representative on the Budget Committee when policy decisions are made about what kind of raises are to be offered for a given year. That way, faculty could have an effect on the general question of merit vs. across-the-board raises. Then, at the department level, there could be faculty committees to advise department heads concerning the merit status of individuals. He himself would have no difficulty accepting either kind of faculty involvement. It is in the university's interest, after all, to make the compensation system as fair as it can be.

The President also wanted the senate to realize that Western's record on faculty compensation is basically an enviable one, given the fiscal restraints under which the university labors. Western leads the MA-granting institutions in the state in average salaries and allocates a larger percentage of its revenues to instruction than does any other public institution at any level. That's quite a bit to be proud of.

Finally, the President pointed out that the senate's resolution on salaries was presented to the university's executive officers and may not have been entirely without influence; without the resolution raises might have been 100% merit-based this year. [See the President's 1/28/85 letter below.]

Bob Otto's first resolution, that the faculty be formally involved in the raise process, passed unanimously.
The second resolution, which declared the present compensation plan unacceptable, was subject to more divergent opinions. Frank Hollenbeck, who can always think of interesting objections, rose again to the occasion. The wording is vague, he averred; "unacceptable" could mean that there is too much emphasis on merit, or too little. He himself, he confessed, thinks there ought to be more merit money, not less. Western doesn't do enough to reward outstanding performers.

Bob Otto replied that no one ever said merit should be ignored. The January resolution called for across-the-board raises, it is true, but only for people doing an acceptable job. Faculty doing less than acceptable work could still be cut off without a sou, and besides, the senate only recommended across-the-board raises as a temporary measure, until there would be money left over for merit increases after base raises matched inflation for the year—though God alone knows when this would be.

Someone called for the question, and the second resolution—that the present compensation plan is unacceptable—passed by a narrow margin, 17 to 15.

All this while, Edmund Hegen had been anxiously regarding the clock. He was scheduled to present his committee's report—which runs to 79 pages and weighs 1 lb., 12 oz.—for a thorough discussion. It was approaching 5 o'clock when he judiciously decided to pass. His report and the March theme, Load Reductions and Research and Creative Activity, was postponed until April 11.

**THE LOST LETTER**

Here is a letter from President Zacharias to Tom Coohill that was supposed to be read in the senate meeting for February. Tom was out of town, and the letter was overlooked in the heat of that meeting (the one on athletics).

TO: Tom Coohill, Chair  
Faculty Senate  
1/28/85

FROM: Donald W. Zacharias, President

I have received your memorandum regarding actions by the Faculty Senate on January 17. The position of the Senate that salary increases be distributed across the board has been shared with the executive officers.

The position of the Senate will be considered as we continue our deliberations on salary and budgetary matters.
PURDUE REVISITED

Here is an impressive analysis of the Purdue evaluation "medians" sent in by Barry Brunson. I hope someone besides Barry understands it:

Since the "Purdue Cafeteria medians" may have a significant impact on personnel decisions, faculty members should know what they are. In the first place, they aren't medians in the usual sense, but rather a type of "weighted median." Specifically, the statement in the "Interpretation of the Instructor Report" that "one half of the responses have fallen above the median value and one-half have fallen below" is just plain false most of the time.

Here is what actually happens: the true median is determined, and that number is then adjusted upward or downward by some decimal, depending on whether there are more responses above or below the true median.

Here is the mathematics:

response:     SA   A   U   D   SD
point value:  5   4   3   2   1

In short, if the true median is $k$, with $n_k$ responses of that value, then the Purdue median is

$$M = k - \frac{(# \text{below}) - (# \text{above})}{2n_k}$$

Examples:

(a) 3 0 0 4 0 $M = 2 - \frac{(0-3)}{8} = 2.4$
(b) 0 0 3 4 0 $M = 2 - \frac{(0-3)}{8} = 2.4$
(c) 4 0 0 3 0 $M = 5 - \frac{(3-0)}{8} = 4.6$
(d) 4 3 0 0 0 $M = 5 - \frac{(3-0)}{8} = 4.6$

From the examples, it is evident that this "median" is insensitive to the positioning of responses above or below the true median; but as (a) and (c) indicate, it is very sensitive to marginal changes in the true median.

The Purdue "median" agrees with the true median when and only when the number of responses strictly above the true median equals the number strictly below.

My own feeling is that, in the first place, these "medians" quantify things that should not be quantified—they are meaningless statistics. Given that some people will persist in using them anyway, we should be aware of their volatility—one student's change of response can have a dramatic impact on the value; even in a class of 30 students, a change in one response can change the Purdue "median" by 0.2.
INCOGNITO

Someone who wishes to remain anonymous submitted this fantasia to the Newsletter. And he or she wasn't kidding; the piece was submitted through a third party.

Merit Pay in Heaven
or
He Who Flaps Fastest Finds Fiduciary Fulfillment

"Everyone rise, face the Hill and bow reverently."

"Now turn, face the Dean Angel's Office. Wave your wings in adoration."

"Remain standing. Here comes the Head."

"The meeting of this Angel Department will come to order," called Angel Head. "There are a few angels missing, some with permission to do angelic workshops or angelic consultation. However, note has been taken of the non-excused absences. I know these angels have valid reasons to be gone, and I can assure you they soon will be!"

A room full of angels of all sizes and ages beam at the Golden Chair where the Head is seated. Some have tenure, some don't. Some stress teaching. Some think their heavenly reward will come from research and publication. "No time to teach," they say. "I have 27 articles to finish."

Nonetheless, angelic smiles are on every face. Heads and wings make affirmative motions. Each angel indicates high approval of whatever Head utters.

Some important issues need consideration. Following each statement by Head, the angels enter deep thought and meditation. Then a vote confirms their unwavering support. "We agree!" chorus the heavenly voices. "Naturally, you are right." Each voice agrees loudly. Each head and wing nods affirmatively. Each angel desperately hopes the Head will recognize his earnestness and unquestioning support.

"He must know I'm on his side. I agreed loudest. I nodded hardest. I waved my wings fastest. Did he glance at me just then? Was that a smile of approval?"

The meeting continues late into the day. All the new important issues—program changes, student housing, declining enrollment, grade inflation, drugs on campus—must be dealt with. "Damn, these students are a nuisance!" says the Head. "I don't have enough time for my administrative decision making."

"I have an announcement on salaries," the Head states. For a moment ears perk. "Oh Glorious Day, some salary relief." It takes only a sentence or two
before the Great Revelation. "Three percent, but only half of it for you. The other half will be used to reward the favored, good, meritorious angels."

"And you may not recognize the exact . . ." The Head's voice drones on. "Be thankful you don't have my terrible job. It's so hard every year to sort wonderful angels like you. But I must be firm . . ."

Angelic minds drift again. They've heard it all before. Some angels, wings turned grey, will soon retire. They nod in weary agreement with the Voice. The younger angels are thankful to be in heaven, but they think about survival.

"Provide shelter, nourishment, love, and protection to my little cherubs. Hard to make ends meet. And only one and a half percent. Maybe I'll get merit this year."

"How does He decide? What is merit? If I knew, I'd try harder. I'm as good as the others. But He just doesn't notice. Maybe they do more than I do. If I knew what, I'd try. It's hard to make it on my money. But better be careful. Not everyone gets to heaven."

"It's no good worrying. Be thankful you're here. Keep working. Do good teaching. Do good public service. Do good committee work. Do good advisement. Do good research. Finish the articles. Maybe this year . . ."

"Keep on smiling. Keep on agreeing. Maybe He'll see you nodding or flapping your wings. I know Pure White gets merit every year. No research, no articles. But he can sure flap his wings."

Suddenly the Voice breaks through, "Meeting adjourned!"

"Amen! Praise Our Heavenly Leaders!"

APRIL 11 THEME

Load reductions and scholarly and creative activity