FACULTY SENATE communications committee NEWSLETTER
FACULTY SENATE MEETING
October 12, 1989

Bart White called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. Minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee--Bart White, Chair
President Meredith has asked White to recommend 10 Senate members (from which he will choose five) to serve on the Western 2000 committee. White urged those who were interested to give their names to him at the end of today's meeting. He stressed the importance of faculty input into determining where Western is going during the next 10 years and the beginning of the next century. The committee will look at the programmatic and academic mission of the University.

The next item in White's report related to a Courier-Journal article reviewing President Meredith's first year at Western. White assured the Senate members that he gave a balanced and even interview, but that the tone of the article was negative. He mentioned responsibility for the quote, "the President doesn't listen." He further indicated that he was not totally negative in the interview. White emphasized that his views do not necessarily reflect the views of the total Senate nor the faculty. There are always minority opinions which need to be respected.

White has a concern about assessing the climate at Western and faculty feelings about particular issues. He plans to appoint an ad_hoc committee to assess the feelings of faculty at WKU about a number of issues. He stated, "Quite simply, the President took grave offense toward my comments and felt that they were very inaccurate. I know, however, that many of you feel they are very accurate and to the point. Some of you feel that they were a little harsh. In order to represent all of you in the best way I possibly can, I would like to have a better feel of what the climate is at Western." A resolution will be forthcoming. More on this later!

White mentioned the Head/Chair issue, which will be the main agenda item for today's meeting. He concluded his comments by stating that the Senators will soon receive an updated membership list that will reflect committee assignments.

By-Laws, Amendments, and Election Committee--Alan Yungbluth, Chair
Yungbluth announced that Steven White, Department of Accounting, will replace David Schull as the At-Large senator from the College of Business; he will be a member of the By-Laws, Amendments, and Election Committee. Susan Gore will replace Dana Boden as the new senator from Library Services; she will serve on
the Communications and the Executive Committees. Elections will be held on October 13 to elect a new senator from the Educational Leadership department.

Yungbluth stated that eligibility lists for the Regent election were distributed during the last week in September. Several corrections were necessary; these were verified through John Petersen’s office to ensure accuracy. Revised lists were distributed. To date, Dr. Evans is the only nominee. October 17 is the last date for nominees. Absentee ballots will be available on October 23 and must be returned by October 30. Voting will take place on Thursday, November 2 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the respective college dean's offices, in the office of the director of libraries in Helms, and in 153 Academic Complex. Senators are to remind faculty that they must present their faculty ID's before voting.

Academic Affairs Committee--Elaine Moore, Chair
The Chair was unable to attend this meeting. Bart White reported an item of concern related to the Economic Development Center. Some concern emanated from the Executive Committee that faculty could be hired by various companies as consultants and thus neglect their classes. According to White, "If we spend more time with the companies than we do in the classroom, then what do we do with our classes?" Steve House, administrator for the Center, assured White that the priority would be given to the academic mission of the university; no faculty would be pulled from classes unless a suitable replacement could be hired. The committee plans to monitor this issue.

Faculty Status and Welfare Committee--Joyce Rasdall, Chair
Rasdall announced that the Faculty Salary Survey is in process. Her next item dealt with Insurance. A hearing will be held either the last week in November or the first week in December to give faculty an opportunity to discuss their insurance needs with the proposed companies. Bids are due by October 31; an evaluation of the bids by the personnel office or university committee is due by early November. Contracts will be awarded by mid November. Faculty will be able to sign up for their various options in early December.

Professional Responsibilities and Concerns Committee--Jim Wesolowski, Chair
Among the areas to receive study by this committee are:
1. Full scale periodic review of administrative units beyond the department unit.
2. Policies and procedures for consideration of faculty grievances.
3. Procedures for faculty evaluation.
4. Limitation on enrollment size at Western.
5. Elected versus appointed departmental administrators.

Weslowski encouraged faculty to share their ideas concerning these topics with members of the committee. He also extended an invitation for senators to attend the committee meetings. The next meeting is scheduled for October 19 at 3:33 p.m. in the Fine Arts Building.

Faculty Regent's Report--Gene Evans

Regent Evans and other board members attended the Higher Education Council meeting on September 17 and 18 in Louisville. Most of his remarks related to the happenings of this meeting. The sessions dealt with raising admission standards as one means of increasing academic quality within the universities. A number of people at the meeting shared this belief. The Council also addressed the possibility of some type of assessment program to measure institutional effectiveness. Such a program could become reality in the future.

A major issue discussed at the meeting was the financing of higher education in Kentucky. According to a report given at the Council meeting by Senator O'Daniel, expenditures for the first year of the next biennium will be $216 million more than estimated revenue. A major concern of O'Daniel was that somebody is going to have to do something about raising revenue, or higher education will not fare too well in the next budget.

Evans also reported briefly on a quarterly meeting of state university faculty regents, which was held in Frankfort on September 24. Discussions at this meeting centered around financing of higher education, athletics, quality in terms of doing remedial work, and the issue of bringing community colleges up to parity within the next two bienniums. There is some optimism that the governor will make a real effort to raise revenue for higher education in the near future.

NEW BUSINESS

Lengthy discussions were held regarding President Meredith's draft (see Attachment A) of the Department Head versus Department Chair issue. Richard Hackney presented a brief history of previous deliberations and debate on this issue. The Faculty Senate voted to adopt this resolution on first reading: The faculty Senate continues to recommend and request that the faculty be truly given an enhanced role in departmental governance at Western Kentucky University by implementing a system of true department chairs who are elected by the faculty of the respective departments. A copy of the resolution
(Attachment B) is included for your review. The Senate voted to amend the resolution to include the statement: "The Senate urges the President to adopt this resolution as university policy without delay."

The following resolution was passed, (138:1), on first reading:

The Faculty Senate recommends for the 1990-91 academic year that the President allocate to each department an amount of salary increase equal to 5 percent of the sum of the salaries for the members of the department. This amount is to be distributed equally within a department on a dollar basis, not a percentage of salary basis for faculty performing satisfactorily. Merit pay would be used from money above the 5 percent amount.

The Senate meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.
Western Kentucky University currently operates under the system of academic department heads as opposed to a system of department chairs. Historically heads have been more administratively oriented while chairs have leaned more toward faculty determination in setting the academic direction of a department.

The head vs. chair decision does not need to be an either/or situation at Western. The role of department chair is not one of being either an administrator or one of the faculty involved in shared governance. It must be both. Items from each definition can be used to accomplish the need for a strong leader who involves the departmental faculty in making major policy decisions for the department. The term chair describes this position better than the term head.

The position of department chair is one of the most difficult on a campus. This individual must conduct candid evaluations of faculty, recommend salaries, make promotion and tenure recommendations, and develop the departmental budget among many other things. At the same time, this individual must provide avenues for faculty decision making on academic matters within the department.

Outstanding leadership and personnel skills are required, as well as a respected reputation in the discipline. This individual must not be hesitant to act as a mentor to all faculty members in the department regardless
of their status or longevity. The chair must provide the motivation for a
department to seek to be the best on the Western campus and beyond. Leadership requires that an individual make hard decisions in the best interests of the department, the college, and the university. Nonacademic matters cannot always be put to a vote.

A search shall be conducted for all departmental chair vacancies. An interim department chair may be appointed by the Vice President for Academic Affairs after consultation with the faculty and dean of the college. The search for a full-term department chair shall be an open search to both internal and external candidates. However, after consultation with the faculty, if both the dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs agree and can obtain the concurrence of the President, the search can be declared internal.

The faculty involvement in the selection process shall be to select the majority of the membership of the search committee from the tenured and tenure-track faculty, be a part of the interview process, and recommend no less than three acceptable candidates to the dean. If it is determined by the dean that it is not feasible to have the entire faculty of the department on the search committee, a reasonable distribution should result, with weight being given toward rank and tenure.

The dean's involvement shall be to appoint the full search committee, the majority of which shall have been selected by the faculty as mentioned
above, and the chair of the committee, with the concurrence of the Vice President for Academic Affairs; determine with the chair the number of candidates to be interviewed; be a part of the interview process; receive the recommendations of the department; and recommend no less than three candidates to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs' involvement shall consist of conferring with the dean on the naming of the search committee, being a part of the interview process, receiving the recommendation of the dean, and recommending no less than two candidates to the President.

The President shall be involved in the interview process whenever possible and shall recommend the institution's choice to the Board of Regents.

Candidates should not be ranked when their names are sent forward. Comments by the committee and individuals forwarding the recommended names should be clear in providing an evaluation.

Most of the day-to-day decisions on a campus are made at the departmental level. This requires strong and wise leaders who must be free to operate effectively and without fear of being removed at any time over a single decision by a faculty vote. Except in rare circumstances, department chairs shall be tenured members of the department. However, the chair will be evaluated yearly by the faculty in his/her department. This annual evaluation will be administered by the dean. During the chair's fourth
year, the dean will conduct a more extensive evaluation for the purpose of determining if the dean will recommend to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and in turn to the President, that the chair should continue.

The yearly evaluation by the faculty will clearly indicate to the dean if a chair has lost the confidence of the faculty. Although an individual will be expected to serve a four-year cycle, the dean may determine that it is in the best interest of the department, college, and university that the chair be removed prior to the end of the chair's expected cycle. This should be done only with the concurrence of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the President and the full knowledge of the faculty.

Additional details will be prepared after the final decision is made on the above. The Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs will be asked to initiate a department chairs' handbook.
RESOLUTION OF THE FACULTY SENATE OF WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

Whereas:

I. In the memorandum of April 2, 1986, from Academic Vice President Haynes, the faculty of Western Kentucky University were offered an enlarged role in the governance of departments. A fundamental part of this promise was the initiation of a process

"by which the administration of departments will be in the hands of a chair rather than a head."

II. The Implementation Committee, consisting of faculty and administrators appointed by Dr. Haynes, carefully defined the concept of a chair as being elected by the faculty of the department, consistent with the traditional and self-evident definition of the term chair.

III. The Implementation Committee unanimously recommended changing to a system of elected chairs.

IV. Consultants participating in the Tom Jones Symposium on Faculty Governance related the positive experience and effect of departmental governance by elected chairs at institutions comparable to Western.

V. The faculty of Western Kentucky University and the Faculty Senate endorsed the recommendation of the Implementation Committee that a system of governance by elected chairs be instituted at Western.

VI. Responding to Vice President Haynes' subsequent proposal (April 1, 1988) that would have the effect of changing the designation to "chairs" without providing for their election by faculty, the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, reaffirmed the previous endorsements and requests for election of true department chairs in the full and customary meaning of the term.

VII. Every official recommendation or endorsement from the faculty and its representatives and from the Implementation Committee, responding in good faith to the administration's original invitation and solicitation, has consistently supported and held true to the concept of elected chairs.

VIII. The proposal of September 29, 1989, runs counter to all of the previous recommendations and endorsements, leaves the procedures essentially unchanged from the present system, and is, in effect, a change in name only.

Therefore:

The Faculty Senate continues to recommend and request that the faculty be truly given an enhanced role in departmental governance at Western Kentucky University by implementing a system of true department chairs who are elected by the faculty of the respective departments.

Reasonable procedures for election, and for recall for cause (with adequate safeguards and balances) are carefully and thoroughly detailed in the recommendations of the Implementation Committee (November 11, 1986) and of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate (May 12, 1988).

We especially urge that in the selection process the faculty be given the principal role, subject always to veto for cause at a higher level. When a search is necessary, provision should be made for involvement of faculty at all levels on the search committee in those departments where it is not feasible for the entire faculty to constitute a search committee. We further urge that the decision about whether the search shall be in the hands of the entire department or its committee
be left to the judgment of the faculty of the department, rather than the dean of the college. Relative to search processes, we ask for clarification of the statement that the majority of the members of the search committee shall be selected by the faculty, since the document gives no indication as to how additional members are to be chosen or who or how many they might be. We urge that the search committee be allowed to rank the recommendations it makes to the dean. We urge further that, if one or two candidates are deemed to have particularly outstanding qualifications, the search committee not be required arbitrarily to submit three names.

We urge that the final procedure re-incorporate the carefully thought-out method for the recall of a chair. To put this function completely in the hands of the dean makes no real change from the current procedure. The procedure outlined in the original proposal offers little justification for the expressed concern that a chair may be removed at any time over a single decision.

We urge that procedures be specified more completely than the statement that "additional details will be prepared after the final decision is made on the above."

These recommendations are consistent with the highest principles of government that have yet been devised by mankind. They are made in the interest of helping Western to become the best possible institution that it can be -- to transcend limitations imposed by an antiquated system of governance that is not characteristic of the best and most progressive universities in America.
WHY DO STUDENTS ATTEND WESTERN?

CHARLES BUSSEY
PROFESSOR OF HISTORY

That's not a new question, of course, but are there any new answers? Maybe.

One of the oldest answers is athletics. Some say that students flood the Hill to watch Big Red basketball and football teams. They say that's sufficient reason to justify the millions of dollars in athletics over recent years.

Others point to friends as the reason people choose Western. Still others say that boyfriend or girlfriend is the attraction.

I am a history professor and was intrigued by the question, partly because of the mounting athletic deficits, so I decided to collect some evidence.

With a simple though informal and unscientific survey, I called on other history teachers for help. With no preliminary discussion, they began asking students taking their History 119 or 120--one or the other of which is required of all Western students--to list from one to three reasons for their attending Western.

Number one among the 1,420 students was no surprise--close to home, with 811 responses.

But second place surprised me. It was academics, which was listed by 453 students. All of those mentioned a specific department, college or teacher.

The third highest response total--372--was for attractive campus/friendly people/atmosphere. Then came low cost, 319; endorsed by friends 259; good reputation of school/faculty, 233.
Trailing were financial aid (including academic scholarships), 144; size of student body, 123; boyfriend-girlfriend, 60.

Standing 11th was athletics, 43—all recipients of grants-in-aid.

Ten students listed athletics/spectator.

Some students added specific comments, such as these:

—"I want to be a teacher, and Western’s Education College is ranked 16th in the nation."

—"I heard Luther Hughes [Head of the Agriculture Department] is a great teacher. I want to major in agriculture."

—"Western’s business college has a great reputation."

—"Western has the best music department in the state."

—"I came to Western because I heard it had the best nursing department in the state. Western students pass state boards."

—"Western has the best photojournalism department in the nation."

—"Western’s journalism department is Ivy League."

—"Western is one of only six schools in the country to offer a program in recombinant genetics."

—"I want to be a dancer. I heard Miss Veenker is an excellent teacher."

The most frequently mentioned department was journalism with 91 responses. Next was teacher education, 80. Following were business, 69; communications, 40; nursing, 16; performing arts, 16; biology, 14; computer science, 11; art, 11; music, 11.

Thirty-four other departments or pre-professional programs had respondents, ranging from nine to one.
TO DATE--HISTORY SURVEY--8/30/89--9/6/89--1420 Respondents

Close to Home -- 811

Academics -- 453 -- Students mentioned specific dept/college/teacher.
  Journalism -- 91; teacher education -- 80; business -- 69;
  communications -- 40; nursing -- 16; performing arts -- 16;
  biology -- 14; computer science -- 11; art -- 11; music -- 11;
  history -- 9; engineering technology -- 8; pre-vet -- 9; agriculture -- 8;
  social work -- 5; psychology -- 5; pre-med -- 4; public relations -- 4;
  advertising -- 4; math -- 3; philosophy -- 3; English -- 3;
  recreation dept. -- 3; honors pro. -- 2; equine program -- 2;
  French -- 2; pre-pharmacy -- 2; athletic training program -- 1;
  geology -- 1; Spanish -- 1; medical technology -- 1; geography -- 1;
  wildlife ecology program -- 1; general studies degree -- 1;
  non-traditional major -- 1; interior design -- 1; chemistry -- 1;
  hotel management -- 1; "Science Dept." -- 2; dietetics -- 1;
  library media -- 1; government -- 1; Russian -- 1; physics -- 1.

(Of the 14 mentioning biology, 11 specifically mentioned "Recombinant Genetics.")

Attractive Campus/Friendly People/Atmosphere -- 372

Low Cost -- 319

Friends Recommended -- 259

Good Reputation of School/Faculty -- 233

Parental/Family Influence -- 186

Financial Aid (Includes Academic Scholarships) -- 144

Size of Student Body -- 123

Boy-Girlfriend -- 60

Athletics -- 43 grants -- (8 baseball grants; 6 track grants; 11 football
  grants; 7 swimming grants; 10 "recruited";
  1 basketball grants;)

Athletics/Spectator -- 10 -- (6 "to watch sports" or "I like to watch W.K.U.
  Hilltoppers"; "Big Red's here" -- 2; "I grew up
  going to Western ball games" -- 1; Cheerleader -- 1.)

"From Lex. -- to avoid U.K." -- 1
COSFL
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Support Higher Education

COSFL
COSFL is a statewide organization that promotes the professional welfare of faculty members in Kentucky's public universities and community colleges.

COSFL members are elected representatives of faculty organizations at the state-supported universities of Kentucky and so are uniquely qualified to understand the problems of higher education in Kentucky.

COSFL meets regularly to share concerns, identify issues, and seek solutions to the problems of higher education in Kentucky.

COSFL strives to improve faculty morale, the quality of faculty work life, and the overall quality of higher education in Kentucky.

COSFL believes that an excellent system of higher education is crucial to the cultural and economic welfare of the state and to all of its citizens.

COSFL considers the university faculties in Kentucky to be one of the state's greatest resources and is proud of its commitment to the development of that resource.

LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

COSFL SUPPORTS the concept of education reform in Kentucky for the purpose of creating an educational system that will produce high quality students and productive citizens for the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

COSFL SUPPORTS full formula funding for the commonwealth-supported universities of Kentucky.

COSFL SUPPORTS changes in legislation to improve the selection process of candidates for possible appointment to the boards of regents and trustees at the commonwealth-supported universities of Kentucky.

COSFL SUPPORTS changes in legislation to extend to six years the terms of members of the boards of regents and trustees at the commonwealth-supported universities of Kentucky.

COSFL SUPPORTS an actuarially sound Kentucky Teacher's Retirement System for faculty members of the commonwealth-supported universities of Kentucky.

COSFL SUPPORTS the fundamental concept of a sound general education program at the commonwealth-supported universities of Kentucky.

COSFL SUPPORTS the position that athletic programs at the commonwealth-supported universities of Kentucky be self-supporting.