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WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

XVI Number 2
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Announcements

Your Senate chair is back in her office in Tate Page and can be reached at 4417.

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If you are not a faculty member and interested in continuing to receive a copy of the newsletter, please inform the Senate secretary at 5325. She can be reached between 12:00 and 1:30 daily. If you are receiving extra copies, please inform us. We are trying to cut xerotyping costs.

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Material published in this newsletter expresses the opinion of the author and not the Faculty Senate.

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From the Desk of the Chair

This has been a difficult and eventful period in our history. The Senate has addressed the results of the Arthur Anderson Special Procedures Report (see the summary of meetings). Other issues, such as possible budget cuts and the regent election, have demanded attention. You will see some of these issues addressed in this newsletter.

My activities since the last newsletter have been varied. One regent, Earl Fischer, responded to my request for a discussion. We met and I was most impressed by his concern and vision for Western. He struck me as a thoughtful, genuine, individual and a valuable addition to the Board. I attended a meeting of the Coalition for Senate Faculty Leadership (representative of all the Kentucky public universities). The group plans to appeal to the Governor to avoid cutting higher education further. I also attended the student rally in Frankfort. Apart from the political consequences I believe the student effort was a valuable experience in civic responsibility and collective action. Joe Rains, the organizer, and all those students who attended deserve plaudits for their efforts. Jeff Jensen and his committee (Lou Turley, Rudy Prins, Jackson Kesler, Larry Scott, and Dwight Cline) deserve special thanks for running the Regent election and its forums. It is a more difficult job than it may appear.

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A Brief Overview of the Faculty Senate?
by Sally Kuhlenschmidt

What is the Faculty Senate? Our constitution, which is a document approved by the Board, lists 3 main purposes of the Senate (the following are quotes from that document):

1. to provide a forum for the concerns and interests of the university-wide faculty community
2. to furnish advice and recommendations with reference to policies that pertain to the faculty
3. to make available to the university the expertise of the faculty on appropriate matters.

To address these 3 goals committees are formed which do significant behind the scenes work, often impacting an issue before it becomes a problem. The By-laws, Amendments and Elections committee (Jeff Jensen, chair) supervised the recent Faculty Regent election, monitors senate elections, and presents possible changes to our constitution. The Faculty Status and Welfare committee (David Neal, chair) generates the ever-popular salary survey and periodically addresses the smoking issue, concerns about liability, retirement, etc. etc. The Professional Responsibilities and Concerns committee (Linda Brown, chair) deals with issues relating to the profession of being a member of the faculty. The Fiscal Affairs committee (Lou Fong, chair) monitors institutional spending. The Academic Affairs committee (Barry Brunson, chair) examines academic policies, such as recruitment of minority students. The Committee on Senate Communications (Mary Cobb, chair) prepares the newsletter which provides a community-wide means of transmitting the faculty point-of-view. The Executive Committee (Sally Kuhlenschmidt, chair) acts as liaison with the administration and with the Academic Council. This committee also provides nominees to the President for University committees when asked to do so and meets regularly with the President for the purposes of enhancing communication.

This body is a tool which ultimately reflects the needs and motivations of its constituency (that's you) to the degree that the constituency is involved with the Senate. This body is also a representative group which means the solutions and responses generated will be consensual—rarely taking a strong stance in one direction or the other, but addressed in a manner which most can agree to. Every faculty member has a say in these decisions to the extent that senators are elected who reflect the interests of the department or college from which they come. When you elect your representatives choose individuals with the patience for the political process and the vision to generate solutions and insights into the needs of the faculty and of Western. Inform those individuals of your wishes. The Senate is what you and your colleagues make of it.
Summary of Sept 10, 1992, Senate Meeting

Nancy Givens reported on the Preston Center indicating that in the future they hope to avoid classes during the lunch hours. Spouses who are members are not eligible for the health screening, though they may be eventually. One-third of the lockers are reserved for single-session rental. Graduate students who are teaching and part-time students may use the facility for a $10 fee. Part-time faculty are charged a higher fee than Full-time faculty.

Chair Kuhlenschmidt reported that the President would provide a report on football expenditures shortly and that he had urged support for recruitment of minority faculty and students. Following committee reports President Meredith was allowed to make a presentation concerning the audit. He indicated that a package of compensation was offered to him verbally when he came. He said, "Although my salary now ranks sixth among Kentucky's university presidents, I've asked the Board's Executive Committee to not consider an adjustment in my salary at this time." He said that the allowance was not compensation for his wife, that she works for free. "The fact that the check was made out to her was the institution's long-term mechanism for providing additional funds to the President and his spouse to accomplish the myriad of functions and expectations that are not reimbursable by the University." He also addressed the three resolutions scheduled for later Senate debate.

Regent Evans reported that the Board will receive a quarterly statement on agency accounts; charges to the physical plant for the President's home and office will be invoiced to the budget of the unit where the work was performed; the University will continue to be responsible for all maintenance and improvements at the home, all Board members will review a proposal regarding the President's contract, to be decided at the Oct 29th meeting.

The following resolutions were proposed for first reading on behalf of the Executive Committee:

1. The Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University respectfully requests the Board of Regents to enact with all haste, the recommendations put forth by Arthur Andersen & Co. in the "Agreed-Upon Procedures Report," commonly known as the "audit."

2. Through this resolution the Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University expresses its concern and utter dismay regarding the manner in which public funds have been administered and disbursed by the current University Administration as revealed in the "Agreed-Upon Procedures Report" prepared by Arthur Andersen & Co. The loss of a quorum ended discussion.
Summary of Sept 22, 1992, Special Senate Meeting

A special meeting was held in order to complete, in a timely manner, first readings of the resolutions proposed Sept 10. The second resolution was amended to read:

Through this resolution the Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University expresses its concern regarding the manner in which public funds have traditionally been administered and disbursed by the University.

A third resolution was proposed and amended to read:

In the interest of fiscal integrity, the Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University respectfully requests the Board of Regents to require the internal auditor of the University to report directly to the Board and in addition to the University Administration.

Information pertaining to the duties of internal auditors was presented, indicating that generally auditors have a direct link to the board of directors. Furthermore, the President of the Assoc. of College and University Auditors was quoted as saying that about 1/3 of auditors report to the trustees, 1/3 to the president and about 1/3 to the vice-president.

Senator Kessler proposed, for one reading, that the fall break cover faculty and staff in addition to students. The motion failed. Opportunity was presented for a discussion of basketball ticket fees and the Preston Center fees but those who requested the time were not present thus no discussion followed.

[These minutes were summarized by Chair Kuhlenschmidt in the interests of saving you reading time and the Senate copying costs. Complete minutes are available from the Senate secretary if you desire them. If there is objection to this format please notify Mary Cobb and we will return to printing the full minutes. If you like the shorter version, please notify us also. Majority of comments received rules.]

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Hello, I'm Tom Meredith, President of Western Kentucky University. Thank you for joining me for a few comments on the topic, "Higher Education is Good Business for Kentucky." I speak today not only as the President of Western Kentucky University but also as the Convenor for the Council of University Presidents in Kentucky.

Higher education institutions are, in one sense, simply corporations located all across this state. There are 8 public universities, 14 public community colleges, and 21 private colleges, but today I would like to only talk about the public entities.

For many areas, these public entities or corporations are the largest employers in our areas. Certainly that holds true for Western Kentucky University. In 1991-92, the 8 public universities and the 14 community colleges employed nearly 30,000 people in our state and that doesn't include part-time workers or students workers, etc. That's a lot of people. Our annual operating budgets, not counting capital construction, totaled almost $1.6 billion. The interesting part of that figure is that almost $1 billion of this amount is in salaries. That's dollars turning over on a regular basis producing a phenomenal ripple effect of dollars across Kentucky.

That's good business! Public higher education is pumping $1.6 billion into the state's economy each year. That's significant. But what's the state's investment to get this kind of return. What's the state's investment that causes this to happen. Out of that $1.6 billion, the state invests $674 million, or 42 percent of that total. So in other words, for every $42 the state invests, it gets that back plus an additional $58 into the economy. Now it doesn't take one long to calculate that that's a 138 percent return on the state's investment in higher education in this state and that doesn't count the ripple effect. What an investment! Would you invest at that rate with a 138 percent return on a yearly basis? I suspect you would.

But that's not all. All of our institutions have construction going on on our campuses and not all of that construction is state funded.
For example, at Western Kentucky University we have two new residence halls that have just been completed. No state dollars were involved. The cost -- over $8 million with over $7 million going straight to Kentucky contractors. We've just completed a new health and activities building. The cost was approximately $9.6 million. Western Kentucky University provided around 15 percent of that construction cost in private dollars. So many times these are private dollars which are not active dollars in an economy. So, if one takes the 1.5 million private dollars on the Preston Center, those are the dollars that someone had invested somewhere else or which may not have been very active dollars that became extremely active dollars in bringing the building to fruition.

But that's not all. We bring in what we call extramural dollars through outside grants, contracts for research projects, and economic development, for example. These are items benefiting Kentucky. These are not gifts. They are monies for which there is competition and our institutions have been successful in getting those dollars. I don't have a total for the entire state, but at Western Kentucky University this past year we brought in 7.7 million in outside dollars to assist us in what we try to do at our institution. By the way, that's up 101 percent in the last four years, with most of those dollars being spent in Kentucky.

But that's not all. Every good business has clients and many times we measure the success of our businesses by the number of clients that we have and how good those clients are. Last fall, the fall of 1991, in Kentucky we had 157,282 students registered for academic credit courses at our public institutions. Sixty-one percent of those students were going full-time. Kentucky's population of those 18 and over is approximately 2.7 million. This means that last fall 5.8 percent of our total population was taking academic credit courses in our state. By the way, we had the largest enrollment ever in the history of our state in higher education last fall and that's a good sign for our state. As a matter of fact, in Kentucky, higher education enrollment for public institutions had grown 40 percent in six years through the fall of 1991. This figure matches exactly what's happened to Western Kentucky University--40 percent growth in six years. The percentage of high school graduates going to college continues to increase and that just adds to the numbers at our institutions.
I can't give the total for those number of individuals taking non-academic credit seminars, workshops and enrichment courses because that data is not gathered. But I can assure you that the numbers go into the tens of thousands of people who attend those kinds of activities on our campus.

What's the economic impact of all of these students coming to the public institutions of higher learning in Kentucky? At Western, an economic impact study was completed a few years ago. We discovered that our students spend, not counting tuition, $500 per month on average. That's for apartments, gas, food, and clothes. Those of you with sons and daughters in college will easily believe this figure. These students are spending dollars they might not otherwise be spending to help the state's economy.

So, is this good business? In addition to the obvious economic benefits, nearly 20,000 people a year get degrees ranging from an associate degree to a medical degree in our state. What's so good about people with college degrees? That information is well known, but let me just give you ten quick factors that would verify and support the fact that people with college degrees are good for our state. They make more money. They pay more taxes. They are healthier. They have more health insurance. They have fewer divorces. They save more. They spend more on education. They give more to charities. They support the arts. And they are more satisfied with their work. A study in the late seventies stated that with each additional year of schooling, the probability of death is lowered by four-tenths of a percentage point. Now some of you, who have had children in universities now for five, six, or seven years, are thinking your children are going to live forever given the amount of education that they are getting. The fact of the matter is that it's good for our state to have college graduates.

Another major reason why the number of graduates is good news is that we live in a state that is at the bottom, or near the bottom, in the ratio of its adult population with a college degree. Economically, this hurts us. It influences the level of industry that comes to our state to help feed our state's economy. This is one of the reasons why it is so good for our state to encourage out-of-state students to come here to go to college because we know
that many of them will stay in this state and work if we can just get them here to go to college.

**So it comes down to a business question.** If you were involved in evaluating businesses, how would you evaluate higher education as a business in this state?

Let me recap for you. It's one of the state's largest employers -- the largest employer in many areas. It has a major payroll where the money turns over rapidly and quickly. It's environmentally clean. There's a 138 percent return on the investment. It promotes economic development. It's causing possible idle dollars to be given to become active dollars through private fund raising efforts. It has more clients than can be taken care of, so there must be a good product to come to. It offers enrichment and continuing education opportunities for all citizens. And, the end result of this business is that it benefits society intellectually and culturally as well as economically.

Would you cut the support for this kind of business? I suspect not. The benefits are too great. Yet, in this state during this last year $58.6 million was cut from the funding for higher education. This is almost a 10 percent decline in support from the state. From the first of July of 1991 to the first of July of 1992, at Western Kentucky alone, we lost over $4 million in state support. This is nearly an 8.5 percent decline.

One must realize that state support as a part of our budget has continued to decline over the years. In 1987-1988, 54 percent of the budget at Western Kentucky University was funded by the state. That percentage is now 46 percent. Higher education funding, as a part of the state budget, has continued to decline. In the mid 1970s, 20 percent of the state budget was spent on higher education in this state. In the 1980s, this figure dropped to 16-17 percent. In 1991-92, the figure had slipped to 15.5 percent. This year, we're at 14.9 percent and next year, based on the known appropriations, it will be all the way down to 14.5 percent. A major decline. As a matter of fact, the funding in 1993-94 will simply equal the funding of 1990-91. Remember that all of this is in light of a 40 percent growth in enrollment over the last six years. Even worse, the universities in Kentucky have now been told to prepare for a possible additional cut this year.

One of the major concerns facing our state is that we are producing, and are going to produce, the best high school graduates in this country through the Kentucky Education
Reform Act. All of us in higher education are extremely supportive of that act. But those students coming out of the nation's best high schools in Kentucky are going to have to consider attending depleted universities. Remember that 88 percent of the students who graduate from our high schools now stay in state to go to college. That will change and yet we need them here.

We are not crying the blues. We simply want everyone to understand that we are becoming non-competitive through neglect. I suspect this state gets more return on the dollar from its public institutions of higher learning than it gets from any other entity. A recent spokesperson for the Education Commission of the States stated clearly that one of the sad things that's happening in states across the country at this time is that higher education funding is seen as the rainy day fund for the states. It's where states can go to get money when they run short, and it's destroying our higher education system.

In summary, although it is much much more, funding for higher education could be considered as simply an economic decision. To set our goal to have the finest K-12 system is too shortsighted. If this state is to become as competitive as we all would like us to be, then we must fully develop and utilize our higher education system. Education in this state must be seen as a continuum from pre-kindergarten through university. We need your help. Thank you very much.
One benefit of being Senate Chair is the novel view of the University thus obtained. I notice, for example, that the academic community seems like an archipelago. Each department is roughly the equivalent of an island with its own rules, norms, feelings, and needs. The island communities are unified by the culture of academia. These island cultures seem to take a certain pleasure and pride in their particular point-of-view. Each has its own perspective on what "truth" constitutes, its own notion of expertise.

I notice, from my position, that these separate island cultures do come together for some collective actions. Most often, it seems, that each member passionately believes in their own piece of truth and sometimes fails to realize that this person from another ‘island’ has honestly, and with thought, arrived at a different version of the truth.

I take delight in the strength of conviction in and willingness to sacrifice for a particular point-of-view. I am saddened when that same strength of conviction becomes justification for attacks on personality or motivation. There is a seductive pull to identify those opposing your view as morally wrong. Seeing an immorality makes it easier to hold to your own particular perception.

On the other hand, that very sense of morality denied, or injustice, is what drives reform, what corrects inappropriate behavior, what prevents future misbehavior. To ignore or excuse problem behavior is to condone it. The challenge is to find a merciful conviction, to address behavior that is inappropriate but to accept the humanity of the one engaging in the behavior.

In the Senate, merciful conviction is achieved through parliamentary procedures, a structured system allowing appropriate debate, setting limits as needed, ensuring rights as necessary. Parliamentary procedures allow respect for another’s point-of-view without requiring agreement with that view. To be a successful system, however, individuals must recognize their duty to participate, to act, not like an archipelago of islands, but like a unified land. Being chair I occasionally hear from individuals who are disillusioned with the Senate and refuse to participate. They usually cite strong disagreement with some Senate position, or that the Senate has not accomplished what they wish it to do. These beliefs are tragic and a threat to democratic principles. Individuals are denying their duty to participate in collective action, to contribute their individuality to the debate, and then, after debate, to submerge that individuality to the decision of the group until next time.

Collective bodies allow collective actions which can produce far greater products than individuals working separately. If all that collective debate produced was the prevention of dictatorship, then is not service worthwhile?
Collective participation corrects for the problems of dictatorial self-indulgence.

This philosophy has monetary implications. Given current economic conditions we, as faculty, must attend to the needs of our collective culture—that of faculty member—and set aside for the time the inter-island differences of our various professions. We must work toward benefits for faculty as a whole, or suffer as individual experts and as citizens. We must give some loyalty to our role as faculty or lose the benefits of that role. It is time to build bridges between those island kingdoms. It is time for collective action.