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FACULTY SENATE communications committee
NEWSLETTER

XVIII NUMBER 1
SEPTEMBER, 1994
PERSPECTIVE

A warm welcome to readers of this first issue of the Faculty Senate Newsletter for the 1994-95 academic year. This issue is comprised of Senate minutes, related materials and a healthy dose of commentary, always needed to keep perspective.

Our emphasis, indeed our primary focus for the school year, will be to serve as a faculty instrument for commentary and reflective thought. After all, our jobs require that we question, probe, analyze and go beyond the mere appearance of matters to synthesize cohesion from chaos. Reprinting Senate minutes will be done, but the emphasis will be upon interpretation. If your interpretation of events differs from ours, let us hear from you so that your perspective can become a part of these pages.

In a word, we will be assertive in commentary, from a faculty perspective, on issues we believe our colleagues are themselves talking about within their respective departments. To be sure, we are all pleased – maybe even complacent –after two years of decent raises. For that, we are grateful. But, that does not mean we should terminate our roles as proactive members of the campus community.

As such, we should state that articles dealing with issues other than official Senate business are the opinions of the writers and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Senate. They may not even represent yours. They are bound, however, to stir healthy debate.

Indeed, there exist many forums for the free expression of faculty concerns and observations. This newsletter is but one.

Faculty Senate Communications Committee

Bart White, Chair
(Potter College – Dept. of Communication and Broadcasting)
Congratulations to the College Heights Herald for its commentary in the first issue about the alleged willingness of the president and the board to violate the state open meetings law. Wrote Julie Grundy, "Western’s board has gone from one extreme to the other, from a group surrounded by controversy to one that will do anything it can to avoid even a hint of disagreement - even if that means leaving the public out in the cold...It is no accident that two of the four regents’ meetings each year are held when school is not in session. The board wants it that way - no students, few faculty and staff, limited press coverage. Whatever decisions are made will face no opposition because there’s no one there to serve up questions."

A NEW WKU FOUNDATION - NO QUESTIONS ASKED

While on the topic of "no questions," none of the regents except Ray Mendel questioned the rationale of "for whose benefit" was the new WKU Foundation established and how will it be administered? As of this writing, the exact structure (control, accountability, operating policies and procedures, etc.) of the new Foundation remains unclear.

What is known is that the Foundation will be a private entity independent from the university, with a board and chair appointed by the president. The College Heights Foundation and the Hilltopper Athletic Foundation will operate under the umbrella of the new Foundation, which will collect a management fee for administering monies.

Obvious, but unasked questions about how millions of dollars will be spent by a private board beyond the scope of the public are apparent. For instance, can money be spent for reasons other than the reason it was originally raised?

Vice-President Rutledge has been invited to an upcoming Senate meeting (which is open to the public!) to respond to the many concerns raised by the existence of this new foundation and how its funds will be administered by a Meredith-appointed board chaired by personal friend Steve Catron.
* The "New Level/Moving Up" document presents each of us with new challenges and certainly has merit. However, whatever "changes" are implemented will need to be supported by an administration that has not been asked to "change" in any significant way. Each paragraph in the President's original "Moving to a New Level" document refers to either students or faculty and the changes they must make. The commitment to this move will ultimately require increased performance of administrative and support services as well as a higher performance from faculty and students.

If the president and the board are truly interested in proactive change implied from this document, one suggestion would be to look at the real problems confronting each of us on a daily basis: an entrenched bureaucracy that creates communication and administrative bottlenecks and hence, inefficiency at all levels. A highly centralized organization is simply not efficient. The upper administration must be dedicated to the sharing of information, the building of a climate of trust and the moving of information, decision authority and responsibility down in the organizational structure from administration to departments and faculty.

This kind of real change can only occur if the board understands the need to flatten the organization, reduce administrative bloat and decentralize its operations. This would allow departments to obtain their budgets and then captain their own ships in their own ways. Corporate America has become globally competitive by doing this same thing, so why can't we?

We might also ask what the long term impact of a mandated 20 ACT/2.5 GPA requirement will mean for total student enrollment. How will the downsizing that seems apparent then impact faculty and staff positions? It is hoped we could continue doing our jobs with a lower student-teacher ratio, as funding will be derived from a higher graduation rate, the result of a higher quality of student at the head-end.

Also of concern is the statement in the President's document that the "values, traditions and commitment to teaching that WKU has always maintained will be a major asset in addressing" [the demand for higher quality.]

Comparative budget analysis figures might possibly show that teaching has never been given true budgetary priority at Western and may be significantly lower than benchmark institutions. (See this newsletter page 17, S17:3/94.12..."It was brought out during the discussion that such a document may already exist, but is being protected as "confidential" by the President's Office for fear that it might prove embarrassing to the administration.")
Quite simply, regardless of past sins, a greater portion of the university budget must be allocated to instruction and Faculty regent Ray Mendel has done something about this. In an attempt to find the elusive handle that has been missing from the budget in recent years, the board accepted his request to set up an ad hoc committee to investigate thematter of university spending patterns.

This committee met in the Regent's Room (WAB) at 3:30 pm on Monday, September 19 to discuss the issue, but surprisingly elected to do nothing, claiming that two sets of data (one from the president and one from Ray Mendel) was too confusing to analyze. A motion was accepted to table any discussion until the "staff" (the Budget Office) had analyzed and interpreted the available data and issued a report to the board. Thus, information that should be in the public domain remains suppressed by a board seemingly unwilling to publicly discuss data that might prove controversial and, as earlier mentioned, embarrassing to the university. ("Excuse me...but, how long do we have to keep our heads in the sand?!")

*****

DON'T READ THIS - IT'S CONFIDENTIAL

* Ray Mendel has been doing an extraordinary job in trying to work with a docile board. At this year's first Senate meeting, Ray expressed his concern over what he views as a disturbing pattern of "information control" on campus. Examples of this dangerous pattern, which Ray has rejected, include a presidential request that only the board chair and the president be allowed to speak to the press after board meetings, that all information requests on university matters be directed to the president, and the assigning of all three elected university regents to the same board committee (the academic committee.) These three examples are in addition to much information, like the benchmark institution report on instructional spending, being classified as "confidential" by the president and the board then delaying discussion on this data as long as possible.

*****

DON'T LEAVE CAMPUS WITHOUT IT!

* We hope all faculty and staff (who qualified) are enjoying their most recent perk: a new and unsolicited American Express card, compliments of the administration. Even though this has been in the works for months, the administration didn't inform
us of their decision until after we had received the cards. For those who haven’t already cut them up, the card won’t expedite the red tape of travel reimbursement. Your bill may still arrive and be due before you receive a travel check to cover it.

For those full-time employees who didn’t receive them... sorry, your credit is questionable and you’re not an acceptable risk. Now, you have the stigma of not getting a card that you didn’t request, because not getting it puts you in a separate class from those who did.

If you do decide to keep yours, at least there is no annual service fee. Evidently, American Express will profit from the percentage rebate they receive from retailers who accept the card and possibly from the faculty/staff mailing list itself.

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* Football attendance figures for the WKU-EKU "Thursday Night Game of the Year": 12,000 something; not bad, but can any WKU team keep the students on campus for the weekend??

*******

PASSED BY THE FACULTY SENATE AND SENT TO THE PRESIDENT ON FIRST READING, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 1994

WHEREAS:

The Faculty Senate is in agreement with the President that the faculty should be afforded the fullest possible participation in considering a "New Level" of quality for Western Kentucky University.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Faculty Senate requests that the President furnish the Senate with one copy of each of the College-level responses and each of the Vice-Presidents’ responses to the "New Level" proposal as soon after October 15 as possible.

2. The Faculty Senate requests that faculty comprise at least one half of the university-wide committee appointed by the President which will be charged with preparing a "final plan" for advancing Western Kentucky University to a "New Level."
CHAIRS OF FACULTY SENATE
WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
1976-1994
FACULTY SENATES I-XVII

1976-78* Phil Constans
1978-79 Tom Jones
1979-80 Tom Jones
1980-81 Don Bailey
1981-82 Joan Krenzin
1982-83 Joan Krenzin
1983-84 Richard Weigel
1984-85 Tom Coohill
1985-86 Gene Evans
1986-87 Gene Evans
1987-88 Fred Murphy
1988-89 Fred Murphy
1989-90 Bart White
1990-91 Bart White
1991-92 Arvin Vos
1992-93 Sally Kuhlenschmidt
1993-94 Robert Dietle

*Faculty Senate I ran from October, 1976 to early April, 1978. Roman numbering of the Senate year did not appear in Senate Minutes until 1980.

SCHEDULE OF FACULTY SENATE XVIII MEETINGS
1994-95
GARRETT CC BALLROOM, 3:30 PM

September 8
October 13
November 10
December 8

January 19
February 9
March 9
April 13
April 27 (XIX)
Call to Order

The first meeting of the Senate XVIII was called to order by Chair Dietle at 3:32. R. Simpson substituted for Shula Ramsay, Karen Samson for Bill Howard, Betty Fulwood for Louella Fong, and Patricia Minter for Charles Bussey. Absent without alternates were Eugene—Evans, Carolyn Eichenberger, Richard Patterson, John Crenshaw, Matthew Dettman, Rita Hessley, Daniel Jackson, David Stiles, Jim Brown, Lou-Ann Crouther, Patricia Lockett, Fred Murphy, Brent Oglesbee, and Charles Smith.

Consideration of the Minutes

The minutes for the April 14th meeting were corrected to read "The Faculty Morale Survey" (in the first sentence for the Announcements) and were approved as corrected.

Committee Reports

Report from the Executive Committee (Robert Dietle)

The results from the 1994 Faculty Morale Survey were distributed to all the senators. From the responses (total responses 262) it seems that the faculty is not particularly happy about a number of things. With respect to the Faculty Senate, the lack of a consistent newsletter might be a problem. The chair indicated that he read all the handwritten comments on the surveys and recommends the new officers to do so as well. The surveys are available in the Senate Office (224 D Cherry Hall).

All the senators should caucus with their committees immediately after this senate meeting to elect a committee chair and report back to the new Senate Chair.

Report from the Committee on By-Laws, Amendments and Elections (Larry Snyder)

A list of the senators for the Senate XVIII were distributed to all the senators.

Report from the Faculty Regent (Ray Mendel)

The budget and the agenda for the meeting of the Board of Regents on May 10, 1994 has been set. The salary increases are in the budget as discussed (6% on average for full professors, 5% for associate professors, 3% for assistant professors, and 2% for instructors). The salary increases for last year and this year were the largest in the state and Western made progress towards adjusting the salaries of employees to benchmark institutions.

Mendel compared the average salaries of Eastern Kentucky University, Northern Kentucky University, and Middle Tennessee State University with the average salaries at Western Kentucky University from 1979 through 1994. (Eastern and Northern are the benchmark institutions which are used by the salary plan; MTSU is the benchmark institution President Meredith used for a similar comparison of salaries, the results of which have never been made public.) For the level of instructors and assistant professors, Western is about equal with the other institutions. (Eastern is ahead on both categories.) For the level of associate professors, Western’s average salaries are below the average salaries of any of the other three institutions (and have been since at least 1984). For the level of full professors, Western’s average salaries are even further below the average salaries of any of the other three
institutions. However, in 1968, Western was on top (with MTSU) for full professors.

Other items on the agenda are changes in the admission requirements for social work, the possible resurrection of the MBA program, approval of expenditures for the 3rd quarter report, recommendation for approval of salary guidelines (known as the uniform personnel policy which deals with employees paid by soft-money), recommendation to approve the use of money from the reserve funds for essential instructional equipment as requested by department heads and deans for some time. Another item on the agenda is a recommendation to approve that the university changes how bids for the external audit are evaluated.

**New Business**

**Election of Officers**

The following officers were elected:

- Chair: Marvin Leavy (nominated by Nancy Baird)
- Vice-Chair: Larry Snyder (nominated by Lynn Newhart)
- Secretary: Sylvia Pulliam (nominated by Joan Krenzin)
- Parliamentarian: Joan Krenzin (nominated by Ed Dorman)

**Announcements**

The committees should caucus after the meeting is over and let the new chair know who was elected chair of each committee by campus mail before the end of the semester.

**Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 4:25.

Respectfully submitted by Uta Ziegler
MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Committee of Senate XVIII
    Chairs, Standing Committees
FROM: Larry Snyder, Vice Chair
DATE: 25 August 1994
RE: Log of resolutions passed by Faculty Senate XVII

According to the revised Constitution of the Faculty Senate, it is the responsibility of the Vice Chair to track the progress of resolutions adopted by the Senate. I have therefore reviewed the minutes of Senate motions passed during the previous legislative session. Motions not adopted have been omitted.

Attached is a log listing resolutions adopted by Senate XVII and recorded in the minutes. Vote tallies and number of readings were carried through when listed. Apparently some resolutions have not been acted upon, or that action, such as letters written and/or delivered, was not recorded in the minutes. It is the duty of the Senate, and particularly its standing committees, to act upon adopted resolutions. A review of these resolutions may help to shape our agenda for the coming session.

Finally, as this is only the second such log prepared, I have taken the liberty to alter the process for numbering the resolutions from the first log. Instead of beginning with the calendar year, which does not correspond with our sessions, I have begun with the Senate number (eg. S17). Next, the month and year of the meeting is given, rather the number of the meeting itself (eg. S17:10/93). Finally, the adopted motions are numbered sequentially for the entire Senate session (eg. S17:4/94.13). It seems to me that a standardized process for numbering the resolutions be established in order to track their progress. I am certainly open to any suggestions as to how this can be simplified and/or clarified.
The following resolutions were adopted at the first meeting of Senate XVII on 4/29/93:

S17:4/93.1 (one reading: voice vote)

Whereas: The implementation of the three-year salary proposal recently passed by the Western Kentucky University Board of Regents will involve restructuring of the university, including the elimination of full-time faculty positions;

Whereas: University president Thomas Meredith has stated that any restructuring of the university will be guided by a revised Western XXI plan;

The Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University resolves:

1. Any committee given the task of revising Western XXI must consist of a majority of full-time faculty not assigned administrative responsibilities.

2. The faculty who serve on the committee will be elected by the Faculty senate but do not have to be members of the Senate.

3. No other group or individual will have the power to change the finished report, before it goes to the Board of regents, without the consent of this committee.

ACTION: see S17.10-93.1 and S17.2-94.1

S17:4/93.2

Whereas Senator Kuhlenschmidt has served the Faculty Senate with outstanding ability,

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate commends Senator Kuhlenschmidt for her excellent service to Senate XVI.

ACTION: Senator Otto presented a gavel to Senator Kuhlenschmidt in appreciation for her service.
The following resolution was adopted at the third meeting of Senate XVII on 10/14/93:

S17:10/93.3

Whereas: In April 1993 the Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University approved a resolution calling for the participation of full-time faculty in any revision of Western XXI;

Whereas: Western Kentucky University is in the midst of a three-year salary plan which may require restructuring of the university;

The Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University resolves:
1. To create a committee of full-time faculty to begin a review of Western XXI.
2. Each college shall be represented by one assistant professor, one associate professor, and one full professor, none of whom have administrative responsibilities. No department may have more than one representative on the committee.
3. The Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate will receive nominations for this committee until November 2. On that date the Executive Committee will review nominations and select the faculty to serve on the committee.
4. The committee to review Western XXI will hold its organizational meeting on Monday, November 8, 1993. The Chair of the faculty Senate will preside at the organizational meeting.

ACTION: President Meredith explained that Western XXI was not up for review until 1996. On 11/2/93, following the close of nominations, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate selected a twelve-member committee to review Western XXI. The committee's report was given to the Senate on 12/9/93 as is recorded in the minutes of that meeting. On 2/17/94 the following motion (S17.2-94.1) passed:

The faculty Senate accepts the report of the committee to review Western XXI for review.

No further action has been taken.
The following resolutions were adopted at the fourth meeting of Senate XVII on 11/11/93:

S17:11/93.4 (second reading)

Whereas, The University libraries perform service functions that affect the academic role of the entire University, and

Whereas, the university-wide oversight committee for the libraries established during the presidency of Dr. Donald Zacharias, which reported directly to the Vice president of Academic Affairs, no longer exists, and

Whereas, such a committee would be beneficial in helping the libraries to fulfill their service now as in the past, therefore

Be it resolved that the Faculty Senate urges President Meredith to re-establish a University Library Oversight Committee, reporting directly to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, to be composed of one faculty member from each of the four colleges, elected by the departmental library representatives of that college, one faculty member from the University Libraries, elected by the University Library Faculty Committee, one faculty member representing the Faculty Senate, elected by the Senate, with the college deans and the Dean of Libraries as ex-officio members, this committee serving the same function with respect to library decisions that the Academic Council serves with respect to curricular decisions.

ACTION: It was reported to the full Senate on 2/17/94 that the Council of Academic Deans had adopted a proposal for a Library Advisory Committee similar to that suggested by the Senate. The purpose of the committee is to "review library policies and make recommendations to the Dean of Libraries and to the Vice President for Academic Affairs." The committee will not scrutinize the work of individual librarians.

It should be noted that the plan adopted differs in the composition of the Committee. In particular, no faculty member represents the Senate and the faculty member elected by University Libraries to the Committee is ex officio without voting privileges.

S17:11/93.5

It is so moved that one representative from the libraries and one representative from the community college be added to the faculty committee to review Western XXI.

ACTION: the committee was increased by two.
Whereas, the faculty of Western Kentucky University has strived since 1906 to make the University a respected center of learning,

Whereas, Western Kentucky University faculty excels in both basic and applied research,

Whereas, Western Kentucky University faculty has earned reputations which enable them to provide service on a regional, national, and international level,

Whereas, the ninety-six academic majors and six master degrees attract students throughout Kentucky, the United States and foreign countries,

Whereas, the faculty of Western Kentucky University is expected to respond to regional, national and international issues relative to their teaching, research and service role,

Let it be resolved that the Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University strongly supports the concept of Western Kentucky University as a comprehensive university and encourages President Meredith to champion this cause as deliberations continue on the subject of university mission statements.

ACTION:

The Faculty Senate requests that the Executive Committee of this body work out a statement to be sent to the board [of Regents] which emphasizes the concern of the Faculty Senate over the activities of the Higher Education Reform Commission and to encourage the board to take action.

ACTION: After consultation with the Executive Committee regarding content and form, Senate Chair Robert Dietle drafted a letter expressing the concerns of the Senate over recent actions of HERC. This letter was sent to the state-wide Congress of Faculty Senate Leaders (COSFUL) where it was then presented to HERC in the presence of the university presidents. It was reportedly well received.
The following resolution was adopted at the sixth meeting of Senate 17 on 2/17/94:

S17:2/94.8  
The faculty Senate accepts the report of the committee to review Western XXI for review.

ACTION: No further action has been taken.

The following resolutions were passed at a special meeting of Senate 17 on 2/24/94:

S17:2/94.9 (passed 20:13)  
The WKU Faculty Senate urges the WKU Board of Regents to adopt a non-grant-in-aid program in football as soon as possible.

S17:2/94.10 (passed 21:8)  
The WKU Faculty Senate urges the WKU Board of Regents to hold off making decisions with a potentially long-term impact on the budget without the budget being worked out to a large extent.

ACTION: Faculty Senate Chair Robert Dietle presented the resolutions passed at the special session of the Senate to the Board of Regents on 2/25/94. At that meeting, the contract of Coach Harbaugh was extended and no immediate action was taken by the Board with regard to the status of football as a grant-in-aid sport at Western.
The following resolutions were adopted at the eighth meeting of Senate 17 on 3/10/94:

S17:3/94.11 (second reading)
Whereas information on the Highest Degree is missing for many faculty in the printout to the Faculty Status and Welfare Committee for use in preparing its annual salary survey for the faculty Senate;

Whereas the Nine Month Equivalent salary of faculty for the prior year in the printout is not systematically updated to reflect all changes in that year (thereby creating some incorrect $ and % change figures);

The Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University requests that the Office of Institutional Research supplies the Computer and Informational Services Office with updated information on the highest degree and revised prior nine month salaries of faculty to be posted in the printout run off each fall for the Faculty Status and Welfare Committee of the Senate.

ACTION: Informed of this resolution, the President directed the Director of Human Resources to confer with the Chair of the Senate's Faculty Status and Welfare Committee to update the salary printout accordingly. An amended printout for 1993-4 was furnished to that committee on 6/16/94. The degree and salary data thus incorporated should be reflected in the 1994-5 printout.

S17:3/94.12 (first reading)

The faculty Senate requests that the Board of Regents undertake a study of other benchmark institutions to determine the percentage of budget spent on instruction.

ACTION: Faculty Regent Ray Mendel promised to present this request to the Board at its March meeting. It was brought out during the discussion of the motion that such a document may already exist, but is being protected as "confidential" by the President's Office for fear that it might prove embarrassing to the administration.
The following resolution was adopted at the ninth meeting of Senate XVII on 4/14/94:

S17:4/94.13 (second reading)

Whereas, the faculty of the English Department strongly questions the procedures used for administering the Instructor and Course Evaluation Forms; and

Whereas, the methods used imply that all faculty members of the university may be unprofessional, unethical and untrustworthy; and

Whereas, the faculty waste time and effort searching out colleagues to administer the evaluation which serves no useful purpose since the confidentiality of the process can still be breached; and

Whereas, the university faces shrinking financial resources;

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate create a committee to re-evaluate the process by which instructors and courses are evaluated at Western.

ACTION: No committee has yet been formed. The recent President's document "Moving to a New Level While Keeping Old Traditions" presented to the faculty last spring has asked that the evaluation process be reconsidered by each unit and college.