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WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

XVIII NUMBER 4
APRIL, 1995

Senate
Communication
Committee

Bart White, Chair
We, as faculty, certainly are represented well by current Regent Ray Mendel who has been the lone public voice in a silent wilderness at recent Regent's meetings. Last week, Ray expressed his concerns about the "New Level" timetable where appointed task forces will work primarily during the summer months when 80 percent of the faculty are gone. This discussion resulted in a compromise when an August-September faculty review will be scheduled; but, as Mendel noted, once put onto paper, decisions become very difficult to change.

***************

Despite the rhetoric, the alleged intentions to give faculty raises in the area of 5% are apparently dashed due to the increases in employee health insurance premiums. Even though this is beyond university control, this was foreseen months ago; still, the president informed the Senate that 5% raises were realistic. Although the administration is still working on this matter, which has "forced" us into a statewide consortium that costs us more than if we negotiated premiums on our own, it seems that this very issue will be the causal factor that will sound the retreat from 5% raises. The administration claims that the final costs to the university could near $800,000, but newsletter political sources claim it will be much lower.

Even though the budget won't be final until sometime this summer, so much for the plan the regent's had to bring salaries closer to benchmark mean. We still may see 4%, but we'll be even farther behind next year (with Eastern reportedly giving 5%), leaving the question open of how we can move to a new level with little money to be competitive within rank or at entry-level for newly hired professors. Once this "New Level" begins to roll, be prepared to do more for less; nothing new for WKU faculty, though. Just look at Ray Mendel's benchmark statistics on faculty salaries for the past several years.

***************

Now, THE story we've all been waiting for. Has a major van line yet been booked to move presidential belongings from Bowling Green to Mississippi? Nobody knows at this writing, with sources in Mississippi telling a different story than does WKU, meaning that the only official word that can be printed is that Dr. Meredith had until last Friday to either keep his name in nomination or withdraw it. By the time you read this, updated information may have appeared in the Daily News.

------- Bart White
**My personal impression of:**

1. faculty morale is that it is ................................................................. 3 35 21 33 9 255
2. the Senate’s focus (e.g., choice of issues) is ....................................... 5 41 39 11 4 254
3. the Senate’s performance in communicating faculty concerns to university administration is ............................................................... 13 43 25 15 3 252

**In my view:**

4. a system that would distribute salary increases based primarily on merit would be ................................................................. 21 33 17 20 10 257
5. the expectation that a faculty member must be proficient in all professional areas (teaching, research and service) is that this expectation is ................................................................. 12 20 11 36 21 258

6. the latitude for the faculty to influence decision-making is ........... 1 12 18 45 24 256

**In my opinion:**

7. the university’s governance system is ...................................................... 2 24 28 32 14 251
8. the university’s spending priorities are .................................................... 1 20 30 33 16 256
9. the university’s administrative responsiveness to faculty concerns is ................................................................. 2 18 27 32 21 258

**My personal assessment of:**

10. the university president’s job performance is that it is ....................... 9 31 27 20 13 258
11. my department head’s job performance is that it is ....................... 36 27 11 14 12 257

**I rate my:**

12. working conditions as ................................................................. 11 50 13 19 7 258
13. job satisfaction as ................................................................. 19 48 12 15 7 258
14. working relations with other faculty as ............................................. 36 51 4 6 3 258
## Faculty Senate Questionnaire Results
March 31, 1995

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<th>Percent of Responses</th>
<th>Point Avg*</th>
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<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Promotes academic excellence</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>2. Supports efforts to assure that high academic standards are maintained</td>
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<td>3. Demonstrates concern for the welfare of the faculty</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>4. Follows appropriate established procedures regarding tenure, promotion and grievance procedures</td>
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<td>5. Shows support for academic freedom</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Financially supports adequate faculty staffing</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Systematically addresses problems confronting the institution</td>
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<td>8. Addresses problems confronting the institution in a timely fashion</td>
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<td>9. Promotes long-range planning consistent with institutional needs</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>10. Encourages participatory decision making, seeking input from those most directly affected</td>
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<td>20</td>
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<td>11. Is willing to reevaluate and, if necessary, retract decisions</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<td>12. Selects competent administrative subordinates</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>13. Delegates appropriate responsibility to subordinates</td>
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<td>14. Establishes standards of control and review to ensure efficient and effective task completion</td>
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<td>15. Works toward providing equitable salary rates for faculty</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>16. Once decisions are made, promptly informs those affected</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>17. Treats individuals, departments, or colleges fairly</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>18. Provides accurate budget information</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>19. Works to provide adequate resources for faculty professional development</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>20. Allocates available funds equitably to all areas of the university</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>21. Prudently administers university funds</td>
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<td>22. Candidly explains the reasoning behind decisions</td>
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<td>23. Conveys accurate information</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>24. Uses appropriate channels to convey information</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<td>25. Engages in open dialogue with faculty</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td>26. Makes public statements which are consistent with his behavior</td>
<td>17</td>
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<td>27. Conveys a positive public image of the university</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>28. Supports attempts to secure governmental and other outside funding</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>29. Creates working conditions that facilitate using outside funding</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
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<td>30. Appears poised under pressure</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>31. Honors commitments and agreements</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>32. Works toward achieving affirmative action goals</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
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I have sufficient confidence in the President’s leadership to endorse his continuing as President.

Yes ___ 60% ___ No ___ 40% ___
(N=238)

*Scale: SD=1, SA=5

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Overall Avg = 3.11
Overall N= 258
An Open Letter on the Moving to a New Level Initiative

The following observations reflect discussion of the Moving to a New Level initiative at a luncheon meeting between President Meredith and the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate on 21 February. These comments may or may not precisely reflect the sentiments of all those present, or of all senators. They do attempt to convey accurately the spirit of that meeting, however.

From discussion and study of documents collected from the various units, it is clear that the President's intention to raise the academic standards of the university is widely applauded across campus. So, too, is the President's desire to position Western uniquely within the Kentucky state university system. Nor is there any dissent from the call for all faculty to pursue instructional excellence. Many faculty, if not all, are willing to make the necessary steps to move to a "new level," even at the risk of reduced student accessibility.

Faculty continue to express concern and frustration, however, over the apparent unwillingness of the President to incorporate our suggestions for improving the New Level proposal. The fact that the document is essentially unchanged after a year of deliberation, except for a compromise on admission standards, gives the appearance that this administration is willing to listen to anyone--politicians, fund raisers, and education theorists--anyone, that is, except its own faculty. There can be no faculty ownership of a document that does not reflect faculty input. Indeed, the rebuff only breeds the kind of cynicism and mistrust that stifles genuine cooperation.

In particular, the Summation Committee commissioned by the President accurately reported that faculty have expressed little support for, and frequently opposition to, rising junior exams, mandatory public service for students, and a "quality assurance" guarantee upon graduation. All responses reasonably questioned the viability and appropriateness of these requirements given our present general education curriculum and our student constituency. Faculty also remain wary of the President's commitment to research given the intended reduction in release time. A higher level university must support its researchers, as well as its teachers. Indeed, research is essential to good teaching and the enhancement of the intellectual atmosphere of an institution of higher learning. Further, there is still a great deal of confusion about the structure and purpose of the proposed "University College." Although it was endorsed by the Summation Committee, there was virtually no support for this idea within the individual colleges. Finally, before student evaluations are forwarded to administrators at every level as proposed, the current evaluation process needs to be revised or replaced. At present, student evaluations do not gauge teaching effectiveness, only student satisfaction, which is something very different. We dare not cave in to the "consumer mentality" here, lest we reduce education to a commodity dependent upon opinion polls.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry Snyder, Vice-Chair, on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate
27 February 1995
Report of the Ad Hoc Committee for Developing a Statement on Faculty Ethics and Professional Responsibilities

13 April 1995

Resolution

Whereas, faculty status confers both rights and professional responsibilities,

Whereas, discussion of ideals is a valuable activity, profitable in itself,

Whereas, a statement of ethical responsibility expresses the aspirations of a community of people; that community should be involved in the development of the statement,

It is resolved that the Senate present the proposed *Statement on Faculty Ethics and Professional Responsibilities* to the faculty, and seek ideas from them over the course of the Fall 1995 semester. At the beginning of the Spring 1996 semester the Executive Committee of the Senate will be empowered to revise the working document in light of the obtained ideas. The Committee will present the revised document to the entire faculty for a vote on the acceptability of the *Statement*.

Summary: The following is a proposed *Statement on Faculty Ethics and Professional Responsibilities*. This is a working document, and thus subject to revision as per the suggestions of the Senate and the faculty of Western Kentucky University.

According to our mandate, this committee addressed the general principles which should guide professional behavior of faculty, as well as specific obligations toward students and colleagues. We did not consider issues regarding faculty to administration relations, or ethical responsibilities involved in research and publishing. Neither does this draft include anything on implementation or enforcement. The section entitled "References" at the end of the *Statement* indicates those primary sources consulted in drafting our document and adapting it to the unique situation of WKU.

Finally, should this *Statement* be adopted or accepted, the Senate will need to promote faculty ownership of this document. A plan for campus-wide discussion and revision of the *Statement* ought to be considered.

Submitted by:
Nancy Baird (Academic Services)
Larry Finley (Business)
Sally Kuhlen Schmidt (CEBS)
Lowell Shank (Ogden)
Larry Snyder, Chair (Potter)
STATEMENT ON FACULTY ETHICS
and
PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Preamble

This Statement on Faculty Ethics and Professional Responsibilities indicates the aspirations of the faculty of Western Kentucky University and provides standards by which to conduct our professional lives. Because we are guided by a deep conviction of the worth and dignity of the advancement of knowledge, we recognize the special responsibilities placed upon us. Our primary responsibility to our students and to our disciplines is to seek and to state the truth as we see it. To this end we devote our energies to developing and improving our scholarly competence. We accept the obligation to exercise critical self-discipline and judgment in using, extending, and transmitting knowledge. And we seek to practice intellectual honesty.

Based on the Statement on Personal Ethics
adopted by the American Association of University Professors in June 1987

Responsibilities to Students

The educator strives to help students realize their potential as worthy and effective members of society. The educator therefore works to stimulate the spirit of inquiry, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding, and the thoughtful formulation of worthy goals.

In fulfillment of our obligations to students, we as educators:

1. Shall encourage the pursuit of student learning.

2. Shall provide students with professional education services in a non-discriminatory manner and in consonance with accepted best practice.

3. Shall demonstrate respect for students as individuals and shall adhere to appropriate roles as intellectual guides and counselors of students while helping students help themselves.

4. Shall make every reasonable effort to foster academic conduct and to ensure that evaluations of students reflect each student's true achievements.

5. Shall make reasonable effort to protect the student from conditions harmful to learning or to health and safety.
Statement on Faculty Ethics and Professional Responsibilities

6. Shall provide accurate and current information for which the educator bears responsibility, and shall clearly distinguish between personal and professional opinion.

7. Shall seek to be effective teachers and respond to responsible criticisms.

8. Shall offer students informed guidance in planning their academic performance.

9. Shall present to students and make all reasonable efforts to follow a course syllabus that includes course objective(s), requirements, a grading scale and office hours, and shall arrive on time and begin class promptly.

10. Shall keep in confidence information about students which has been obtained in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

11. Shall not knowingly make false or malicious statements about students nor embarrass them.

12. Shall maintain a professional relationship with students and not use one's position for personal advantage, while especially adhering to the existing policy on sexual harassment.

Responsibilities to Colleagues

Membership in the academic community of Western Kentucky University bestows both rights and responsibilities upon the faculty of this institution. Among those obligations, is the duty to uphold professional and ethical standards in relations with all colleagues, including full- and part-time faculty and staff. The following statements should be adopted as guiding principles in this area.

1. It is the responsibility of all faculty to treat associates with respect and fairness. Members of this community shall refrain from discriminating against or harassing colleagues. As fellow scholars we defend the free inquiry of associates, and show due respect for others in the exchange of criticism and ideas. It is incumbent upon us all to acknowledge academic debt. We strive to be objective in our professional judgment and sensitive in our treatment of colleagues.

2. In the interest of privacy, we should safeguard confidential personnel matters and avoid disclosing opinions expressed, attribution of statements, and voting behavior and outcomes. Information obtained about colleagues in the course of professional service shall be kept confidential unless it serves a compelling professional purpose or is required by law.
Statement on Faculty Ethics and Professional Responsibilities

3. Parties involved should make every effort to settle misunderstandings or conflicts quickly and directly to prevent divisions within the academic community. Especially in the classroom, we should avoid speculative criticism that might damage the reputations of individuals or groups. As the primary units of communal responsibility, department members should work to promote a healthy and supportive working environment.

4. Senior faculty have special responsibilities to junior colleagues. As experienced professionals, senior professors should provide appropriate advice and support in matters of teaching, research, and service. All professors accept their share of faculty responsibilities for the governance of this institution. We must accurately represent the qualifications of a candidate for a professional position.

Concluding Statement

Behavior not addressed in the ethical code implies nothing about whether that behavior is ethical or unethical. The code is not meant to be exhaustive. The expected standard of conduct may be higher than that required by law or less explicit. The faculty member should try to resolve any conflict between the law and the ethical code in a responsible manner.

The ethical code may be modified by resolution of the Faculty Senate after a period of debate before the faculty as a whole.

References

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE XIX

1995 -1996

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
NANCY Baird LIBRARY SPECIAL COLLECTIONS/KY MUSEUM 1997-1
RALPH GOLA LIBRARY PUBLIC SERVICE 1997-1
ROSE DAVIS LIBRARY AUTOMATION & TECHNICAL SERVICES 1997-1

COLLEGE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
JOEL PHILHOURS ACCOUNTING 1997-1
CATHERINE CAREY ECONOMICS 1997-1
HERMAN MANAKYAN FINANCE & COMPUTER INFO. SYSTEMS 1997-1
EUGENE EVANS MANAGEMENT 1996-1
PAT MOORE MARKETING 1997-1

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
RICHARD PATTERSON CONSUMER & FAMILY SCIENCES 1997-2
BILL TRAUGOTT EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP 1997-2
JEANETTE ASKINS P. E. & RECREATION 1997-1
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PATRICIA DANIEL TEACHER EDUCATION 1997-1

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OGDEN COLLEGE OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND HEALTH
JACK RUDOLPH AGRICULTURE 1997-1
BILL HOWARD ALLIED HEALTH 1996-1
JEFF KENT BIOLOGY 1996-1
EARL PEARSON CHEMISTRY 1996-1
UTA ZIEGLER COMPUTER SCIENCES 1997-1
MATTHEW DETTMAN ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY 1996-1
DAVID KEELING GEOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY 1996-1
DANIEL JACKSON INDUSTRIAL TECHNOLOGY 1996-1
RANDY SWIFT MATHEMATICS 1996-1
LINDA CLARK NURSING 1996-1
DOUGLAS HARPER PHYSICS & ASTRONOMY 1997-1
GLENN LOHR PUBLIC HEALTH 1997-2
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