WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE IX
March 20, 1986

CALL TO ORDER: Senate Chair Eugene Evans called the meeting to order in the Regent's Room at 3:20 p.m.

ROLL CALL: The following Senators were absent:
- Allan, Linda
- Ball, Karlene
- Baum, Robert
- Caillouet, Larry
- Cannon, David
- Davis, Rose
- Feintuch, Burt
- Layne, Lois
- Leeper, Terry
- Long, John
- Lowrey, Howard
- Miller, Mary Ellen
- Williams, Deborah
- Martin, Ed
- Stickle, Fred
- Wells, Carroll

*Sent an observer

MINUTES: The minutes were approved.

RESPONSE TO ACADEMIC AFFAIRS COMMITTEE REPORT ON RELEASE TIME:
Vice President Haynes

Vice President Robert Haynes responded to the Faculty Senate report which recommended that release time be increased to 10%. Haynes said that he wants to remove any ceiling on it. He stressed two factors:
1. The desire of faculty members to enhance the needs of departments for classroom instruction.
2. The accountability element, with a need to report on activities during release time and some indication of goals accomplished.

When Vice President Haynes called for questions, Michale Salisbury asked what percentage of release time was now awarded. Haynes responded that it exceeded the earlier goal of 3.5%, but was not as high as 10%. Joe Glaser suggested that faculty members needed to teach no more than six hours a semester during release time, and Haynes replied that this should be adjusted to meet the demands of the project. Then Barry Brunson inquired whether any faculty members are turned down for release time. Haynes said that although he did not make the decisions, he thought that some requests were denied due to lack of accountability or conflicting departmental needs.
Robert Otto asked about non-research release time, and Haynes replied that it was available for public service and faculty development. Janet Palmer wanted to know if a faculty member writing a book would be granted release time, and Haynes answered in the affirmative, suggesting that the term "special assignment" was more appropriate. Evans asked whether writing a textbook was scholarly activity, and Haynes responded that it depended on whether it made a special contribution to one's discipline.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:
Speaking for the Committee on Finance, Norman Hunter reported on athletic expenditures. He called this report a follow-up and a comparison to the 1985 report, and thanked Paul Cook for his assistance in gathering information. The committee found the conclusions and recommendations of the 1985 report still appropriate in 1986. The 1986 conclusions are:
1. The athletic budget continues to be in a state of crisis.
2. Expenditures continue to exceed budget and revenues.
3. While revenues for 1984-85 have increased a modest amount (9.9%) compared to 1983-84, unrestrained spending kept pace by increasing 9.2%. The deficit with respect to budget did decrease slightly (11.7%) in 1984-85 compared to 1983-84, but this appears to be a result of a significant increase (13.8%) in budget, rather than any attempt to restrict spending. The deficit of expenditures with respect to revenue for 1984-85 is actually 8.6% larger than in 1983-84.
4. While football has played a major role in creating an unhealthy situation, it appears that both baseball and women's basketball have caught the fever of overspending budget.

In response to Hunter's report on athletics, questions and corrections came from Robert Bretz, Paul Campbell, Arvin Voss, and Chuck Crume. Otto noted that this was the second year that the Fiscal Committee spent time preparing a report, and suggested that the Senate needed to hear from the Board of Regents or the Administration on this matter.

Executive Vice President Paul Cook addressed the issue of athletic spending. He observed that other departments at the university also overspent their budgets, including the Faculty Senate. The university's budget is a guide, he noted, rather than an iron-clad document. Many expenses, like telephones, graduate assistants, repairs, and equipment costs, can not be determined in advance.

Cook announced that he would be taking over athletics when Vice President John Minton retires. At that time, he will consider many factors in checking expenses. When Otto stated that we get little information unless we ask for it, Cook responded that the budget was always available. Crum, Glaser, Claude Pickard, and Evans made inquiries, and Cook agreed with Evans that the basic question is how much money should be spent.
on athletics when the university needs money for salaries and library needs. Evans thanked Cook, noting that some institutions would not allow such an open discussion of athletics.

Then Evans reported on the COSFL meeting in Frankfort. The highlights were (1) the session on university governments and (2) the discussion with legislators. The legislators suggested that lobbying by faculty was acceptable as a means of education, but should not be overdone, especially when the legislature is in session. They also suggested that we avoid "12-page letters."

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

The Senate then discussed the following resolution on faculty evaluation:

Resolved that the faculty senate endorses the concept of anonymous student evaluations. Such evaluations should be reported only to the individual faculty members until the senate and university administration together develop additional ways of appraising teaching which are appropriate to the various disciplines.

John Parker supported the last sentence in the resolution, but expressed concern about the first. He asked: "If student evaluations are not to be used by administrators, then what will they use--rumor?" Crum asserted that the Purdue instrument does not do a good job, and he called for standards or criteria for evaluating faculty. Parker suggested that it was curious that students should not evaluate us when we evaluate administrators. Otto observed that Senators do not know what is done with administrative evaluations, but we do know that student evaluations are used. Brunson said that student opinions were important, but were not adequate for determining faculty merit. Joe Glaser agreed that it is difficult to get a good instrument for evaluation, but said that student evaluation was important as one factor in determining merit.

Vice President Haynes noted that he tended to believe that the point of evaluation was faculty improvement. He also concurred that these evaluations should never be used to make sharp distinctions. Instead, he noted, evaluations divide people into three or four groups. Because they form only one kind of evidence, they need to be used with a great deal of caution. He favors asking faculty to establish standards and evaluative procedures appropriate for each discipline. We need to reward good faculty, he said, rather than punish poor faculty. He reported that there has been a 70% increase in the use of student questionnaires, noting that people were uncomfortable with other methods of evaluating teaching. Evans closed the discussion by reasserting the importance of faculty involvement in devising an evaluative instrument.

The resolution passed by a voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT