Call to Order

The Faculty Senate was called to order by Chair Marvin Leavy at 3:30 pm. Zack Murrell substituted for Blaine Ferrell, and Jim Worthington for David Stiles. John Bruni, Mary Cobb, Matthew Dettman, Bill Howard, Larry Snyder, Samanta Thapa, and Wieb Van Der Meer were absent without alternatives.

Disposition of the Minutes

Minutes of the January 19 meeting were corrected to state that the Executive Committee reported that, "The executive committee has made recommendations for appointments to two committees." A sentence concerning the report from the Fiscal Affairs committee was extended to indicate that, "Three of the answers to the 25 questions submitted to the WKU Foundation have not been clearly defined, referring to the service fee and disposal of unrestricted monies, and fixed and non-recurring expenditures." Numbers were corrected in the Fiscal Affairs Committee's report on use of part-time faculty to show that part-time faculty taught, "214 out of 2504 classes in the fall of 94 and 233 out of 2598 classes in the fall of 92". The minutes were approved as amended.

Reports of Faculty Senate Committees

A. Executive Committee (Marvin Leavy)

Leavy did not have an official report from the Executive Committee at this time, but information from the committee will be presented in the form of announcements later.

B. By-laws, Amendments, and Elections (Joyce Wilder)

The committee will make a motion under new business changing the wording from Academic Services to University Libraries, to reflect real changes in responsibilities. Department elections will be made this month, in order to conduct at-large elections in a timely manner after the department elections.

C. Faculty Status and Welfare (Eileen Williams)

Senator Williams distributed the faculty salary survey. This is not the final report; more work needs to be done to show average salary by gender within rank, as well as average salary overall for each rank. She reminded the Senate that discrepancies are due in part to differences in number within each department and in differences in people within each rank in each department. At least one figure will need to be changed in the final report. Senators were encouraged to read over the report, absorb it, and ask questions at the March meeting.

D. Professional Responsibilities and Concerns (Roy Cabaniss)

Leavy reported for the committee chair, stating that the committee has presented recommendations to the Executive Committee, which will review the committee's recommendations before submitting them to the full senate.

E. Fiscal Affairs (David Keeling)

To highlight some of the research concerning the use of part-time faculty, of the 214 courses taught by part-time faculty, 60% were taught in Potter College, 26% in Ogden, and 13% in the College of Business. From 1990 through 1994, there was an increase in use of part-time help in the spring semester compared to the previous fall. Most colleges and departments have decreased their use of part-time instructors during 1990-94. Potter College
has actually decreased the use of part-time help, but increased in percentage of classes within the University using part-time instructors. The impact of raising part-time reimbursement by $100 for a 3-hour course is approximately $21,000 per semester. Another issue of concern is that part-time faculty have not yet received any payment for this semester, since they do not receive their first paycheck before the fourth Friday of the semester.

F. Senate Communications (Bart White)

The next (third) edition of the Senate newsletter is at the print shop and should be available for distribution next week. One of the items it contains is the text of comments made by vice-chair Larry Snyder before the Council of Higher Education last fall. Hopefully, enough funds will be available to print another edition later this semester.

G. Ad hoc Committee on Faculty Ethics and Responsibility (Nancy Baird for Larry Snyder)

At its initial meeting, the committee decided to study reports from committees at other universities and current literature to get some guidelines. They are requesting other input as well for direction.

Report of Faculty Regent (Ray Mendel)

The Board of Regents has met since the last Senate meeting. They passed in favor of all the items brought before them.

Another matter of concern has been the distribution of funds within various areas of the institution. A special budget committee had brought the Board a resolution advocating the increase of spending in the areas of instruction, libraries, and research. There was some discussion whether that increase was to be in absolute dollars or as a percentage of overall spending. At the previous meeting there was discussion leading to an agreement that the resolution was intended to refer to an increase of spending as a percentage of overall dollars, not just in absolute terms. That discussion was not a part of the minutes, so Mendel suggested that the minutes of the previous meeting be amended to reflect the discussion. The amendment to the minutes passed the Board by a vote of 5 to 4. Therefore, it is a matter of record that the Board is calling for an increase in the percentage of money spent by the University for instruction, libraries and research. It will be important to pay attention to see that it actually happens and does not just appear to happen as a result of transferring expenditures to those areas.

Another issue that the Board will probably address in April is the consideration of an ethics code. The student regent has distributed among the Board members a draft code of conduct. Mendel hopes to share this with the faculty in order to get faculty input.

On February 24, the Board will hold a special meeting, focusing attention exclusively on the New Level document. The President will explain more about what the New Level document means and what it is charting.

Report of University Budget Committee (Charles Hays)

The University Budget Committee met once last week and twice this week, so the numbers are still raw. He estimates that University revenues will increase about $3 million due to increases in state funds and tuition. They will look at increases from other sources and increases in fixed costs, such as increase in paper costs of about $130,000. There is also information that all state organizations must be placed into a pool for insurance purposes, and that will lead to an increase in health costs for WKU employees. The University’s contribution would probably go from about $125 to $175-$180 for individual coverage, with a total cost to the University of about $475,000 or more. All University vice presidents have requested increases for various expenses, at a total of about $900,000. Fixed costs are expected to increase by about $1.5 million. New initiative requests will require about $350,000 in
additional funds. These increased expenditures total about $2.7 million. Priorities must be set for the remaining available funds, including needs such as increases in salaries and construction.

A preliminary estimate is that $460,000 is needed to give a 1% salary increase, and $55,000 to raise department operating budgets by 1%. According to rough calculations by Hays, if WKU sets aside $500,000 for the increase in health insurance costs and $165,000 to increase operating budgets by 3%, and allocates the rest of the increase in revenue for salary increases, that would result in about a 4% increase in salaries. The President asked at yesterday’s meeting what we should shoot for in salary increases. Responses were in the neighborhood of 3% and 5%. Hays recommends an increase in the range of 4% to 5%, which would require reallocation of funds, but it is still too early to be sure what we have.

Report of Coalition of Senate Faculty Leadership (Marvin Leavy)

Leavy attended a COSFL meeting at UK Patterson Tower Regents Room on January 28. About 25 people were in attendance. There was another communication with Gary Cox concerning the Council of Higher Education. He encouraged faculty to get more involved with their own campuses. There is nothing further faculty can do with CHE. The Council would be able to pass on decisions made by COSFL concerning such things as 1) forthcoming performance-based funding criteria, and 2) advocating higher education at the Kentucky Assembly and other bodies, since all dollars get scarcer and must be divided up. The next COSFL meeting is scheduled for February 25 in Richmond, hopefully with several gubernatorial candidates in attendance. All faculty are invited. COSFL will meet in early April with strategic legislators.

Old Business

A meeting concerning the New Level document will be held tomorrow in Downing University Center Theater. President Tom Meredith addressed the Senate to invite all faculty who can do so, to attend the meeting, which will go over admission standards and different options. He will lay out about 3 different options requesting input from faculty, then will distribute the document on campus for about a week, asking for further comments in writing. He will then give a final recommendation concerning the entire document to the Board of Regents. The Board can approve none, all, or part of the it.

New Business

Nelda Sims moved that the wording of the Senate constitution be updated to change the term Academic Services to University Libraries (see end of minutes). Seconded and passed unanimously.

Announcements

Due to the expenses of printing, the next newsletter will include the minutes from the November and December meetings, but later newsletters will not have minutes of the Senate meetings. In the future, five copies of the minutes will be provided to each department representative, to be distributed among those who are interested.

The next Senate meeting will be in four weeks, on March 9.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 pm.

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Resolution passed:

The wording of the Senate Constitution, under Roman III Organization, category A Composition, number 1, second paragraph, shall be changed from "Academic Services" to "University Libraries."

Respectfully submitted by Sylvia Clark

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