Faculty Senate Minutes
Western Kentucky University Faculty Senate XVIII
Thursday, March 9, 1995
Garrett Conference Center Ballroom

Call to Order
The Faculty Senate was called to order by Chair Marvin Leavy at 4:35 pm. Antony Norman substituted for Dorsey Grice, Rose Davis for Nelda Sims, Cassandra Pinnick for Larry Snyder, and Jack Rudolph, Jr. for David Stiles. Ed Bohlander, Larry Caillouet, Catherine Carey, Mary Cobb, John Crenshaw, Matthew Dettman, Ed Dorman, Blaine Ferrell, Louella Fong, Bill Howard, Glenn Lohr, Mary Ellen Miller, Earl Pearson, Samanta Thapa, William Traugott, Wieb Van Der Meer, Sharon Whitlock, and Eileen Williams were absent without substitution.

Disposition of the Minutes
Corrections were made to the coverage of the Coalition of Senate Faculty Leadership (COSFL) report: rather than stating that there was another communication from Gary Cox, the minutes should state that there was a second meeting with Gary Cox; and the sentence that there is nothing further faculty can do with CHE should be struck; and the word "things" should be replaced with "matters." The minutes were approved as corrected.

Reports of Faculty Senate Committees
A. By-Laws, Amendments, and Election Committee (Joyce Wilder):
All departments except one have elected department Senators. Only two colleges are having at-large elections, Potter College and the College of Education and Behavioral Science. March 22 is the deadline for at-large ballots.

B. Faculty Status and Welfare Committee (John Bruni for Eileen Williams):
All state and university employees will be forced to participate in the Health Care Reform Act mandated by HB250. Five standard benefit plans will be made available on April 5, and individuals will choose from them. In answer to a question about the cost of single coverage, Bruni said there is an estimate that the total cost for single coverage, which has been covered by WKU, will be $461,000 for the year 1996. It was pointed out from the floor that all estimates are speculation since details have not yet been worked out and no bids have been received, and that Rep. Jody Richards has estimated that our increase should not be more than 15%, although we will be included in a larger pool that is likely to be less healthy overall than our current pool.
Thirteen names were omitted from the Salary Survey data, two-thirds of them women. Eileen Williams is working with the computer services representatives to rectify the omission. The final report will be ready next month for the April 13 meeting, with or without those names, but it is hoped that it will include those thirteen individuals, since they will impact averages for several departments and all ranks, as well as gender analysis.
C. Professional Responsibilities and Concerns Committee (Roy Cabaniss):
The committee has been looking at the evaluation process for a long time and has produced a document that represents the majority of the committee, which they would like to submit as groundwork for further discussion.

Rather than using the current Purdue system, they recommend using some measure of academic gain. The committee suggested using two methods of evaluation, the first for process (similar to the current system, with comments staying with the professor) and the second for academic gain (which should be a long-term measurement and not an immediate response). They recommend that a prototype be used before implementing the complete recommendations. The suggestions are available for senators and others to review, and the committee leaves it to others to review and to decide what to do with them.

It was pointed out by two committee members that Senator Cabaniss' report does not represent the opinions of the entire committee. Cabaniss agreed but stated that it represents the opinions of three of the five committee members, thereby reflecting a majority opinion and that it should be considered in that light.

D. Fiscal Affairs Committee (David Keeling):
The Committee submitted a report on part-time faculty. Senator Keeling pointed out a table of the hours and 3-hour courses of part-time faculty by grade and by college before 1994, showing instruction hours for on-campus, extended campus, and community college courses. Part-time faculty currently cost the University $470,568 a year. The recommended increase of $100 per course to part-time faculty would cost the University approximately $39,000, if the hours taught by part-time faculty were to remain the same. Keeling stated that part-time faculty are paid considerably less than full-time faculty and that they save WKU approximately $1.4 million yearly. He also pointed out that recommendations were made in 1992 concerning part-time faculty, and that they have not yet been fully implemented. The committee makes ten recommendations that are included in the report distributed.

E. Academic Affairs Committee (Mark Robinson for Larry Caillouet):
The committee had no report to make at this time.

F. Senate Communications Committee (Bart White):
There is enough money for at least one more newsletter this academic year, in April. Leavy stated that he transferred funds from the travel budget to help with printing costs.

G. Executive Committee (Marvin Leavy):
The committee has met twice with the President, on February 21, and earlier today. The February 21 meeting and most of the meeting today dealt with the New Level document. He received from Lana Flynn today the New Level document dated February 24, which is intended to be the one presented to the Board of Regents. Leavy found one substantive change, which is that rather than expecting all classroom teachers to be excellent, "everyone who is involved in classroom instruction will strive to be an excellent teacher." No other substantive changes -- changes to the action statements in bold print -- were noted by Leavy, although there may be stylistic changes or changes in implementation, or
even substantive changes that he did not notice during this brief time.

A special meeting of the Board is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22, at 8:30 am, to review the document.

The Executive Committee felt that the report by Roy Cabaniss from the Professional Responsibilities and Concerns Committee contained several suggestions that were worthy of further development, either by an ad hoc committee created by next year's Executive Committee or by next year's Professional Responsibilities and Concerns Committee. Of course, Faculty Senate endorsement will be required for the recommendations to be relayed to the President and university-wide committee formed to assess the current process of instructional evaluation.

Jim Brown has been appointed by the President as the Senate representative to the University Wellness Committee.

Leavy attended a meeting of the Coalition of Senate Faculty Leadership (COSFL) at Eastern Kentucky University in Richmond on February 25. Harry Moberly and Ernesto Scorsone, two Kentucky legislators in strategic positions for several concerns relating to higher education, including potential cost increases resulting from the Health Care Reform Act, met with COSFL. They discussed strategies for individuals and COSFL, including meetings like one scheduled for this evening or writing local legislators, Jody Richards, Billy Ray Smith, or Nick Ralognis. The next meeting will be April 1 in Bardstown. An attempt will be made to get as many gubernatorial candidates as possible to attend the meeting.

H. Ad hoc Committee on Faculty Ethics (Nancy Baird for Larry Snyder):

The committee has drafted a preamble for a statement of commitment to ethics and members are now working on a statement relating to faculty commitment to students and colleagues. They hope to provide a draft for faculty to review and consider over the summer. Baird, Snyder, and Lowell Shank are Senate representatives on the university-wide committee. Leavy opened the floor for questions, but there were none.

Report of Faculty Regent (Ray Mendel)

Regent Mendel reported on the New Level document, Salary issue, and an issue with respect to the Budget Committee.

Mendel compared WKU faculty salaries to benchmark institutions. Although WKU faculty has made progress since 1992, salaries are still lower than benchmark institutions for WKU faculty at all levels except that of instructor. Administration (President and Vice President level) salaries are well above average. WKU spends only 59% of its total budget on the academic areas of instruction, research, academic support, and libraries compared to a mean of 65% of the total budget at other benchmark schools, representing a shortfall of about $4.5 million, compared to the average benchmark institution. He shared charts showing data received from AAUP.

Mendel said that when he tried to attend a Budget Committee meeting as a guest in the audience, he was told that no substantive issues would be considered unless he left the meeting. He choose to leave, because he felt it important for the Budget Committee to make a report before the summer break. Mendel considered this a violation of the open meeting law.

The Board meeting scheduled for March 22 will deal exclusively with
the New Level document. Mendel distributed a summary of the document and changes that have occurred since the original proposal. Eighteen of the original points have not changed in the final form. Mendel was disappointed that some issues that he considered important, such as improving entering students' scores, have been weakened; and that other issues that he felt imposed control, such as rising student exams and faculty evaluation, have survived. He encouraged all faculty to attend the March 22 meeting.

Report from Senate Member of University Budget Committee (Charles Hays):

The committee is operating under an assumption that the University will grant an average salary increase of 5% this year, based partly on the data accumulated by Regent Mendel, which will require an additional $2.8 million. They are setting aside about $500,000 for the insurance pool in anticipation of increased costs. They are planning to increase department operating budgets by about $200,000 and grant increases to libraries and other areas, bringing increases to about $3.8 million. The committee expects about $3 million in increased funds, leaving the budget about $800,000 short. There is general agreement that WKU should increase expenditures for academic affairs.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

David Keeling moved that the Senate accept actions 1 through 10 on page 6 of the Part-Time Faculty Report by the Fiscal Affairs Committee. The motion was seconded. This serves as a first reading; the recommendation will be discussed again at the next meeting April 13.

A clarification was made that this recommendation should be a revenue neutral process, because WKU could be reducing part-time faculty at the same time that it is increasing part-time stipends. Item #1, "Increase PTF stipends by $100 across all Grades," is the only recommendation with possible financial impact.

Announcements

Several Senate members have responded to President Meredith concerning the New Level document. Larry Snyder's letter is the Executive Committee's response.

The Faculty Survey should be returned by Friday, March 31. Great care is being taken to retain anonymity.

The first meeting of Senate XIX is set for Tuesday April 25 (not Thursday, April 27).

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sylvia Clark Pulliam