CALL TO ORDER
The faculty senate was called to order by Chair Arvin Vos at 3:33 p.m.. Absent without representation were: John Bruni, Thad Crews, John Faine, Gerald Post, Jack Rudolph, Loren Ruff, Rick Shannon, Walter Stomps, Moosa Valinezhad, Sharon Whitlock, Carol Wilson. Kenchel Doerner substituted for Zack Murrell. Faculty Regent Ray Mendel and University Provost Dr. Burch were in attendance.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES
The minutes of the April 9th meeting were accepted as distributed.

FACULTY REGENT
Regent Mendel discussed the Presidents memo that had been distributed to faculty via e-mail. Regent Mendel also noted that faculty had fared well in the university’s proposed 1998-99 budget, with a significant raise expected. However, Dr. Mendel further noted that Western can expect some lean years in the future with some structural changes occurring through the reduction/elimination of programs with high costs and few graduates, accompanied by an increasing need for efficiency. Regent Mendel also noted that the Governing Board would be meeting May 15th and that the contracts for the upcoming academic year would be mailed following board approval of the budget. Dr. Burch amplified Regent Mendel’s remarks, adding that faculty and administration would have to be more effective in looking for outside money.

Dr. Burch also reported to the Senate about Western’s actions with regards to several recommendations.

1) Professional Responsibilities and Concerns had presented a proposal to expand the University’s core items on teaching evaluations to four total as well as reiterating an over-dependence of these measures in the assessment of teaching performance. Dr. Burch was happy to report that the University had acted on these recommendations and the changes had already been made to the spring evaluation sheets. Dr. Burch did express concerns about the Senate’s recommendation that student’s written comments be released to administration above the college Dean’s level only under ‘extraordinary’ circumstances. The Provost requested feedback and clarification about what the Senate intended by the word extraordinary.

2) Faculty Status and Welfare had developed several reports over the course of Senate XXI. Dr. Burch noted that the proposals dealing with benefits had been forwarded to Mr. Tony Glisson, head of human resources. Given that so many of the resolutions dealt with different aspects of the compensation package offered by the University, Dr. Burch noted it would be unlikely that all the recommendations would be implemented. The Provost suggested that the Senate may wish to discuss or address budget priorities.
Another report adopted by the Senate had recommended changes in the University’s payment for summer teaching. Dr. Burch outlined the plan of the University for the 1998 Summer term. Assuming a target enrollment is met, faculty will receive a ‘bonus’ of 500 near the beginning of the fall term. However, low enrollment was projected for 1998 summer school. Further, the University’s “cap” on earnings, may never be eliminated. Dr. Mendel interjected that one measure of Dr. Ransdel’s performance adopted by the board is reaching benchmarks for the total compensation package. Following up, Dr. Burch also indicated that she was in favor of increasing compensation, but that doing so by simply increasing pay grades may not be the best answer.

Dr. Burch took this time to bring the Senate up to date on several activities administration had ongoing or were expected to begin soon:
- A task group is to be formed to conduct a review of all programs in the University and assess their relationship to the University’s focus;
- The general education report is due to be released some time over the summer;
- The post-tenure review policy will be released prior to the end of the spring semester;
- Programs of distinction proposals are moving forward;
- A planning task group is meeting to combine all planning documents and develop a new strategic plan for the University. Current goals and objectives for Academic Affairs can be found at: http://www.wku.edu/Dept/Support/AcadAffairs/aagoal3.htm

NEW BUSINESS
- Election of Officers:
  Arvin Vos, Chair
  Rose Davis, Secretary
  (Who Else?)

ANNOUNCEMENTS
- Chair-Elect Vos Announced there would be a 1:30 meeting in the Regents Room on Monday, May 4th, for those interested in learning about the University’s move to self-insure.

Chair Vos adjourned the senate at 4:46.

Respectfully submitted,

John B. White
Outgoing Secretary/Treasurer

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