February 12, 1999

From: Faculty Governance Committee

TO: All faculty members

RE: Attached Report

Many of you will recall that in the university review conducted by Fisher and his associates our present form of faculty governance was criticized heavily. Our present system was described as being "confusing, time consuming, [and] often redundant...." In response to Fisher's criticisms the Board of Regents has asked President Ransdell to have this matter studied and to report back to the Board. President Ransdell put Dr. Burch in charge of doing this study and she has appointed a committee to work with her in studying this matter.

Attached you will find a draft of the committee’s report. It is presented here for your consideration and comment. Our goal has been to strengthen the voice and role of the faculty in the governance process and to provide a more efficient system of faculty governance. We are recommending the following actions: 1) to merge the Faculty Senate and the Academic Council into one body, a University Senate; 2) to expedite the curriculum process by granting greater responsibilities to College Curriculum Committees and reserving University curriculum review to new programs and other broad curriculum matters; 3) to concentrate General Education concerns and issues in a separate committee within the University Senate; 4) to limit membership on all committees to a workable number while retaining balance in representation and the diversity of the faculty; 5) to streamline all aspects of the committee structure by limiting whenever possible duplication of effort and unnecessary paper work, while still allowing for needed checks and balances.

Our goal has been to develop a governance structure where faculty and administrators meet, become informed, debate, and frame policy on the major issues and concerns facing Western Kentucky University. Please review the attached document and give us your suggestions.

The following persons are members of the Committee:

Wayne Hoffman          Julia Roberts
Marvin Leavy           Joseph Trafton
Sherry Reid             Marilyn Brookman
Rick Aldridge          John Petersen
Barbara Burch, Chair   Arvin Vos
Report on Faculty Governance
(Draft 2/2/99)

Preamble: The University Senate of Western Kentucky University is the body which acts as agent for the University faculty to recommend policies concerning the educational activities of the University and the welfare of the faculty.

I. The Function of the University Senate

The University Senate shall function as the official representative voice of the faculty, advising and making recommendations to the President and Provost/VPAA concerning academic requirements and policies, faculty responsibilities and welfare, and any other matters having implications for educational policy. The Senate may make recommendations, give advice, furnish information, respond to administrative communications, or communicate for whatever purpose it deems appropriate.

II. Organization of the University Senate

The Senate will normally act through its committees, but it may act directly on matters raised by members. The standing committees of the Senate are the following: the Executive Committee, the University Curriculum Committee, the General Education Committee, the Professional Responsibilities and Faculty Welfare Committee, and the Fiscal Affairs Committee. The composition and duties of each of the standing committees are as follows:

A. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary of the University Senate, and the Chairs of the other standing committees. The Provost/VPAA and the Faculty Regent will be ex-officio, non-voting members of this committee. The Secretary of the Senate shall function as Secretary of the Executive Committee.

The functions of the Executive Committee shall be:

--to set the time and place of regular meetings and prepare the agenda for each meeting
--to function as liaison between the Senate and the President and Provost/VPAA
--to assist the Chair of the Senate in assigning issues to the appropriate standing committee for study and possible action
--to assist the chair and the Provost/VPAA in the appointment of study committees as needed
--to make recommendations to the Senate concerning Senate rules and by-laws, proposed amendments, and procedural changes.

B. The University Curriculum Committee

The University Curriculum Committee shall consist of fourteen to seventeen members, selected as follows: six members, one from each undergraduate college and the Library, shall represent his/her college. Each shall be elected by the University Senate members from her/his respective college. Six faculty members will be appointed by the Provost/VPAA in consultation with the deans. Up to three additional members may be appointed jointly by the Chair of the Senate and provost/VPAA. Two undergraduate students shall represent Student Government on the committee and shall be appointed by the President of SGA. A member of the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs office will be an ex-officio non-voting member.
The University Curriculum Committee shall function as the faculty advisory body with regard to academic program matters. Its decisions shall be conveyed to the entire Senate for information purposes after which they shall be forwarded to the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. However, the Senate shall have the prerogative of considering on the floor any matter it chooses, if a majority of the membership present vote to discuss the issue in question. If an item discussed by the Senate is approved, it shall be forwarded to the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. If the Senate by a majority vote rejects an action of the University Curriculum Committee, this item shall be returned to the University Curriculum Committee for reconsideration.

The University Curriculum Committee shall operate in coordination with the college curriculum committees. It shall receive via the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs two types of items from the college curriculum committees, those requiring action and those presented for information only.

The University Curriculum Committee shall review and act upon all proposals, received from college curriculum committees including the Graduate Council, that involve changes in degree and graduation requirements, proposals for new majors, minors, or degree programs both at the undergraduate and the graduate levels, and all matters which either have significant implications for the programs of more than one college or require cooperation between departments from different colleges.

The University Curriculum Committee shall receive for information only, as a consent agenda, those items from each college curriculum committee and the Graduate Curriculum Committee which have been judged both by the college curriculum committee and by the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs to have a significant effect only on the programs in the college submitting the proposal. However, the committee reserves the right to review and discuss an information item and to take action on it, if a majority of its membership vote to do so. Matters to be received for information include such items as course number changes, course description changes, suspension or reinstatement of courses, one-time offerings, and all similar items of this type where the effects of the change are limited to the college where the course is taught.

The functions of the University Curriculum Committee shall be:
- to review existing programs and new program proposals in light of the university's mission statement
- to review existing courses and new courses with implications across college lines that are submitted for approval
- to review any academic matters such as degree requirements, standards of scholastic achievement, and rules governing faculty-student relations
- to study and respond to all matters assigned to it by the Chair of the Senate

C. The General Education Committee

The General Education Committee shall consist of twelve to fifteen members, selected as follows: five members, one from each undergraduate college, shall represent his/her college. Each member shall be elected by the University Senate members from her/his respective college. Five faculty members shall be appointed by the Provost/VPAA in consultation with the deans. Up to three additional members may be appointed jointly by the Chair of the Senate and Provost/VPAA. Two undergraduate students shall represent Student Government on the committee and shall be appointed by the President of SGA. A member of the Office of the
Vice-President for Academic Affairs office shall be an ex-officio non-voting member.

The General Education Committee shall function as the faculty advisory body on general education matters. Its decisions shall be conveyed to the entire Senate for information purposes, after which they shall be forwarded to the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. However, the Senate shall have the prerogative of considering on the floor any matter it chooses, if a majority of the membership present vote to discuss the issue in question. If an item discussed by the Senate is approved, then it shall be forwarded to the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. If the Senate by a majority vote disapproves of an action of the University Curriculum Committee, then this item shall be returned to the General Education Committee for reconsideration.

The functions of the General Education Committee shall be:
--to develop and review general education guidelines and course criteria
--to review existing courses and to consider new courses proposed for general education.
--to study and respond to all matters assigned to it by the Chair of the Senate

D. Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee
The membership of this committee shall consist of six University Senate members representing the five colleges and the library. The members shall be elected by University Senate members from their college or area. Two additional members, a representative from extended campus and a part-time faculty member, will serve as ex-officio voting members of this committee. A dean and representative from the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs shall be ex-officio members of this committee.

The functions of the Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities Committee shall be:
--to make recommendations concerning policies and procedures related to faculty grievances
--to recommend procedures for faculty evaluation and the recognition of outstanding performance in teaching and university service
--to make recommendations on policies and procedures relating to patents, copyrights, intellectual property rights, research grants, etc.
--to make recommendations concerning the responsibilities and obligations of the faculty person in his/her role as scholar and teacher.
--to make recommendations on policies, criteria, and procedures for faculty recruitment, appointments, reappointments, promotions, tenure, salary, work-load, working conditions, summer teaching, sabbatical leaves, leaves of absence, professional travel expenses, off-campus teaching and service, and consulting activities.
--to furnish advice on policies and procedures relating to retirement programs, insurance plans, sick leave, tenure clock, and other matters relevant to faculty welfare.
--to study and respond to all matters assigned to it by the Chair of the Senate

When there is a major issue in the area of Faculty Welfare and Professional Responsibilities which requires study, the Chair of the Senate and the Provost/VPAA will constitute a larger committee by appointing members of this committee along with others chosen from the Senate and/or the Faculty at large to develop a faculty position on the issue in question.

E. Fiscal Affairs Committee
The membership of this committee shall consist of a representative from each of the five undergraduate colleges and the library. A dean, and a representative from the Office of The
Vice-President for Academic Affairs shall be ex-officio members of this committee. The members of this Committee shall also be the University Senate's representatives on the University Budget Committee. They shall report regularly to the Senate on the activities of the University Budget Committee.

The functions of the Fiscal Affairs Committee shall be:
--to make recommendations to the University Senate on institutional policies, procedures, and guidelines related to resources allocation, the financial impact of proposed program additions or changes, and institutional response to financial exigencies.
--to advise and work with the administration in developing the university budget.
--to study and respond to all matters assigned to it by the Chair of the Senate.

III. Membership of the University Senate

A. Composition

1. The term "faculty" for the purposes herein is defined as all persons in the full-time employ of the University who hold faculty rank, excluding visiting or adjunct professors. The single exception is that the persons appointed as ex officio voting members to the Professional Responsibilities and Faculty Welfare Committee who represent those teaching in the extended campus and those teaching part-time must be a member of the group they are representing but need not have faculty status as defined above.

2. Each academic department shall have one representative. Department Heads shall be eligible to be elected as the representative of their department. Departmental alternates shall have the full rights and privileges of elected senators when substituting for them at a meeting.

3. Ex-officio non-voting administrative members of the University Senate include: the President of the University, the Provost, the Deans of the Colleges, Dean of Graduate Studies, President of the Student body, the Registrar, Dean of Libraries, Director of the Advising Center, Faculty Regent (if not already an elected representative), and other appropriate administrators.

4. Term of office: Each elected member shall serve for a term of two years and shall be eligible for reelection for a second consecutive term but ineligible for further reelection until one year has elapsed. Elections to fill vacancies shall be conducted by the department where the vacancy has occurred and shall be only for the unexpired term. Fractions of terms of less than one year served in fulfilling an unexpired term shall not prevent the individual from being elected for two successive terms following that term.

5. Faculty members appointed to a committee by the Provost/VPAA and/or maybe members of the Senate or the faculty at large. They shall have the right to speak on the floor of the Senate when matters related to their committee are being debated, but they shall not have voting rights. In committee sessions they shall have the same rights as duly elected members of the committee.

B. Officers and their functions

1. The University Senate shall have a Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary elected by the membership of the University Senate. A Recorder and Parliamentarian shall be appointed by the Chair.
The Secretary will record the minutes of the Executive Committee, and the Recorder will record the minutes of the Senate, distribute the agenda, etc.

2. The officers of the University Senate shall serve in their respective positions for a period of one year, or until successors are elected. They shall be eligible for reelection.

3. The terms of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary shall begin with their election at a meeting held near the end of the spring semester.

4. The constitutional officers of the Senate may be removed for cause, following the guidelines established in Sturgis' current edition.

5. The Chair shall conduct all meetings; in case the Chair is unable to be present, the Vice-Chair shall preside. In addition, the Chair of the senate will function as the liaison with the Provost for the Executive committee. The Chair and Provost/VPAA shall have the power to appoint additional faculty members to the standing committees, as indicated above. These members shall serve up to two years. In addition, the Chair and Provost/VPAA shall have the power jointly to constitute a special committee to study a specific issue. At least half of the members of any special committee shall be regular members of the university senate.

C. Elections
During the first half of April, each department or unit that has a representative whose term is ending shall hold an election and forward the results to the Secretary of the Senate who shall prepare the roster for the new Senate. Each department shall also elect an alternate to attend meetings of the Senate when the regular representative is unable to attend.

D. Rules of Standing Committees
a. Meetings—Standing committees shall meet at least once each month during the academic year. Special meetings may be called by the committee chair upon the request of a majority of the committee members.

b. Quorum—A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of voting members of the committee.

c. Voting requirements—A simple majority of the quorum is required for a legal vote. Voting may be by voice or show of hands. Any member of the Senate may request a vote by secret ballot and that request shall be granted.

d. No member of the University Curriculum Committee or the General Education Committee shall have a vote when an item of business pertaining to one's own department is being considered.

IV. Meetings and Rules of Procedure
A. The University Senate shall meet once a month during the School year unless the frequency of meetings is changed by a vote of the Senate. The date, time, and place of the meetings are to be determined by the Executive Committee.

B. The agenda shall be distributed to the members of the Senate at least four school days prior to the meeting. Full information for items listed on the information only/consent agenda will also be made available on the Senate Web site at least four days prior to the meeting.

C. Special meetings may be called by the chair, with the concurrence of the majority of the voting members of the Executive Committee. Such meetings must also be called by the chair upon written
request of at least ten members of the University Senate.

D. A quorum of the University Senate shall be a majority of the voting membership of the Senate. Business conducted up to the point that an absence of quorum is established and announced by the chair is assumed to be conducted with a quorum present.

E. Procedural matters brought before the Senate require only one reading; substantive matters require two readings.

F. The University Senate use the most recent edition of Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure to govern its meetings.

V. The Organization and Rules of the University Senate may be amended by a majority vote of the quorum on a motion presented by the Executive Committee.

[Appendix]

Functions of the College Curriculum Committees

Each college shall have a Curriculum Committee to review all curriculum-related matters, including the determination of degree requirements and standards of scholastic achievement. Departments will submit to the curriculum committee of their college all proposals for new programs, changes in programs, new courses, course revisions, etc. Also, departments will submit to their college's Curriculum Committee proposals to delete courses, to change the number of courses, receive information about one-time offerings, etc.

With regard to all matters coming before a college committee that are concerned with changes in already existing programs, the College Curriculum Committees shall function as the final academic reviewing body. Such matters shall be referred to the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs for review and approval. Similarly, all changes in course numbering, substitution of courses in a major, and other revisions that do not change or decrease the number of hours required for a major shall be under the authority of the college curriculum committees.

Proposals for new programs, changes in programs that increase the number of hours required for a program, new courses, or changes in a course that will significantly affect majors in another college shall be forwarded to the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs which will refer such items to the University Curriculum Committee for approval. If a proposal receives such approval, it will be forwarded to the University Senate for information and to the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs for review and approval.

In reviewing the actions of the College Curriculum committees, the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs shall have the option of returning to the College curriculum committees all matters in which it deems that the implications of the proposed change for other parts of the university have not been sufficiently taken into account. In response the College Curriculum committees can either make the suggested changes, or if not in agreement forward the matter to the University Curriculum Committee for its consideration. The University Curriculum committee has the option of approving the item and sending it on to the Office of the Vice-President for Academic Affairs or of rejecting it and returning it to the college and department where the proposal originated.