RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION: A SURVEY OF SUGGESTIONS

A follow-up report prepared by the Faculty Senate Institutional Goals and Planning Committee

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WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
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In February of 1979 the Institutional Goals and Planning Committee submitted to the Faculty Senate a preliminary report on enrollment projections for Western Kentucky University. The Senate voted to distribute the report to the University community and to invite comments and suggestions. The Committee promised the Senate a follow-up report to include these responses.

The preliminary report included a table of figures prepared by Dr. Carl Kreisler of the psychology department:

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In the Senate discussion of the preliminary report, some Senators expressed the opinion that our figures were too pessimistic. One comment related to the thesis of demographer Richard Easterlin. His thesis is that there will be no enrollment crisis in the 1980's. He argues that enrollment will increase; that a larger percentage of the 18-22-year-old population will go to college because of increased affluence of parents who have smaller numbers of children to educate.

Of our written responses, two were negative. One professor who did not give us permission to quote him directly felt that the Committee was unrealistic in citing Western’s past "good management" and overly optimistic in writing that "if handled right this next decade could be a very exciting period."
The other disagreement concerned our percentage figures on the number of high school graduates from Kentucky and neighboring states who go to college. The original report reads "Only about 36% of Kentucky high school graduates attend college. In Indiana and Ohio the percentage is 65." We were sent a sheet of information with these figures: 40% for Kentucky; 41% for Indiana; 43% for Ohio. The sheet of figures footnotes the National Center for Educational Statistics. We double checked our figures with Curtis Logsdon, Director on Institutional Research. Senator Don Rowe, a member of our committee, called W. Vance Grant, chief of the National Center for Educational Statistics, projection branch, to inquire about the sheet of figures submitted to us. Mr. Grant said he was unaware of such a sheet.

The Center number in Washington D.C. is 202-245-8710.

As you know, hundreds of articles on the college enrollment crisis have appeared in recent months. We quote from one (HIGHER EDUCATION'S ENROLLMENT CRISIS AHEAD OF SCHEDULE, Courier-Journal, June 17, 1979) not because of its gloomy nature but because of the call to action in the last paragraph:

American colleges and universities may face a far more serious enrollment crisis than has been predicted by analysts of higher education, according to the Census Bureau's latest enrollment statistics.

The reason for the apparently widespread miscalculation is that most of the projections for the decade ahead have been based solely on the declining birthrate, not taking into consideration the possibility of a waning interest in college attendance. On the basis of the Census Bureau figures, experts estimate that the enrollment drop by 1990 may be double what is now forecast.

The last paragraph of this article by Fred M. Hechinger is far
from defeatist, however:

What emerges from this analysis of unexpectedly gloomy statistics is an appeal to the higher-education leadership to take a new look at the future, with less wishful thinking and a greater dose of realism and educational activism.

That sentence, we feel, is the theme of all the ideas and suggestions submitted to us.

RECRUITMENT

Most of the ideas submitted to the Committee concern recruitment; some concern retention.

As you may know, what we can do with paid advertising is determined by the Council on Higher Education. In April of 1979, the Council issued this policy statement for all public institutions in Kentucky:

All recruitment activities by Kentucky's public universities are not to be designed to aggressively recruit students for the primary purpose of enlarging enrollments to gain appropriations increases. The Council on Higher Education will review, on a recurring basis, the recruitment procedures of each of the public universities to insure that the procedures followed are in compliance with the intent of this policy.

An additional part of the three-page statement reads:

Advertising, whether general or specific, should be designed to inform the public about an institution, not to attract students.

All eight public institutions now have a representative on a faculty advisory committee for the Council. Perhaps this committee can interpret the policy statement for us.
Our original report contained five pages of suggestions and recommendations. Following is a complete review of suggestions submitted to us after release of the original report.

Dr. Rudolph Prins, department of biology, is president elect of the Kentucky Academy of Science. He writes that KAS has appointed an ad hoc committee to "study the 'Quality of Science Education in the State.'" This is a long-range project and one that Dr. Prins feels:

...will in some way quantify what is going on out there in the state from K-12, and...that this will have direct bearing on the kinds of recommendations we can make to produce needed changes (at least in science education). Potentially, recommendations could have significant effects on college enrollments.

Dr. Prins adds:

I share this with you and your committee because I feel sure that somewhere down the line we will be interacting with groups across the state who share the same concerns (not only about enrollment, but also about the quality of subject matter taught and the quality of the teaching).

Other state and national groups are concerned about the quality of teaching. For the first time (spring, 1979), state-wide testing was done in the elementary and secondary schools of Kentucky. At the time of this writing, the following information has been released by the state department of education: 80% of the students who took exams (grades 3, 5, 7, 10) scored at or above grade level based on national norms. (We feel this supports our point in the original report that more than 36% of Kentucky students are college-worthy.) Certainly the Kentucky Academy of Science will want to investigate the science scores. Western Kentucky University trains many of the
teachers who teach these elementary and secondary students, and the competency tests can provide us with useful information about what we are doing right or wrong in all fields, not just science. Also, increased contacts with elementary and secondary teachers in the state is good recruitment thinking.

Ms. Libbie Oakes of the English department writes:

To increase communication with high school teachers, each 101 and 102 instructor could send a letter to the high school teacher of each student who makes an A in 101 and 102 commending the teacher for preparing the student so well.

Several of the recruitment ideas submitted by Ms. Jean Moisan concern communications with high schools:

I strongly favor an all-out effort in recruitment. The suggestion that selected faculty members receive release time to visit high schools is good. Students who have tried working and who have become disillusioned with the blue-collar world through factory jobs, etc., and then returned to college (I have some in my 055 classes) could be included in some of these "visits" to high schools. Some of our remedial programs should receive more emphasis and more publicity; high school students need to realize that they have other alternatives besides trade school or blue collar labor. Some effective work could be done in breaking down academic prejudice in high schools so that high school students don't think of college as a place for only the highly-gifted intellectual. We could also emphasize—and develop more—two year degrees to attract students who shy away from making a long-term commitment to the four-year degree. Providing attractive married housing could be given more priority too. Another idea which entered my mind (and which may not be feasible for various reasons) is to offer introductory college courses and credit to high school seniors in the high school. Could members of our faculty go to the high schools as visiting teachers and teach, either before the regular school day, after it, or even during it, a class that would provide a sample of college work for partial or total credit? This might be team taught with various disciplines. Such an experience, if positive, might lure some students into the decision to come to college. Finally, I believe we need to make a real effort
to develop PR specialists in each department--faculty members who can develop skills to "sell" college to parents and high school students. High schools do this now when they have their "parent's day." Why can't we have a college "parent's day" one Friday, or a day when we invite our students to bring high school seniors they know to class with them?*

(*Some of these ideas have been effected on a limited basis.)

If 80% of Kentucky students are at or above grade level, why are only 36% of the ones who graduate from high school entering college? Dr. Elsie Dotson of the psychology department would like for us to find out why.

The potential inherent in the large percentage of high school students who do not come to college presents a real challenge to us at Western to meet and raise the educational level of our region.

First, I think we need to know why these people don't come to college--is it economic, attitudinal, or what? Then we need to take a good, hard look at what we find. Since Western has as its purpose the discovery as well as the delivery of information, we have some research activity right here. We could get some sociologists, psychologists, educators and economists to plan some in-depth research on this topic of why so few students attend college in Kentucky.

I keep hearing that we should "sell the value of education" to our citizens, engender the "love of learning" in our people, and I'm 100% for this. But we also have an old adage in education that states that we should begin where the student is. It is my guess that people in our region are pragmatists. They want to know, "Does it pay?" Well, that's a reasonable question to ask, so I would suggest that we demonstrate to our people that it isn't true that those who can, do and those who can't, teach. How about writing good common sense articles in local newspapers about crops, farm economy, family living, the psychology of aging, etc.,--information that is useful to people. We could do more team consultation in the schools. Consultation of a practical nature to the classroom teacher. We could give talks to local clubs. I'm suggesting that we, the faculty, become visible as persons with common practical sense.
I think we need to offer good continuing education programs for guidance counselors. These people can have an impact on high school students.

I'd like to see some interdepartmental brain storming on how to effectively help our region identify and cope with its needs so that our region would look to this University as a problem-solver or a partner in solving our regional needs.

Essentially I am stressing that our university become a forum for meeting practical everyday problems. I believe that the people in this region can understand and appreciate this.

Dr. Hugh Thomason of the government department writes:

I wish to comment on the potential for recruitment of students at Forts Knox and Campbell.

As you know, we offer a few courses at these two places and have done so for several years. I have taught at each for one semester and have ambivalent feelings about the experience--the students are a pleasure to work with (mine were mostly Army officers) but the time and travel involved are burdens.

It seems that we are about to be "driven out" or have "lost out" at Campbell. There seem to be several reasons for this. One of these, is, I think, that we have made no significant effort to continue or to enlarge what once was a viable program there. This comment aside, in the larger context of courses at both Forts, I think we have made no significant effort to recruit students from a potential student population: officers, enlisted, wives, and other dependents at these installations.

I'd like to suggest that your Committee inquire into our policies relevant to these military bases and whether or not it might be possible for us to increase our activity there.* With some sustained work we might secure a larger student enrollment from these groups.

(*The Committee will investigate this and all other ideas.)

No member of the University has commented more extensively on our report than Dean Carl Chelf. His suggestions are excellent; his quarrels with some of the attitudes we expressed in our original
I want to commend you and your committee for your hard work in addressing some of the difficult issues facing the University and for raising some difficult and pertinent questions about our future directions. I hope you won't think I'm being negative if I use your invitation to comment on your report to express quite candidly and frankly a number of concerns I have relative to some of the issues you raise. I share these with you for whatever consideration you feel they merit.

The first part of your report dealing with demographic and enrollment projections reflects a common bias that we in colleges and universities must somehow overcome if we hope to cope more effectively with current trends. On pages 6 and 8 you refer to "college age populations" and "college age group," meaning 18-22 year olds. Is there a "college age"? Psychologists tell us people are never too old to learn, and current trends are for more and more older adults to enroll in college. What I'm saying is that we must broaden our concept of the college student to include non-traditional elements in our population. It is among these elements that a vast and largely untapped potential lies that could help to offset anticipated declines in the numbers of traditional students. However, we will have to make some adjustments in programming to accommodate these new types of students and this sometimes comes only with difficulty in the university setting. With some imagination and conscious efforts at attracting more non-traditional students, Western could develop sizeable programs in this area.

I agree with you that there should be some potential for increasing the percentage of high school students who go on to college. I think one of the best ways to do this is by developing attractive and unique programs. In many areas I think this could be done through existing resources with little or no added costs. I think some cross-disciplinary, cross-departmental programs which provide a student a somewhat unique degree program might help. For example, programs combining foreign languages and business administration in a degree in international business; foreign languages and communications in international communications; English and technology courses in a program in technical writing. These could be sound, quality programs but oriented in a bit different direction making their graduates a bit different from others in the same fields.

I think this matter of programming ties in closely also with the concern you express about retention—a concern to which I think we must direct more attention. If, as the data seems to indicate, many students leaving are good students, then they must not be finding at Western what they are seeking. Are we providing programs that challenge students and that are capable of attracting and holding quality students? If not, then where are the shortcomings? Another key factor in this regard, is the quality of teaching. Do we demonstrate a real interest and concern for the educational development of the student as an individual, or are students too often dismissed as "second-class citizens" for whose problems and concerns we have little time? I'm not saying we should coddle our students,
but that quality instruction includes an element of humaneness and concern for the student and his personal success and development. It may be this element of teaching that determines whether a student remains or drops by the wayside.

In your report you mention more direct contacts with high school teachers. This is one area where I feel we might have our greatest potential impact on the recruitment of high school graduates. If more of our departments could develop close relationships with their counterparts in the secondary schools this could create a very positive attitude toward Western and its programs. There are several ways to help accomplish this: departments could make faculty members available to lecture, present demonstrations and programs in the schools; they can conduct workshops and conferences for teachers; and they can bring students and teachers on campus for fairs, contests, etc. All of these can help to establish a positive working relationship between University departments and secondary teachers.

Another thing we need to look at are our own policies and procedures and how these may deter some students, especially non-traditional students. You mention that a bright student can study for six months, get a GED and enroll at Western. Why does an adult, bright student need a GED to enroll? Why not admit such students on a provisional basis and if they complete two, three courses satisfactorily, let them continue? Don't we have confidence in our own ability to determine whether a student is capable of college work or not? Why set up a lot of obstacles in the course that don't mean all that much anyway? Why not adopt a positive rather than a negative approach to education for a change?

As you indicate in your report, the next decade poses a real challenge to our University, and in meeting this challenge we need to be both imaginative and realistic in defining the role of our University in a changing environment. In a time when available resources are going to be severely restricted, we must develop the means of making our programs more attractive and of serving a broader constituency through a greater variety of educational opportunities. We need to explore the possibilities of such things as expanded cooperative education experiences for more of our students. In a survey of their students, the University of Cincinnati found that co-op was a factor in a high percentage of student decisions to enroll there. Thus, expanded co-op opportunities could possibly help with recruitment. It also could help improve our retention by providing a structured system of alternating work-study periods. In this way the student could be away from the classroom without actually dropping out of school. We must break out of the straight-jacket thinking that all college education must come in a four-year package, and must be administered in three-credit-hour doses to those between the ages of 18 and 22.

You conclude with the observation that we need to do an educational job on the Council on Higher Education. I share your frustrations with the Council because some of their greatest shortsightedness has been in the area of programs with which I deal directly. However, let's not make the Council the scapegoat for many of our own shortcomings. If you look at our mission statement, the Council certainly has not placed us in a
The potential for all kinds of educational service is still open to us and the initiative rests in our own hands. Before, or maybe at the same time, we educate the Council, we also need to do the same internally. We need to have more people throughout the University asking the questions your committee is asking and seeking solutions to problems we face. And, we need some bold, hard-headed thinking and leadership from faculty, department heads, deans, and all levels of the University. We must all grapple with these issues together and through our collective wisdom come up with solutions that will enable the University to serve its constituents to its fullest potential.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to your report and get some of these concerns off my chest.

Since the high school dropout rate in Kentucky is quite high (one-third of the students who enter ninth grade do not graduate), Dean Chelf's idea for provisional college enrollment is especially interesting.

Dean Chelf also sent the Committee a copy of a memo on recruitment which he sent to President Dero G. Downing in October, 1978. Some parts of the memo duplicate the information quoted above, but the following paragraph includes an additional suggestion:

What I'm emphasizing is that we need to break out of our mold and try some things that are new and different. We might, for example, consider a mobile van that we could equip with all kinds of literature, a video display, loudspeaker system, etc., and send it around over the area to shopping centers, county fairs, etc., to make people aware of what Western has to offer. We may need in some areas to look at the delivery of our services. Would we serve students better and maybe attract more students if services were available on a different basis? Should we have counseling services available in Russellville, Glasgow, and other places periodically? Maybe some of our staff should work an 11:00 to 8:30 shift rather than 8:00 to 4:30.

In addition to the recruitment office, Western has a university steering committee (Dean Chelf is a member) appointed by President Downing to assist Dave Mefford with brainstorming sessions. We have found this office and the steering committee members receptive to any
workable recruitment idea. The Committee hopes that suggestions will continue to be submitted to us or to our recruitment officers.

Our immediate concern is our own institution. Beyond that, though, we need to recognize that college enrollment decline is also a state and national problem. Dr. Sam McFarland of the psychology department has drafted a plan of action that calls for a state-wide task force:

The number of college-age individuals in Kentucky is steadily declining. Fear is widespread concerning the impact of these declines upon our institution. While our public universities face hardships from loss of student revenues, many private colleges may face extinction. It is imperative that we develop bold and imaginative plans for our uncertain futures. One aspect of these plans should be to develop new orientations and programs for student recruitment.

A preliminary plan for combatting declining enrollment is outlined on the following pages. This plan is based on the following assumptions:

1. All colleges and universities in Kentucky are in this problem together. Declining enrollment is not Western's problem or Kentucky Wesleyan's problem but our problem. It can be addressed most effectively when seen as a shared difficulty.

2. There are still large numbers of college-capable people in Kentucky, who, for whatever reasons, are choosing not to attend college. Thirty-six percent of high school graduates in Kentucky attend college, as contrasted with over 60% in Ohio and other northeastern states.
3. By all appearances, the majority of our present recruitment activities compete with other schools over the 36% who already plan on attending college. This focus is shortsighted.

4. The percentage of high school graduates attending college in Kentucky can be increased with concerted effort. Even small increases in the proportion of college-age students attending college would result in substantial enrollment gains. An increase from 36% to 38% would result in nearly 6% more college students than currently expected. An increase to 41% -- a figure which is still well below the national norms -- would mean nearly 14% more college students would be enrolled than now anticipated. The total effect of a declining population base would be abated.  

5. Education is the best product on the market and it can be sold. It cannot -- and should not -- be sold primarily as a path to a higher income: college graduates currently earn only 6% more in their lifetimes than do high school graduates. Education can be sold as a way to a richer and more valuable life.

6. When selling a worthy product, we should not disparage techniques of creative salesmanship.

7. The individual, the schools, the state of Kentucky and the nation would all prosper by a more educated citizenry, by having a high proportion of college-educated adults. Abundant evidence shows that education affects the quality of our thinking on public issues in highly positive ways.
Based on these assumptions, we suggest that Kentucky colleges and universities develop a joint, coordinated task force to develop a program for "Selling" the values of education. The task force should have at least one representative from each institution. The campaign should begin now and continue through the 1980's.

1Since the present 36% is a decrease from 43% in 1966, a goal of 41% appears reasonable.

The campaign should focus on the values of education both for the individual and for our common good: We should stress that education enriches our lives, sharpens our abilities to think, refines our tastes, deepens our understandings of ourselves, and broadens our perspectives on our world. Educated individuals are infinitely better off, even when they are no richer. The opportunities to examine the secrets of the universe, to see beyond our own place and time in history, to develop better visions of our past and of our future constitute a rare privilege which is beyond the reach of most of the world's people.

We should also stress that education contributes to our welfare as a state, nation, and world. Participatory democracy, if it is to work well, requires an informed and far-sighted electorate. The massive problems confronting our world—war, arms races, overpopulation, hunger, and environmental destruction—require our greatest collective wisdom. Education is essential if we, as a people, are to lead in finding solutions.
The following ideas are preliminary and require further development by the task-force. We suggest, however, that the campaign contain the following components:

1. A Speakers Bureau, composed of faculty from all of the Kentucky colleges and universities who are willing to give of their time to speak in local high schools and junior high schools on the values of education. Model speeches can be developed which might impress upon the students the importance of their minds and the terrible waste of priceless resources if they are not developed. The speakers can also seek opportunities to discuss the importance of education with groups of parents.

2. A Public Media Campaign, with the following elements:
   a. Public service radio messages on the values of education. Resources for preparing and distributing these messages to radio stations across the state are available at several universities and colleges. Faculty members experienced in radio marketing are willing to coordinate and assist as needed.
   b. 30-second television commercials. These might take the form, for example, of stimulating exchanges between teachers and students in classroom setting, concluded by a one-line "zinger"--"College can improve your ability to think!"

3. An increased solicitation of support from our graduates now working in the public schools. The present dominant emphasis upon "skills" in the training of public school teachers can be supplemented with efforts to insure that
our own students develop a genuine "love of learning" and a recognition of the importance of learning as a permanent style of life. As we can enhance the value attached to learning in our own graduates, we can also elicit their support in developing a similar value in their own students.

While this plan is only a beginning, we hope that it will stimulate a reorientation toward cooperation rather than competition between our schools in the matter of student recruitment. We recognize that this plan will be only one part of our total efforts to survive during the next decade. Nevertheless, we believe that these activities can be a part of the solution. We urge your cooperation in their further development and implementation.

RETENTION

Several ideas on retention have already been mentioned. In January of 1979, Dr. James L. Davis distributed to all the faculty a document describing ideas developed by the faculty and staff of Jefferson Community College. These ideas are on the faculty member's role in retention of students. All of you have had an opportunity to review this document, so it is not included here. You may have found it useless in your own case, or you may have found parts of it relevant. Perhaps some of you may want to recommend that we design our own form.

A cover letter for the document contains this information:

A study which followed our 1974 freshman class revealed that only 47.7% of those beginning freshmen had completed
degree requirements or were still enrolled after four years. More recent studies indicate that the attrition rate is even higher.

There are also a number of apparent myths about attrition. The one most frequently invoked is that students who drop out of college are not college material. In fact, a recent study at Western indicates that 65% of students who drop out have a GPA of 2.0 or above and that only 16.3% of the dropouts are candidates for academic dismissal.

Results of a nationwide study...reveal that one of the major reasons given by students for leaving college is dissatisfaction with courses. The author of the study (the study is available in departmental offices) indicates that one cause for students' dissatisfaction with courses may be their relationship with the teacher and with other students in their classes—that is, with the atmosphere in the classroom.

Dr. Davis suggests the following:

In studies which have been done at other institutions, the reason given most frequently by the cream-of-the-crop students for dropping out is boredom with courses. They often elaborate by stating to the effect that they were not getting from the courses anything that they "didn't already know." At Western, we can protect our best students from that situation by advising them into honors courses. Since students are more likely to have extensive previous knowledge of the material covered at the 100-level and since students are more likely to drop out during or following the first two semesters, advising freshmen into honors sections of general education courses is extremely important. In these sections, students can explore topics in more depth and are provided greater opportunity for discussion than in regular sections, and they are not jeopardizing their GPA by taking these honors courses.

We received far fewer ideas on retention than on recruitment, but we do have a very detailed letter from Major Gregory A. Lowe of the Military Science Department (also Senator Lowe). Major Lowe's letter outlines some recruitment and several retention procedures employed by his department:
I have reviewed with great interest the fine report prepared by your committee concerning the enrollment projections for the University. Since I have been involved in the Military Science Department's enrollment/recruiting activities on a full-time basis for the last year, I wanted to share with you the benefit of some of my experiences. I will key my comments to specific paragraphs and pages in the draft report you distributed at the Faculty Senate Meeting on 8 February so that I won't ramble.

Let me say initially that we in the Military Science Department here and at most of the other 280 colleges and universities hosting an ROTC program have had to be most concerned about recruiting and retention in our programs since the incentive to participate presented by the draft was eliminated. We spend considerable amounts of time, effort and money in this area. This projected deficit of 18-year-olds is going to have an impact on us in ROTC and in the active army as well, so we are most concerned.

Page 11, 1st paragraph. I think that you have hit on the two key elements to the survival of many of our universities...recruiting and retention. We have for a long time recognized that recruiting was a most important aspect of what we were doing in the university. I believe that more effort must be placed in the area of retention. We have attempted to do this in the Military Science Program at Western and have realized generally good results. A good deal of time is devoted to one-on-one counseling between cadre members and our students. This is probably a little easier for us to accomplish than it would be for some departments since we have only about 450 students and 9 instructors to do most of the counseling and to show an interest in our students.

Page 12, 2d paragraph. I would totally agree with Mr. Reynolds' comment that more involvement of the total University is required in the recruitment effort. The Hometown Committee is, I think, a good start in this area, but participation in this committee seems to be sporadic at times. Maybe when the rest of the faculty realizes that enrollment trends are declining, they will get out and try to bring in some students.

Page 12, 3d paragraph. The Military Science Department has had a high school visitation program in effect for several years now. A cadre member is assigned a certain number of high schools in our twenty-four county recruiting area. He is then required to visit that high school between September and December to talk to students and faculty about ROTC and, at the same time, about Western. Army ROTC Scholarship applicants are sought out during these visits and the general benefits to be derived from the Military Science programs are also stressed. During the Spring, return visits are made to the high schools demonstrating high interest in the Fall or to those schools providing significant input to Western's freshman classes each year. These visits usually amount to going back to about half of the schools originally visited. As time permits during the Spring visits, we conduct some sort of demonstration for the high schools such as basic techniques in rappelling or military drill and ceremonies. These demonstrations have been extremely well received by the high school students and
the students have been able to see first-hand some of the activities that they will be able to participate in if they come to Western. We also participate in Career Days or Nights at various high schools on request. There have been occasions where we have found out that a school was having such a program and we have invited ourselves to attend. I believe that we must be assertive in these areas without becoming pushy. The last comment I would like to make in this area has already been touched on, and that is the personal involvement and interest shown by the faculty and staff. Western has had the reputation for many years as being an institution that "cares." I don't think that point can be overemphasized. The moment that we forget about the student as an individual because we are involved in our own research, writing, or outside activities, we might as well shut down completely, because they are our most important asset.

Page 13, 1st paragraph. I think that "high powered approach" or "high pressure sales" in anything is going to have very negative effects on whatever we are trying to accomplish. We do not use those tactics in our department and are, I believe, better off for it. I would agree with your committee member that a concentrated effort must be employed in the high schools and we must get the "word" out to prospective students, but they must make the decision. I think he meant to recommend a high visibility approach or a saturation of the target audience which, in my opinion, differs from "high powered" techniques. Equipment displays and outside demonstrations have also helped us get the word out. Anything new and different has generally high student appeal and interest.

Page 13, 4th paragraph. The area of retention must be expanded. We have dedicated considerable effort toward retention in the Military Science program and it has paid off. Funds are not yet available to supplement this effort, but we continue to ask for them. Time and fiscal restraints are probably restricting the University's efforts also. As I mentioned earlier, I think recruiting is only the first step in solving our declining enrollment problem. The logical follow-up step is retention.

Page 14, 5th paragraph. Why are so few Kentucky high school graduates attending college? What is Indiana and Ohio doing that we aren't? It appears to me that we had better look into those questions, find some answers, and then apply those things that will work in our State.

Page 14, 3d paragraph. "Class appeal" is, in fact, important for both the part-time and full-time student. We conducted a survey of our freshman and sophomore Military Science students currently enrolled and of previously enrolled sophomores to determine what "turned them on" and what "turned them off" about the Military Science program. The results confirmed some suspicions we already had and therefore allowed us to justify making some changes in our program. Some of these changes involved offering more adventure-type classes and less of the traditional classroom work associated with ROTC. In one case, we merely changed the title of a course. We are within the limits of Army regulations giving the students what they want. This is keeping some of them in the program long enough for the program to sell itself to them. I think this concept can be employed University-wide.
We, by no stretch of the imagination, have all the answers to the recruiting and retention problems but, through trial and error, have found some things that seem to work. Many have no direct measurable results, but we still feel that they are effective. We are as concerned about student enrollment as your committee and will be glad to share our successes and failures with you, since our very survival depends upon the enrollment trends at Western.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OTHER STATES?

The California Postsecondary Education Commission reports that the high school dropout rate in that state has doubled in the past ten years. To offset this problem and its effect on college enrollment, California, as well as other states, has adopted a plan called Early Exit. The plan was reported on in the April, 30, 1979 issue of NEWSWEEK:

**AN EARLY EXIT FROM HIGH SCHOOL**

"A bad idea," some of her friends thought, but 16-year-old Jana Hunsiker says, "I look at them and they aren't doing anything." Cindy Cody, 17, says, "I've grown up a little bit quickly, but I'm glad I did it." Jana and Cindy, who live in Larkspur, Calif., took a grueling, four-hour exam to gain a measure of freedom that most teen-agers would envy. In California, students who pass the test can earn a high-school diploma as much as two years early—and get a head start on either college or a job.

Four years ago, California became the first state to offer an "early exit" proficiency test, and since then more than 40,000 teen-agers have passed the exam. Florida allows impatient students to take a "high-school equivalency" test designed for adults, and Connecticut is considering a similar plan. Wilson Riles, California's superintendent of schools, says that his state's exam originally was intended to reach "borderline dropouts"—youngsters who don't like being "corralled in the four walls of a classroom." In practice, the exam has primarily attracted students who are bright but bored. They simply feel ready to move on to college, travel or a job.

California gives the test three times a year to students at least 16 years old. Prepared by Educational Testing Service of Princeton, N. J., the exam includes 188 multiple-choice questions in mathematics, reading comprehension and practical skills such as balancing a checkbook and completing a job application. Students must also write two short essays on such subjects as whether women should serve in combat.

**A SECOND-CLASS DIPLOMA?** California teachers and administrators worried at first that the test might lead to a mass exodus of students, exacerbating the already high teen-age unemployment rate and reducing state funding for school districts losing large numbers of pupils. Both educators and parents also suspected that the diploma earned by passing the examination would be considered only "second class."

The anxieties proved unfounded. Initially, large numbers of students signed up for the test, but after only 30 per cent passed, word of its difficulty got around. Participation dropped dramatically. Nearly 13,000 youngsters took last month's test—only a tiny fraction of the 750,000 teen-agers eligible for the exam. And in a test last November, the latest for which results are known, a record 52 per cent passed. "The population taking the exam is selecting itself better," explains California assistant superintendent of schools George Neill. "The test was not designed to prompt a mass walkout," but to provide a "law-abiding way to freedom" for motivated students. The state legislature has cooperated by equating the test diplomas with those obtained after four years of high school.

Florida's plan is different. To gain early exit, high-school students take the General Educational Development test, which is designed for adults who have dropped out of school and want a high-school-equivalency certificate. "It's a rinky-dink exam," charges principal Don Reynolds of Seminole High School in Sanford. "It really can't be too much above the sixth-grade level." Reynolds even tries to avoid informing students of its availability. State officials concede that the GED has been less diffi-
cult for Florida teen-agers than they had expected. So far, 75 per cent have passed. Although only 4,500 students have taken the test since 1977, the number of applicants this year has risen sharply.

California youngsters offer a variety of reasons for wanting to graduate early. Some plan to find jobs or get married. But most of the applicants, Neill says, intend to enroll at community colleges, which require only a high-school diploma for admission. "When a kid has outstripped his peers," Neill argues, "early graduation can spell the difference between swimming in success and drowning in boredom."

ASPIRING ACTOR: For a surprising number of students, the test simply represents a challenge to be met. "I decided to take it just to see if I could pass it," says Linus Huffman, a junior at San Marcos High in Santa Barbara. Linus, an aspiring actor, passed—but did not leave school. "I rather like school," he says, "but if something better comes along, I can go with a diploma in my hand." By now, even many teachers are impressed. "A high-school diploma doesn't prove that a student has learned how to read," says Julie Walker, who teaches math at Larkspur's Makew Mountain High. "But the test certificate proves that he can meet our graduation standards."

Jean Seligmann with Michael Reese
in Larkspur, Calif. and bureau reports

We see no reason why this plan could not work in Kentucky. At present, a high school dropout can earn a Graduate Equivalency Diploma but he or she must either be eighteen or have been out of school for a year before taking the exam.

Is a high school diploma even necessary for college entrance? Alternatives to the diploma are being discussed in other states.

Dean Chelf sent us the following article form the June 24, 1979 edition of the Lincoln, Nebraska JOURNAL AND STAR:

**Diplomas to be obsolete?**

The high school diploma may be obsolete as a measure of student progress.

That notion, heresy to some, has been discussed with Nebraska college and university deans, the state Board of Education and the Postsecondary Coordinating Commission.

There may be better ways than a high school diploma to judge adult achievement and encourage interest in college, says William Fuller, executive director of the coordinating commission.

The state board and the commission explored the possibilities briefly during a joint meeting.
Certain classes skipped

Nebraska Education Commissioner Anne Campbell noted the nationwide increase in the number of dropouts and the rising number of students who skip certain classes during the day.

"- Others stay in class but are unchallenged academically, despite the schools' best efforts, said education board member Arlene Hart. "We're doing them a disservice by forcing them to stay there," she said.

One of East High School's top students graduated this spring after taking only four high school credit hours during his senior year. He spent the rest of the time at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where the challenges were greater than East could offer the bright student.

Courses are important

Joe Lutjeharms, deputy education commissioner, said some persons suggested during a recent meeting with education deans that students should be allowed to carry their transcript, not a diploma, to college with them. The courses taken are what's important, some say, not the actual diploma.

A few community colleges and private four-year colleges already will take students without a high school diploma, Fuller said.

One alternative, Fuller said, might be to allow any nongraduate 21 or older to enter college. The state education department would award them a high school diploma after they have successfully completed 24 college hours.

A new program in Cambridge and New Bedford, Mass., Fuller noted, gives adults high school credit for "learning gained through life experience," not just academic classwork.

Half the adults in Nebraska (more than 70 percent in some counties) haven't finished high school. Should they be denied the chance to go to college? The two boards didn't try to answer that question.

But they did recognize informally that the old diploma may need a new look.

The University of Washington in Seattle admits students as young as ten years old if they can score in the top 20% on a comprehensive pre-college exam.

We are aware of no institution in Kentucky with a similar early entrance program. Since Kentucky schools in general offer too few programs for gifted students, we could serve ourselves and the state by offering an entrance program similar to the ones being offered in other states.
ATTACHMENTS

The Committee recognizes that the two attachments we have decided to include will interest some of you more than others, but since our original report contained a report from the Community and Continuing Education College, we felt that many of you would want to see the current report.

Because our committee has not yet made a full-scale study of graduate enrollment,* we are including portions of an address entitled GRADUATE EDUCATION AT WESTERN by Vice-President James L. Davis.

(*Dr. Elmer Gray, Dean of the Graduate College, has requested that we make such a study.)
The 1978-79 academic year was a period of continued growth and maturity for programs in the Bowling Green Community College and Continuing Education unit of the University. For the academic year the unit had approximately 28,500 enrollees in its various programs. (This figure does not include associate degree students unless they were enrolled in evening or extended campus courses).

**Associate Degree Programs** - Enrollment in associate degree programs was stable for 1978-79 with 1180 enrollments as compared to 1178 in the fall of 1977. (Neither of these figures reflects approximately 200 a.d. students in programs at Fort Knox). Probably one reason for such stability was the fact that no new associate degree options were added during 1978-79. Much of our previous growth had been in new programs. Some areas remain which should be explored for associate degree programs—transportation, commercial art, commercial photography, accounting, industrial management, and legal assistant, for example. While a.d. enrollments were stable, the number of associate degree graduates increased from 209 in 1978 to 220 in 1979, a 5.3 percent increase.

**Extended Campus Programs** - The demand for educational services off-campus continued to grow in 1978-79 as is reflected in both the number of offerings and numbers enrolled. Classes offered grew from 403 in 1977 to 466 in 1978, a 15.6 percent increase. The number of enrollments grew from 7,844 to 8,875, a 13.1 percent growth. Major areas of growth were in Owensboro and Fort Knox. This growth was, no doubt, stimulated by the new state guidelines on teachers' salaries and may be only temporary. Other factors which may influence our extended campus programs in the next few years are Council on Higher Education policies, increasing competition from other institutions, and the energy situation.
Special Programs Area - Enrollments in programs in this area were relatively stable for the 1978-79 academic year. Enrollments in correspondence programs were encouraging. College level enrollments were up over the previous year, and high school enrollments appear to be ending a declining trend and starting an upturn. We are currently working on a plan for seeking a cooperative arrangement with the public schools whereby certain high school drop-outs might complete the high school diploma through our correspondence courses. If we are successful, this could expand our service role at the high school level. We are also exploring the development of some summer reading courses at the college level.

Evening class participation remains strong, but relatively stable at approximately 5,000 enrollments. We need to expand evening offerings to provide the opportunity for students to complete all degree requirements in the evening. Currently, not all departments offer courses and not enough upper division courses are offered. Most evening students, once they reach a certain level, have difficulty finding the necessary courses for completing the degree. With 5,000-6,000 evening students and a potential for even more, we should seriously consider offering a full schedule of classes after 5 p.m.

Continuing Education - While we continue to lag in departmental initiatives in developing CEU activities, we are beginning to show some real progress in the continuing education area. With the appointment of a Director of Continuing Education Programs in August, 1978, both continuing education programs and use of the Continuing Education Center have shown substantial growth. During the year, eleven Center workshops or seminars attracted 458 participants, and already over 50 conferences, workshops, and seminars have been booked for next year. The IRAM (Institute for Retail Appliance Managers) with General Electric is being expanded; the Economic Conference for Clergy is an annual program; and programs
in banking, transportation and law are becoming established and well attended. Several workshops and training programs for area industry have been quite successful also. The potential is great and the next few years should bring substantial growth in this area. With the growth in programs, use of the Center has also improved. In 1978 5,800 guests used Center facilities, and for the first four months of 1979 almost 2,500 persons had already used the facility. We need to get more departmental and faculty involvement in continuing education; we need to staff the continuing education area sufficiently to capitalize on the great potential there; and we need to get more of the conferences, workshops, etc., approved for CEU credit.

Cooperative Education - Although our proposal for funding of the Cooperative Education program was not approved last year, we continued to show considerable progress in the expansion and improvement of that program. In 1977-78 the program involved 138 students, 14 departments and 91 employers; for the 1978-79 year the program had 164 students (an 18.8 percent increase), 15 departments, and 106 employers (a 16.5 percent increase). Also in the course of the year an advisory committee developed a comprehensive plan and statement of purpose for cooperative education programs at Western, and a newsletter on cooperative education is currently being printed. An evaluation team visited the campus and provided suggestions for strengthening the program. A proposal for federal funding was prepared and resubmitted and the program was re-funded for $54,843 for next year. With the renewal of the grant and growing student and employer interest, potential for this program continues to grow. Participation by more departments to provide a co-op opportunity for more students is a prime need at this point.

Weekend College - Launched in the spring semester, the Weekend College is an effort to provide students unable to attend regularly scheduled classes an
opportunity to attend college on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. In the spring four courses were offered with 60 students enrolled. Considerable interest is being expressed in these courses, but again it is sometimes difficult to get the needed courses in the schedule.

Part-Time Students - We continue to review University policies and procedures in an effort to eliminate obstacles to participation by more non-traditional students. Currently the Office of Admissions is working on a brochure which will contain information directed toward the part-time student. As demographic data and enrollment trends indicate, this is the area where we must focus much of our attention for the next few years. While our programs are doing well, much remains to be done in devising new and better means for serving both our current students and new clientele we should be reaching.
PRESENT STATUS OF GRADUATE STUDY AT WESTERN

Considering that Western has had university status for less than 15 years, our graduate programs have made noteworthy progress. Some have gained recognition well beyond our service region.

Enrollment at the graduate level has reached the three thousand mark this semester. In recent semesters the increased graduate enrollment has compensated for a slight decrease in undergraduate enrollment. John S. Toll, president of the University of Maryland, has recently stated that demands for university teaching will be more evident in continuing education and in graduate and professional programs than in the typical undergraduate programs. The population of bachelors degree holders is and will continue to increase as students complete their undergraduate degrees.

Although graduate headcount has continued to increase at Western, there has been a shift in the pattern of enrollment. The increase has been primarily in part-time, extended campus enrollments. In view of the increased financial incentive for teachers, the part-time enrollment pattern is expected to continue. Also, it has been reported that forty million adults will change careers during the next ten years and that twenty-four million of these adults will seek retraining at some level. The masters degree is adaptable for use in retooling programs. In an address to the eighteenth meeting of the Council of Graduate Schools last year, Dr. William McElroy, Chancellor of the University of California San Diego, encouraged schools to revitalize their masters degrees. It was his stated opinion that there is a ready market for masters graduates and the overall trend for this type of talent can only be upward in most fields.
Although not all graduate programs at Western require a thesis, the thesis or specialist project represents an effort on the part of the student and his or her committee to find solutions to problems and to increase knowledge. During the 1977-78 year a total of 62 theses and eight specialists projects were completed at our university.

More attention will be given to our assistantship program later; however, it is encouraging to note that we are supporting approximately 240 graduate assistants each year. The graduate assistant is a critical part of the on-campus, full-time graduate student population.

I would be remiss in failing to mention the general success which graduates of our masters' programs have in finding jobs and in pursuing post-graduate degree programs. Graduates of many of these programs have established impressive records in some of the top doctoral programs in the country.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Although much progress has been made by Western's graduate program, we must continously plan for improvement. I want to touch on some areas where efforts are being made to effect changes in the graduate program.

1. Teaching loads--During the past year I have directed an effort to reduce all teaching loads in the university to a maximum of 24 hours per academic year. From an educational, as well as an accreditation standpoint, graduate teaching loads should be lower than this maximum. For the faculty member who teaches only graduate courses, the maximum load now is 12 and 9 or 21 hours. A committee of the graduate council is currently reviewing graduate faculty
teaching loads, along with the amount of credit for directing theses or specialist projects and the amount of credit for directing special topics. I look forward to seeing their report, after it has been reviewed by the graduate council.

2. Enrollment—Although the 1978 fall graduate enrollment was up more than eight percent over the previous year, graduate enrollment needs careful analysis as we plan for the future. For example, during the fall semester, graduate enrollment was down in about two-thirds of the masters programs. The total enrollment was up primarily as a result of the increase in enrollment in Rank 1 programs—the terminal program for most public school employees. The good news is that only about 11 percent of the school employees in our service area have completed Rank 1. In other words, the students are there. We must plan programs and course offerings to meet their needs.

There is, however, reason for concern about the graduate enrollment in education. One of the themes that Dean J.T. Sandefur, immediate past president of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, has publicized is that in-service education programs are being moved out of the university classroom and into the schools. There is increasing use of elementary and secondary teachers as instructional personnel in in-service activity and a declining use of college professors. Many states now permit the use of continuing education units and professional development units to replace college credit hours as a requirement for additional certification, salary levels, and promotion. In Kentucky, teachers will be able to meet Rank 2 salary requirements and renew the teaching certificate by a fifth-year programs which includes 12 hours of continuing education and professional development credits. As we
plan for the future in teacher preparation, we must consider these recent moves toward teaching centers and programs which are external to the university.

As we think together about graduate enrollment, I do not want to leave the impression that only bigger is better. On the other hand, I do not want to leave you with a comfortable feeling that we can survive in the currently popular "steady-state." As our biology friends will agree, an organism in the steady state is dead! We must give our best effort in planning and implementing programs for part-time, weekend, or other non-traditional students if our programs are to remain viable.

I want to express appreciation to the Faculty Senate committee which has completed a review of our enrollment and to the university-wide committee, which I appointed last fall, which is developing enrollment projections for the next few years.

3. Maintaining and replacing scientific equipment--During the 1960's (the golden years of graduate education), federal support was available for the purchase of scientific equipment. Now, far less money is available and the equipment purchased in the 1960's is in great need of repair or replacement. You may have read a recent article in The Chronicle of Higher Education in which Jerome B. Wiesner, the president of M.I.T., described the problem of obsolescence in scientific equipment on a national basis. Although Western is not a major research institution, the problem of maintaining and replacing scientific equipment is acute. Much of Western's scientific equipment was purchased during the 1960's when federal funds were more available and when the university's graduate programs were being initiated. The age of this equipment now exceeds the
half life survival for scientific equipment. Maintenance and replacement of this equipment will be a major item of expense which must be faced in the immediate years ahead.

4. Assistantships—During recent years the increases in the assistantship budgets have been rather substantial; however, we have not been able to keep pace with inflation nor with the rate of increase in assistantship stipends at other competitive institutions. In preparation of the 1979-80 budget, every effort is being made to increase the assistantship stipend or to waive the in-state fees or some combination of these two forms of support. As you know, the amount of additional money which the university has for the second year of the biennium is limited and must be used to support increases in faculty salaries, assistantships, and other critical budget areas.

5. Release time for scholarly activity—each college Dean has the prerogative of providing release time to faculty for scholarly activities. The amount of release time may equal a maximum of 3.5 percent of the total faculty time for the college. It is understood that graduate faculty get preference for release time. As the teaching load stabilizes and we make plans for better use of our resources, it is hoped that the release time may be increased to permit greater efforts in the research and public service responsibilities of the university. If an enrollment decrease comes to the institutions of higher education in Kentucky, those institutions with established records in research and public service will be in a better position to obtain a continued level of support.

6. Moratorium on new graduate programs—In 1972 the Council on Higher Education established a moratorium on new graduate programs until existing programs could be inventoried and procedures established
for considering new programs. As many of you know from personal involvement, Western completed the internal evaluation of all graduate programs and submitted the reports to the Council in 1977. We are still awaiting the evaluation of those reports by the Council. Meanwhile, there can be little doubt that the inability of the institutions in Kentucky to initiate new graduate programs has limited the progress of graduate education in the commonwealth. Internally, it is difficult to do the kind of planning which I described earlier when some other regulatory body controls the initiation of new programs. I, like you, hope that the masters programs will soon be reviewed and that a timetable will be established for considering new programs. We presently have before the Council masters programs in Computer Science and Interior Design. Additional graduate programs are being developed in Accounting, Geology, and certain other areas.

SUMMARY

In summary, I want to acknowledge the progress that our graduate programs have made since their inception—in the 1930's for the M.A. in Education and the mid-1960's or later for the other programs.

Generally, much of the development of the graduate program at Western has occurred without sufficient financial support and without adequate recognition of the greater costs of graduate education.

As we plan for the immediate years ahead, graduate education holds much of the potential for maintaining our current level of academic activity.
Last and by no means least, I want to acknowledge the fact that the quality of any educational program—especially a graduate program—rests with the faculty. Regardless of the academic regulations that may be approved by the Academic Council and the Graduate Council, the quality of graduate programs at Western rests with you, the graduate faculty. I would also like to take this opportunity to commend Dr. Gray, who is giving outstanding leadership to the graduate college.