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UA3/9 Thank You & Happy Holidays

WKU President's Office

Gary Ransdell

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Thank You and Happy Holidays

faculty-all-bounces@lists.wku.edu [faculty-all-bounces@lists.wku.edu] on behalf of Gary Ransdell [Gary.Ransdell@wku.edu]

Sent: Wednesday, December 16, 2009 9:32 AM

To: faculty-all; staff-all

Fellow Faculty and Staff:

As we bring the Fall 2009 semester to a conclusion, I want to thank all of you for your extensive efforts, talents, and energy that has benefited our students and all who share this campus community. I hope to see many of you at our Commencement ceremony this Saturday where we will graduate a record number of students in our fall graduation ceremony.

I have enjoyed meeting with most of our faculty during this fall semester. This week, I will complete nearly 60 departmental meetings with faculty across our various disciplines and departments. I have learned much about your priorities and aspirations. I have also been able to gather a shared consensus for those traits you seek in a new Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and I have learned much about what you expect in our emerging research environment at WKU. It was good to talk about a number of other matters important in our academic community at this time, including the outlook for this coming legislative session in Frankfort. As ominous as the state budget situation appears to be, especially in light of the temporary nature of the Federal stimulus funding, it is helpful to discuss such matters personally with you.

As I indicated to many of you, I intend to take the notes gathered from these discussions and pare our current 27 page strategic plan down to a few pages. I will also take what is now a set of some 150 specific performance indicators and boil them down to a few general campus priority areas which will continue to shape our decision making for the next couple of years. It is important that we go from the specific to the general, that we live within our means, and measure our ambitions during this difficult economic period. Kentucky will lag the national data, but both Kentucky and the Nation will come out of this recession in due course. My goal is to help us temper our normal progressive, if not aggressive, tendencies until such time that normal

state funding and tuition margins allow us to shape a university budget more conducive to bold and specific planning. I intend to share with you in early January a pared back strategic plan, seek your input one more time, then finalize a brief planning document that will guide us over the next couple of years. We can resume a more thorough strategic planning process when economic conditions improve.

Thank you for your cooperation as we seek to conserve energy over the break. We are mindful that most faculty will be working in their offices through the 21st. Our Facilities staff will ease into the energy conservation plan early next week.

Julie and I wish for all of you the happiest of holidays. May you enjoy the Christmas season with those close to you. Have a safe and happy new year. Rest well. I look forward to seeing you in January.

Gary Ransdell