

Proposal from Dr. Richard Kirchmeyer:

WKU is considering replacing it (Voice) with a more powerful tool: a forum/bulletin board - where folks can post their comments in any particular thread/subject they want. This is a software tool actually made for threaded discussions and it does that job very efficiently and is very easy to use. It would be the same as WKU-Voice where everyone would be made a member. WKU-Voice - as an email based threaded discussion list - is very inefficient in terms of its use and the storage resources it uses. A one line reply, for example, in the digest mode, could have 30 emails behind it making following a particular thread almost impossible and using large amounts of storage. So far I have proposed it to Admin Council, Deans Council, Dept Heads Council, Senate Executive Committee, and next on the list is the Staff Council. So far, support is overwhelmingly strongly in favor although the Senate Executive Committee asked for a modification of the proposal, which may be reasonable thing to do (they proposed not doing the Faculty/Staff-All gateway piece, but doing the other two first, then give it some time to see if it helps the use of Faculty/Staff-All.) Below is what I sent dept heads, and will give you a better idea of what the whole proposal involves. Finally, this is something we could try and then after a couple of semesters re-evaluate it to see if things are better. Dick K.

Deans/Department Heads: In my eternal quest to reduce the amount of unnecessary email that hits your inbox, I would like to propose a change for the Spring as to how we handle Faculty/Staff-All and WKU-Voice and to get your feedback. My proposal is in three parts.

First, that we eliminate WKU-Voice as an email-based threaded discussion media, and replace it with a forum/bulletin board (F/BB) type system. The F/BB would have predetermined topics (e.g., academics, benefits, parking, policies, politics, budget, diversity, philosophy, etc.). Any WKU employee could then post a comment/comments to any of the topics. Topics could be added as different situations occur. We would attempt to make this a channel in the portal, so it would only be a click away. Or, if you don't use the portal, it would be easy to access otherwise. At the end of every Fall/Spring semester, the posts would be cleared out, so we can start off a new semester with a clean slate. So, if someone wanted to pontificate about something, this is where they would go and we would keep threaded comments off email. This is a place that people would have to go to, to post or read what has been posted.

Second, that we create a new list called: WKU-Activities which would be used to post any type of WKU activity (bands, concerts, plays, camps, debates, bookstore sales, etc). Every WKU employee would be subscribed to this automatically, however anyone could opt out at any time.

Third, that Faculty/Staff-All be used strictly for university business, and only designated people within each division would be authorized to post to Faculty/Staff-All. For example, in the IT Division, I would designate the IT Directors as authorized to post. This would cut down on a lot of unnecessary posts that you have to deal with now.

That's my proposal. If you have some feedback for me, email me directly at richard.kirchmeyer@wku.edu. Thanks, and I look forward to your comments. I will also be getting comments from the Staff Council and the University Executive Committee in the near future. Dick K.

Email from Dr. Richard Kirchmeyer: (12/3/08)

"I have been meeting with or sending email to representative groups on campus over the past 2-3 weeks about my proposals relative to changing the way we use the Faculty/Staff-All mail lists and WKU-Voice. This includes the Admin Council, Deans Council, University Senate Executive Committee, and this morning I met with the Staff Council. Now, I'm ready for some comments from individual faculty and staff. We have created a blog at: [The Email Blog](#) You can click there or go to blog.wku.edu/email at another time and read my proposal, and then post your comments. We'll leave the blog open until December 12th. When you get to the blog:

Read the proposal
Click on Comments
Input your name and email address
Post your comments
Click on Submit Comments."