



## UNIVERSITY SENATE

Thursday, February 16, 2012

3:45 p.m. – Faculty House

### I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the WKU Senate was called to order on Thursday, February 16, 2012 at 3:45 p.m. in the Faculty House by Chair Kelly Madole. A quorum was present.

**The following members were present:** Shahnaz Aly, Darlene Applegate, Erika Brady, Christa Briggs, Charles Borders, Kristi Branham, Amy Cappicola, Jerry Daday, Tucker Davis, Pitt Derryberry, Robert Dietle, Amanda Drost, Marc Eagle, Karin Egloff, Joseph Evans, Ron Gallagher, John Gottfried, Peggy Gripshover, Jennifer Hanley-Walton, Sonya House, Jan Shepherd-Hunt, Angela Jerome, Guy Jordan, Mikhail Kheuner, Randy Kinnersley, Debra Kreitzer, Alex Lebedinsky, Mac McKerral, Steve Miller, Matt Noe, Gustavo Obeso, Yvonne Petkus, Keith Phillips, Kristin Polk, Matt Pruitt, Beth Pyle, Kelly Reames, Erik Reed, Krist Schell, Richard Schugart, Vernon Sheeley, Mark Staynings, Fred Stickle, Martin Stone, Dana Sullivan, Francesca Sunkin, Janet Tassell, Evelyn Thrasher, Paula Trafton, Carrie Trojan, John White, Maribeth Wilson, and Mary Wolinski

**Alternates present were:** Danita Kelley (for John Bonaguro and Darbi Haynes-Lawrence), Cheryl Stevens (for Blaine Ferrell), Jeffrey Samuels (for Ingrid Lily), Steve Haggbloom (for Andrew Mienchowski), and Qi Li (for Di Wu)

**Absent:** Mike Binder, Nathan Bishop, Ginger Bomar, Diane Carver, Vladimir Dobrokhoto, Kinchel Doerner, Sam Evans, Jim Fulkerson, Dennis George, Brandon Gifford, Becky Giffen, Jeffrey Kash, Molly Kerby, Ed Kintzel, Joan Krenzin, Suellen Lathrop, David Lee, Tracey Moore, Pam Petty, Gary Ransdell, Kateri Rhodes, Janice Smith, Michael E. Smith, Billy Stephens, Samanta Thapa, Huanjing Wang, Dawn Wright, David Zimmer

### II. Approve December, 2011 minutes

December 2011 Senate minutes were approved as posted.

### III. Reports:

1. **Chair** – Kelly Madole made three comments about debate protocol: 1) according to parliamentary procedure, only senators or their alternates have a right to speak, but the chair may recognize anyone; 2) the chair will try to recognize those who haven't spoken before those who have already made comments; and 3) only senators, or their alternates, may make motions or vote.
2. **Vice Chair** – Francesca Sunkin made comments about upcoming elections. First, she still needs names from colleges for candidates to run for positions on the Faculty Handbook Committee. To date she has names from three colleges and asked senators to encourage their deans and department chairs to forward nominations. Elections will be held on-line, probably in tandem with at-large senate elections, from 3/21-3/23. Regarding the At-Large Senate elections, Vice-Chair Sunkin reminded senators that

departments may nominate up to three candidates. She needs names of candidates by Feb. 29<sup>th</sup>. She ended her comments with thanks to those who have already submitted names.

- 3. Coalition of Senate and Faculty Leadership (COSFL) Representative** - Molly Kerby announced that COFSL will be meeting on February 22. Some of the topics to be addressed at that meeting include retention plans and faculty salary issues. In addition, each university will have the opportunity to ask questions of Dr. King. WKU will participate in the meeting through ITV at MMTH. Representative Kerby reminded senators that the meeting is open to anyone who wants to attend.

#### **4. Advisory**

- a. **Faculty Regent** – Patti Minter noted that she will only make a few abbreviated comments today but that her full report will be posted on the Senate website. The bit item at the Board of Regents meeting was the contract for Coach Taggart. The contract was approved with a vote of 8-2. Regent Minter and Regent Cynthia Harris voted not to approve the contract. Regent Minter shared with the Board a document that contained comments sent to her by faculty and staff about the Coach Taggart situation. She thinks that those voices made an impact because several people spoke to her afterwards.

Faculty compensation was also on the Board of Regents agenda, perhaps in a significant way in terms of how it related to the budget cut. At the Board of Regents meeting President Ransdell said that he was making a big commitment to academic quality because, despite the budget cut, every faculty search scheduled would go forward. Regent Minter didn't know many more details about the budget cut but suggested that Provost Emslie might speak to this in his comments.

Another issue raised at the Board of Regents meeting was carry forward actions. Regent Minter directed Senators to see the link on the agenda about this. She noted that every time we carry something forward the Board has to vote on it. Regent Minter expressed concern about Academic Affairs proposal to carry forward DELO money in support of capital projects. The projects include \$2.5 million as seed money to plan the Honors College International Navitas building. In light of the looming budget cut, Regent Minter wondered why the administration is taking money made by faculty ("sweat of our brows"), and using it as seed money for a brick and mortar project, even one that is related directly to academics. Regent Minter stated that this is a philosophical issue for her that she will continue to raise because \$2.5 million goes a long way to filling the gap created by the budget cut. She ended her comments by noting that there is a difference between what we want, what we need, and what is aspirational. The academic mission and the people that fulfill that mission should remain the priority for the administration. Board committee meetings will take place on March 23<sup>rd</sup>.

- b. **Provost** – Gordon Emslie began his comments by introducing Cheryl Stevens, the new dean of Ogden College.

Provost Emslie stated that the Graduate Council report has been approved albeit after slight pause because we have to be careful to be able to staff new course options.

Provost Emslie added to Regent Minter's comments about the Board of Regents meeting by stating that the \$2.3 million from DELO to fund capital projects had been approved several years ago. It had originally been intended for use on the Colonial Courts project. Money that remains in that capital account is money designated to move to the project mentioned by Regent Minter in her comments. Provost Emslie emphasized that the administration is not

taking any new DELO money right now and committing it to capital improvements. He also noted that he has tentatively designated some money for a library project.

Provost Emslie noted that there is not a lot to report yet on the subject of the budget. There are numerous variables in the mix – fixed cost increases, faculty promotions, health benefits, etc. in addition to the \$4.9 million cut in state appropriations. Provost Emslie stated that WKU will not terminate any tenure-eligible or non-tenure eligible faculty. Current and prospective faculty are important to our growth; we will be up 30 faculty from two years ago.

Provost Emslie noted that a SACS visit is scheduled in 2015. A 5<sup>th</sup> year interim report was submitted last year. SACS noted a few reporting issues, such as departments with more than one program. We can expect to see significant activity this year. WKU will also be starting an assessment process because SACS loves to see that some assessment was carried out, issues identified, and some action taken for improvement.

The website is up for action plans and strategic plans. We invite individual faculty input and department input through department heads through the end of the month. After that a revised report will be assembled and disseminated. .

Provost Emslie noted his concern with “course shopping” by students. Based on his estimation, we created 80 unnecessary sections. He has some ideas for how to curtail that somewhat.

Candidates for the Associate Provost for Graduate & Advanced Studies/Associate Vice President for Research will be interviewing around Spring Break.

## **V. Standing Committee Reports:**

1. **Graduate Council** (see attached report) – Nevil Speer
  - Chair Speer moved approval of the GC Report. The report was approved as posted.
2. **Undergraduate Curriculum Committee** (see attached report) – John White
  - Chair White moved approval of the UCC report. The report was approved as posted.
3. **General Education Committee** (see attached reports) – Eric Reed
  - General Education Proposals
    - Chair Reed moved approval of the GEC report. The report was approved as posted.
  - Report of the General Education Review Task Force

Chair Reed noted that the GEC committee has four documents for consideration on the agenda today (see Senate website and handout distributed at February meeting). Chair Reed provided a summary of the General Education Task Force report and an overview of the proposed “WKU Colonnade Program.”

At the conclusion of his summary, Chair Reed presented the first GEC motion to consider the task force report and program it contains (including the proposed GEC changes) as a whole (see GEC Motion #1 on Senate website). Some of the comments and discussion points included the following:

- Some context for why considering as a whole is sound is that the individual pieces have numerous implications and fit together in particular ways so that changing a specific element may not be structurally feasible or may alter other pieces in unintended ways (Senator Dietle)
- suggestion that the changes be divided into three parts and voted up or down (foundations, explorations, connections) (Senator White)
- Senator Dietle called a point of order on the proposed amendment by Senator White based on the rule that one cannot split a motion if two motions cannot stand on their own – neither the

explorations nor connections categories could stand on their own; the three pieces work in concert).

The parliamentarian confirmed Senator Dietle's objection.

Motion #1 proposed by GEC passes as originally posted.

Chair Madole then moved discussion to consideration of the new general education program proposed by the General Education Task Force (see Senate Website for details of program). Some of the comments and discussion points included the following:

- Senator Egloff noted that her department supports changing the language proficiency requirement to novice-high.

Senator John White makes a motion to limit debate about the proposed general education changes to 15 minutes. The motion is seconded and passed.

Discussion of the proposed general education changes continued. Some comments and issues included the following:

- Senator Samuels noted the following objections to the proposed changes:
  - o Only three hours devoted to "local to global" in the entire proposal; for a university that values "international reach" this seems problematic
  - o Only three hours devoted to arts and humanities; he questioned whether students are getting a liberal arts university education with such minimal hours
  - o Questioned by the world history requirement in the foundations category is receiving special treatment in that no other courses can substitute for that requirement whereas every other requirement in that category notes "or other approved course"
- In response to Senator Samuels' comments, Senator Dietle stated the following:
  - o Local to global – restriction to 3 hours is misreading because international content will come up in other courses in the 39 hours
  - o 3 hours for arts and humanities, it is a loss but who is going to give up their hours? The new program was a balancing act.
  - o With regard to world history the 18 hours of required courses reflects what we have now; and it's important for students to have shared experience and a foundation course with control over the curriculum
- Senator McKerral shared the following comments:
  - o Attended one of the two campus forums and has concerns as the dangling foreign language requirement
  - o Like Senator White, but for different reasons, he has concerns about the Connections category – no one seems to know what it is
  - o That said, during SEC meeting GEC Chair Reed made a comment that he took to heart: the vision of the task force is that the colonnade program will be more fluid than the existing program and does have opportunity for change. He added that while he is skeptical of people who says pass this and we'll improve it along the way, he is going to take Chair Reed at his word. So, let's hold their feet to the fire to keep them to that promise. Senator McKerral concluded with the statement that overall he supports the proposal.
- Some additional comments included:
  - o Concern about sufficient number of language courses offered to accommodate student needs.
  - o Concern over the drop in number of hours required in social and behavioral sciences (down to 3 hours)
  - o Diversity issues not clearly addressed in core general education requirements ("foundations" category); yet, we say this is an important quality
  - o Concern that new language requirement will encourage students to do the Rosetta stone language training and take the proficiency exam until they pass it
  - o Concern for students in 2 plus 2 programs who may end up choosing other schools if new requirements slow them down or are perceived as an obstacle
  - o Concern over the eradication of health and wellness as a required category

○ Concern over if and how regional campuses will make this transition  
Chair Madole called a halt to discussion when it reached the 15 minute boundary mark.

#### **4. Faculty Welfare & Professional Responsibilities – Mac McKerral**

- Chair McKerral noted that the committee meets again the Monday following Spring Break. A key item on their agenda will be workload policy. A copy of the policy is available on the website

#### **5. Academic Quality – Guy Jordan and Molly Kerby, Co-Chairs**

- Co-Chair Jordan spoke about the widespread discontent amongst faculty about SITE evaluations. To illustrate his point, Co-Chair Jordan read a March 2011 Senate Resolution about the SITE evaluation. His committee found that there are public domain instruments that could be substituted that do work and are used widely. His committee proposes to gradually transition, over 2 years, to an on-line evaluation system. For the first year (2012-13), SITES would continue to be used, but on-line, to see if that format results in a change in the statistics of response. In the second year (2013-14), they propose to start testing a number of public domain instruments. During that second year, the Senate should choose one in consultation with Senate, Faculty Welfare, IT and IR. If we decide that SITES are best, then we can keep it. If not, then switch to another one.
- Co-Chair Jordan moved approval of his committee's proposal and recommendation (see attachment to Senate Agenda):

Discussion followed. Some comments and points included the following:

- Consider feedback/consultation with students. (Co-chair Jordan: we can customize the questions to accommodate student input, departmental questions, etc.)
- Concern about testing evaluations of faculty during the test period resting on experimental tests or modes of delivery. (Co-chair Jordan: during the second year of the two-year transition, SITES would still be administered)
- Concern that on-line evaluations tend to elicit students who have strongly positive or strongly negative comments; on-line systems can tie their comment to a particular grade in the course
- Question about how to incentivize responses to on-line evaluations
- A friendly amendment was proposed and accepted that, "Any decisions made by the Academic Quality committee with regard to implementation will be submitted to the University Senate prior to adoption of any new evaluation format."

Discussion continues on the modified amendment. Some comments and points of discussion included the following:

- Be careful what you ask for; the existing evaluation system serves a purpose and change may actually be harmful
- How will qualitative comments be recorded and who will have access to them?
- Doug McElroy responded to the question about qualitative comments by stating that the third party provider will automatically generate a report and sent it to whoever is deemed appropriate, whether that be only the faculty member in question or his/her supervisor(s).

The motion proposed by Academic Quality passed with the friendly amendment.

## **VII. Unfinished Business:**

### **1. Senate endorsement of *draft* WKU Strategic Goals and Objectives**

Senator Reed proposed a substitute motion: "The senate supports the action plan framework outlined in the draft Strategic Goals and Objectives (14 December 2011). We request that the Provost continue to seek input from the senate as the action plan moves forward."

Substitute motion is seconded. Discussion followed. Substitute motion passed.

**VIII. New Business:**

**Information Items**

**1. Grad Council approval update**

Documents on Senate website to understand justification provided in case this happens in the future.

Motion to adjourn.

Thank you to Kate Hudepohl for taking the minutes in my absence.

Respectfully submitted,

Darbi Haynes-Lawrence, Secretary