

Minutes
WEST LIBERTY STATE COLLEGE
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
Wednesday, October 12, 2005

ATTENDANCE:

Board Members: Clyde Campbell, Al de Jaager, Lynne Exley, Dan Greathouse, Dan Joseph, Mary Kosar, Larry Miller, John Moore, Will Turani, Bernie Twigg, Aaron Wilkinson

Unable to Attend: Roseanna Keller

Administration/Faculty/Staff: J. D. Carpenter, John Davis, Patrick Henry, Andrew Lewis, John McCullough, Genny McIntyre, Richard Owens, Tammi Secrist, Regina Simmons, Barb Neuman, Father Walter Jagela, Ben Exley

1. **Call to Order:**

Mr. Twigg called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. Introductions were made of newly appointed board members Clyde Campbell, Lynne Exley, and Dan Greathouse. Larry Miller was also reappointed to the board. After congratulations to the new members, Mr. Twigg expressed the board's gratitude to distinguished outgoing members John Gompers and Jim Frum. Resolutions will be prepared for presentation at the next board meeting recognizing their efforts over the years as members of the board.

2. **Approval of Minutes:**

Full Board
08/31/05

Executive Committee
09/26/05

ACTION ITEM I:

Mr. Twigg asked if there were any changes to the minutes. A motion to approve the minutes of the full Board of August 31, 2005 and of the executive committee of September 26, 2005, was then made by John Moore and seconded by Will Turani; motion passed unanimously.

3. **Swearing In of New Board Members:**

Bernie Twigg, who officially swore in the new members of the Board of Governors, administered the Oath of Office.

4. **President's Report:**

Dr. Owens welcomed the new and sitting members of the board. This is an exciting time at West Liberty with good news on a number of issues. The number one goal of the college is to increase enrollment and recruitment. New initiatives from Dr. Carpenter have been put in place with the expanded retention task force/plan. These are tried and true measures, as well as some new measures. Some examples of what I have been doing, and Dr. Carpenter has been doing, is meeting with local school superintendents, counselors, and principals. We will be working to get these people on campus and visit their school districts on a regular basis in an effort to try to stimulate interest where we can. Mr. Miller, Ohio County School Superintendent, was very helpful with various ideas.

West Liberty State College continues to be rated with the second highest graduation rate in the State of West Virginia among all public schools, with WVU being first. We need to sell the fact that a student has a better chance of graduating from here.

We recently held the art gallery kick-off following the previous board meeting, the Krise basement opening, and continue to improve other facilities. The Capital Campaign public kick-off last month was a significant milestone. Over \$8 million has already been received toward the new goal of \$15 million.

The School of Business Administration has received positive notification from the IACBE accreditation team. The entire school worked hard to achieve this recognition. Dr. McCullough will present additional information in his report later in the meeting.

We continue to work diligently to increase terminally degreed faculty, with our current percentage in the area of 60%. There are good ideas and good plans to reach the 67% goal.

5. **HEPC and Legislative Update (www.hepc.wvnet.edu):**

We will be seeing volumes of all different rules we will need to have reapproved, rewritten to be made consistent with law and legislature, and very specific rules and rules on rules. This will involve a lot of paper and reading on everyone's part. Special fees are under scrutiny, and it is suspected the legislature may start capping fees or placing restrictions on the expansion of special fees, which are an important source of revenue for West Liberty. With regard to appropriation requests for next year, essentially, priorities are financial aid, PROMISE, and state grants. Other priorities are peer equity, research, ADA, deferred maintenance, and salaries. The updated Master Plan will be presented at the next policy commission meeting. We do not anticipate any problems with the content, and those working on the update did a good job putting the information together. There were no questions for Dr. Owens.

6. **Academic Affairs:**

Dr. McCullough reiterated the fact that the School of Business Administration received international accreditation through the IACBE. An outstanding job was done by committee members Betsy Robinson, Mike Turrentine, and Carrie White. There were no specific recommendations for improvement noted, which is as clean a bill as an institution could receive. With this international accreditation, West Liberty holds close to 30 national programmatic approvals of some type. These approvals are reflective of the teaching and learning environment here at WLSC bringing quality experience to our students.

Work has begun on the North Central accreditation visit for 2007-08, and a committee will be appointed in the near future. This ongoing task will become more intense over the next three years as we move closer to the visit.

The Faculty Salary Policy Review Committee met recently, and pay raises were confirmed to be forthcoming per existing Policy No. 245 and the three categories contained in this policy, those being across the board, longevity, and merit. It has been affirmed the increase will take place in November. Additional recommendations have been made to bring before the board in November as public feedback.

Two weeks ago WLSC was formally recognized by The Washington Center in Washington, DC as one of its 30 distinguished affiliates. The Washington Center is one of the longest standing internship agencies in the nation. WLSC is most likely the smallest college and one of the newer programs to be recognized. We have been affiliated with them for eight years. Recognized was the quality of our students who have participated in the internships, and the interaction WLSC has with The Washington Center. Bev Burke was recognized for her outstanding work as liaison with The Washington Center. Accolades go to the students who have participated in the program and gotten jobs through their participation.

Mr. Twigg offered congratulations on behalf of the board with regard to the international accreditation and the comments from the folks at The Washington Center. These are significant honors and are reflective of WLSC and a lot of folks hard work in the trenches every day. Dr. McCullough thanked Mr. Twigg and will pass those congratulations on. It was also noted that the Foundation supported and provided assistance for the program with The Washington Center.

7. **Enrollment Update:**

Dr. Carpenter apologized for not getting the materials out sooner. The handout is a comprehensive look at the last three years of incoming and outgoing student movement. We will continue to use this particular format in reporting since it provides the greatest amount of detail to ascertain certain trends. Since we've only recently begun to track some numbers, understand that everything may not add up exactly. Charleston reports WLSC headcount as of Friday at 2,246, a decrease of 128 students from the same time last year. From February 2003 through this fall we are down a total of 338. Dr. Carpenter continued with the various lists of data.

The next handout is the WLSC Retention Plan. The three main divisions for the Plan are student connection and involvement, academic advising, and campus wide involvement. There are 15 initiatives which can be done within the existing budget, each with division ownership and a point person to stay on track and reach completion. All efforts are off and running with additional first year experience courses, Project START, the helpline, and the parents newsletter, which is bringing good support from parents.

There is an increase in the amount of involvement on campus since the hiring of the campus life coordinator last spring. Tutoring has seen a marked increase in traffic, which shows students are seeking out their services. The success of this program is to take a look at mid-term grades. At this point we can have preemptive intervention before a student is too far down to be able to help.

In September Dr. Carpenter spent two weeks on the road living the life of an admissions counselor in southern West Virginia. He returned with 500 prospect cards and has set-up student visits to campus as a result of this trip. The Alumni network will soon be forwarding contact information, matching up alumni with students with the same major, giving them a starting point for conversation. They will be calling, writing notes, e-mailing, and getting as involved as they would like to be.

Dr. Carpenter stated that the new prospect cards are bringing in more information to personalize WLSC's response to requests for information. The response to these cards has been very positive. Visits have been made to Wetzel, Marshall, Brooke, Hancock, and Ohio counties to meet with school superintendents. Steps are being taken to expand early entrance programs and set up additional meetings with guidance counselors.

Information was then presented on GoalQuest, a service we do not have on campus. GoalQuest would take our electronic communication plans from non-existent to a 20-step plan with someone else doing all the work. The presentation continued on how GoalQuest works and the cost involved. Mr. Twigg stated that in the future, on a commitment of this size, a presentation be made to the Board up front before moving ahead. A discussion followed with regard to this initiative and additional background information on GoalQuest.

Larry Miller asked what process we have in place with incoming freshman, with mid-term as a benchmark, for those on the borderline. What programs do we have in place to help them, such as tutoring? Of the 450 freshman a percentage will need some type of assistance. Dr. Carpenter stated that between the instructors, advisors, and START mentors, every time a student turns around they should be getting hit with support. Regina Simmons is here with us and she has been instrumental in a lot of what we are doing with respect to our welcome week, our first year experience course, the whole concept of what we are doing. The Board thanked Regina for her work and wished her luck in her new position.

Mr. Greathouse referenced the non-traditional students in the Regent's Program and how this program was offered at Weirton Steel. This program could be marketed to employees such as those at Mountaineer Racetrack & Gaming Resort. During this discussion Mr. Twigg stated he was troubled that we have not done a good enough job capturing the opportunity at the community college level. He has received word that there is a problem with transfer credits, and that basic courses such as English 101 from the community college are not accepted at WLSC. Dr. McCullough stated that we have had articulation agreements for a number of years with local community colleges such as WVNCC and Jefferson Community, in addition to a number of 2+2 agreements with seamless transfers. Per HEPC policy, we can accept up to 72 hours of standard introductory courses, and we have accepted those for many years. Dr. Campbell would have been a part of some of these original articulation agreements. We need to clear up this perception. There are various reasons why credits may not transfer, or may transfer but be counted differently. Dr. Campbell addressed transferability and the case where problems arise with vocational courses. We are not always able to accept these courses. There is a little more freedom in this area than in previous years, and while courses are accepted as credit, they may not apply toward the degree being sought at WLSC. The credit would be counted as an elective.

Dr. Joseph asked why the private colleges have allowed students to test out of English 101. There are junior level students taking freshman English just to graduate. If a student's test scores exceed what is needed this credit should be waived. Mr. Twigg stated this matter needs further exploration and explanation, to which Dr. Owens stated he would commission someone to look at how we do things and areas that can be corrected.

8. **Budget and Finance:**

Mr. Henry reported on the budget as of the end of September 2005. Currently tuition and fees are on schedule, state appropriations are where we should be reflecting our income, and expenses are on track. The adjusted budget, with the semester enrollment numbers, is moving in a positive direction and where we should be at this time. The Finance Committee will look at the adjusted budget at the beginning of each semester, and will be working with the Enrollment Management Committee. We are beyond the point in the semester when students can still receive a refund for dropping classes. Enrollment will be tracked and the budget adjusted if need be based on numbers in January. The bond covenants look okay and the bond audit is complete and currently being reviewed by Deloitte & Touche. The regular audit is also complete and is now in the review process. The updated sheets in the board packet show where we are at this point. We don't expect this to change, but because it is currently being reviewed, there could be small changes but nothing substantial.

Mr. Turani stated that the Finance Committee minutes will have the Moody's letter attached. He encourages the members to read this letter. It discusses WLSC's strengths, challenges, and the outlook based on enrollment. Our rating can go up or down and there is only one step below us right now.

9. **Salary Policy:**

Based on *West Virginia Code* and Higher Education Policy Commission rule, these policy documents were reviewed and disseminated to constituent (faculty, staff, and student) groups for comment prior to their final adoption by the Board of Governors. Due to the high volume of comments received on these documents, the Non-Classified Salary Policy #23 is currently being updated. When complete, the policy will be updated and reissued for comment at a later meeting.

The following is proposed for the Classified Staff Salary Policy #24:

At this time, West Liberty State College does not have, and has chosen not to create, a specific policy regarding merit pay for classified staff.

WLSC remains committed to complete funding of the Mercer salary schedule for classified employees, pending availability of funds, in an expeditious manner.

In the future, when the Mercer schedule is fully funded, the WLSC Board will consider an appropriate merit pay process for classified staff.

Dr. Owens gave the background on the previous version of this policy. Being highly complex to begin with, and having received a lot of input from classified staff and others, the conclusion was to implement something more simple and direct as an alternative to what had been previously presented, while maintaining a commitment to the Mercer system. We will continue to look for funding opportunities and defer the Mercer scale to a later date when funding is available.

Mary Kosar asked if this was the entire policy. Dr. Owens stated it was to this point, but was willing to change the document. A discussion followed on the document previously submitted, along with the suggestions from Classified Staff Council. The decision was to continue to receive comments on this policy for further amendment.

10. **Master Plan Update:**

Dr. Owens stated that the Master Plan update has been forwarded to Charleston and will be formally presented to the HEPC later this month. This update is quite comprehensive. The Executive Committee of the board has previously reviewed and approved this document for submission, but we will be happy to make any necessary additions or corrections. There has been diligent work by many people to improve this campus, its functionality, and service to the campus community.

Aaron Wilkinson named some of the items listed in the Master Plan, such as Topper Avenue and what it deals with. The concept of Topper Avenue was explained, along with the fact that a copy of the original Master Plan document can be viewed by Aaron, or anyone else wishing to do so, in the Elbin Library.

Pat Henry noted we will need to have our list of capital projects put together for presentation to Rich Donovan at the HEPC meeting in Charleston on October 24th.

Dr. Joseph asked about the parking on campus and what the situation will be like when all of the campus projects are complete. The word he has received is there is not enough parking on campus. Aaron Wilkinson did interject that there has never been a day since he's been on campus that there hasn't been available parking for students. The problem is that the students don't want to walk the distance entailed from these spots. Student government is currently working on a survey on various issues, parking being one of them. The results of this survey will be presented at the next board meeting.

11. **November 1 Salary Plan:**

The salary plan, to distribute the money made available through the action of the Legislature, was provided by Dr. Owens. Beginning November 1st, faculty will receive an increase per faculty policy. Classified and non-classified will have \$600 added to their base salary. On January 1st there will be a 2% increase to the base. As Larry Miller stated, these monies will be in the November 16th pay check. A discussion followed with regard to the increases and notification to employees about their distribution.

The question was asked by Mary Kosar as to why the policy in place for classified staff is not being followed. Mr. Moore asked what the policy is for classified staff. A discussion followed regarding this policy. This line of discussion will be referred back to the administration, which will come back with a revised plan of distribution for the pay raises.

12. **Establishment of Enrollment/Student Affairs Committee:**

We had talked previously about the possibility of establishing a committee of the Board to work with us to provide guidance, oversight, etc. in the enrollment management area. We are submitting for consideration a rationale to think about and give us feedback regarding the document and whether you would like a committee to be established.

John Moore stated we should have a clear outline of the makeup of the committee, frequency of meetings, some idea as to how often it should meet, and a rationale that is very clear as to the purpose of this group. A recommendation should come from the administration as to a full composition of faculty, classified staff, and students on this committee.

13. **Follow-Up on Quality Strategy ("Vision")**

We continue to build the best possible image for West Liberty, while not being exclusionary or restrictive, to help us to attract a broader cohort of students that tend to go to a private institution. We would continue to serve the traditional student market. One thing that helps the student who needs support is the availability of tutors. Another is the good student example outside the classroom that gives others a sense that they need to work hard and do things on their own.

Individual meetings will be held in the coming months to obtain additional feedback. These meetings will be with faculty and staff. We will continue to make the kind of progress such as that with the our nationally accredited programs to attract better students and help our enrollment grow.

14. **Update on Progress Toward University Status:**

We have made significant progress toward the bench mark of 67% of faculty with terminal degrees. When we reach this point the board may determine whether we remain a college or university. It is our job to get to that point. We encourage people in doctoral programs to obtain their doctorate for all the obvious good reasons. Ten of the eleven new faculty hired this year have terminal degrees. We would like to get to the point where we need to make that decision. Until we reach the 67% point it's moot. This would be a qualitative enhancement to students, gain the confidence of the students, the best buy for their dollar, and add to the luster of the institution as we continue to fill positions with the appropriate terminal degree. Education is our business.

John Moore asked what advantage this would have for the retention and recruitment issues we have. Dr. Owens stated that to the north, south, east, and west we are surrounded by institutions with the label of university. In some people's minds this is a competitive factor in where they chose to go to school. We are currently in the area of 60% of faculty with terminal degrees.

Larry Miller stated, in looking at the 2002-03 academic year with 2,584 students, to this fall at 2,246 students, at a loss of 338 students, a loss of well over 10%, and a loss of over \$2 million in potential income. We need to make a big focus on how quickly we can get back to that number. We should be getting a minimum of 100 students from his Ohio County school system.

Aaron Wilkinson stated that there is a program in WV called HSTA (Health Science & Technology Academy) that will assist in paying for health science schooling, which would include the various pre-med programs, educational physiology, etc. This would be something to look into. NOTE: In checking with the financial aid office, this is a program that begins at the high school level.

15. **Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Aaron Wilkinson and seconded by Will Turani; motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Bernie Twigg _____
Chair

Secretary

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