

Faculty Senate Minutes September 20, 2011

Senators present: Craig Crow, T. Maurice Lockridge, Jim Crumbacher, Earl Nicodemus, Traci Tuttle, Aaron Huffman, Lance Tarr, Linda Cowan, Brian Fencl, Ryan McCullough, Robert Gall, Shannon Halicki, Darrin Cox, Corey Reigel, Tracy Hutchison, Carolyn Kinney, Bonnie Porter, Hollie Buchanan, Travis Miller, Matthew Zdilla.

Absent members: Michael Aulick, Richard Brown, Tammy McClain

Ex Officio: Anthony Koyzis

Honored Guests: Advisory Council Faculty Representative - Erik Root, BOG Representative - Carrie White, Honors Program -Peter Staffel. A. Walter Hastings, Susan M. McGowan, Melinda Kreisberg.

Absent: Robin Capehart

Senate was called to order by Chair Robert Gall at 3:00 pm.

Minutes of April 19, 2011 were approved with no changes.

Chair called for Elections for open senate positions.

1. Former Senate Recording secretary Gail Smith retired this summer.
Motion was made, seconded, and approved for the nomination of Tracy Hutchison as Recording Secretary. Senate voted unanimously in favor of Tracy Hutchison as Recording Secretary.
2. The position of Chair of the Social Committee Chair held by Shirley Misselwitz is vacant.
Motion made by Travis Miller to nominate himself. Motion seconded, and approved unanimously in favor of Travis Miller as Social Committee Chair.

Report by Dr. Koyzis, Provost

- Requested that the chair hold regular meetings between Dr. Koyzis and the Senate Executive Committee. This has been arranged.
- Reported on the coming General Education/Studies changes regarding the decrease in the number of hours required to earn a Bachelor's degree from 128 to 120. Discussed the General Education Committee establishment to examine this issue.
- Stated that he would prefer that the issue of the number of hours for the Bachelor degree be separated from the generalized review of the General Education Degree.
- A more definitive process that will train faculty in distance education pedagogy, methods and computer programs has been established. This program will provide both training and assistance for faculty.
- Our developing international community needs a cohesive space on campus for the 100% increase in international students, as well as international education and internationalization. An Interim Director has been appointed for this purpose.
- The current graduate level programs developed are providing an area of growth for WLU.

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Graduate programs need a separate entity for admissions. This is in development per the Higher Learning Commission.

- The new Assistant Provost is appointed because Dr. Koyzis needed help with the new University Assessment Initiative process. He wanted a faculty member who understands faculty, not an administrator tainted by too much administration. Dr. Melinda Kreisberg is thus appointed as the interim Assistant Provost. Current projects involve both assessment and accreditation.
- The Physician's Assistant program accreditation is in the works. It is still at an infantile stage, but is beginning to move ahead.
- Enrollments at WLU are at an all-time high since 1973. We have 2,700 students and expect another 230 graduate students at the end of September.
- WLU is currently working on defining or redefining the metro rate. We are poised to be regional university and are exploring how to expand in Ohio and Pennsylvania.
- The Board of Governors next meeting will be Oct. 12, 2011.
- The Higher Education Public Forum and Workshop is to be held at WLU on September 29 from 10:00 am – noon in the R. Emmett Boyle Conference Center at the ASRC. Dr. Koyzis requests that as many as possible of the Faculty Senate and faculty be present. This will be a question/answer session with a focus on “Higher education- can it grow?” A workshop will follow from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm.

There were no questions for Dr. Koyzis

BOG Report – Carrie White

There were no new action items at the last BOG meeting. It was a short meeting. The items of interest were as follows:

- WLU has had a change in the human resource structure. Jim Shultz now reports directly to the WLU Chief Financial Officer.
- A collective meeting of the Board of Governors and the Faculty Senate is required per WV state law (WV 18B-6-3). Carrie and the Faculty Senate Chair, Robert Gall, are working to accomplish this. This will be more feasible to achieve at Board of Governors meeting. She will present this to the BOG at the next meeting.

Questions for BOG representative:

Peter Staffel presented a request for the BOG to meet during the day to see the university in action at least one time a year to get a better idea of what the university environment is like.

Advisory Council Report: Erik Root, Faculty representative of the advisory council and now chair of advisory council.

- Advisory Council issues will be published into brochure that will be made up as we did last year.
It was suggested that the Council read through the brochure and vote, regarding how to market the brochure.
- State overview: There is nothing happening at the moment.

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- Discussed a current opportunity that WLU has to do a joint endeavor. Right now, our University president is the chair of the President's Council and our Staff representative Beverly Burke was named head of the classified staff in WV.

Guest Comments: Honor's Program

Peter Staffel explained the expansion of the WLU Honor's Program. The President of WLU wanted to create more opportunity for our best students, and suggested the Honors College approach that is more in line with other Honor's programs nationwide.

-WLU Honor's College will have a 24 credit hours requirement for anyone graduating from this beginning with this year's freshman class.

- WLU is approaching students as high school seniors now, and the program will be full blown next year.

- For this year, they approached all Elbin and Foundation Scholars already here to be in it.

- 24 hours will be an honors section of General Education requirement courses and an Honor's Special Topics Seminars, with a minimum of 9 hours Honor's Seminars requirement and a 3.25 GPA. We may be able to offer 3-4 honors sessions per semester, most of which will be taught by full faculty, not adjuncts. This will include two 1 hour mentoring sessions also. and we hope to include international 6-9 hours study abroad.

- Dr. Susan McGowan is now interim Dean for the Honor's College, and has much experience in this area. Dr. Peter Staffel will continue setting up seminars and have more face-face time with students.

- This is not an official physical college in the manner that the College of Education or College of Sciences are colleges, but the national trend is to have more expansive programs for honors students.

Dr. McGowan gave introductory remarks and explained her previous experience with Honor's College programs and nationwide trends in this area.

Questions:

A question and answer session ensued regarding the timing of notification of courses to be taught for the Honor's College. Faculty were encouraged to suggest to the Honor's College any courses that they felt could be included or enriched for Honor's College students. Concerns were expressed as to the manner of the creation of the Honor's College and whether there was any precedent for such a move, and if the administration presented anything for us to approve.

Response by Dr. Koysis – Honors Colleges are typical in the university environment. This is not a program people are going to walk into like the College of Education or the College of Sciences. Ultimately a college is the purview of the BOG, because they are the governing body.

The BOG Representative, Carrie White was questioned whether the BOG approved this. Carrie stated that she was not sure and that this was not on the agenda/minutes. The Chair responded that the BOG approval applies to reorganizations, and may not apply in this case.

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Comments were also made that the Faculty Senate is advisory to president. Further comments were made regarding the best time frame to offer students admission to the Honors' College, otherwise we'll be waiting another year. A question was raised that if these students in the Honors' College will be transferred according to numbers for the Colleges, or if they will still be considered to be in their current College since they will walk and graduate together.

Peter Staffel replied that we would still keep the numbers for your colleges.

Committee reports:

Academic Policies and Procedures: Report by Chair, Hollie Buchanan

- Committee met yesterday and discussed the new Honor's college. It was decided to wait for more information.
- The new General Education requirements of 120 hours instead of 128 bring forth a real concern of this devaluing the Bachelor's degree.
- Regarding the Provost directive/suggestion that faculty put the syllabus for each course on Sakai. This was considered a big advantage in that the syllabus remains available even if student has lost it. However, if this is to be policy, Policy 247 must change. It states that faculty and instructors must give a copy of the syllabus in paper to students. The committee also discussed whether faculty /instructors could use a different faculty web page. The committee consensus was that the policy of online syllabi should be written into Policy 247.
- Committee expressed concern over putative measures against students who over-register then plan to drop. This affects FTE numbers. Committee consensus was that maybe we shouldn't discourage people from over registering as it provides more income for the university, as well as an opportunity for students to explore different things. The committee did not think we should change fee structures and does not think we need to address this at all.
- Concern was expressed about the commercial nature of using classes this way, and improper use of FTE numbers.
- Concern was expressed by the committee regarding the fact that everything you write in WLU Gmail belongs to WLU. While this could be useful in some instances, it would be good to have indication or guideline for when Gmail is looked at by University employees, etc.
- Committee expressed concern about the monitoring of online classes by chairs or deans. Shouldn't this process be a mirror to the evaluation process of a face-to face class where faculty is notified of the evaluation visit?
- The committee plans to talk with the Distance Education Committee and Ann Rose about this.
- The committee was in favor of online security.
- Regarding the Honors pledge: Language shapes perception and may affect a collective group of people.
- Also a faculty member found that when students enroll undecided, they are treated as business majors, and is concerned that they would not get general education requirements. The committee checked with Scott Cook who said that this is unfounded rumor.

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Questions/ Comments: Discussion ensued regarding charging per credit. The current system causes the university to spend money on staffing, positions, classes, and faculty. Further, we need to have input and HEPC would have to allow us to change our fee structure.

Response by Dr. Koyzis: Traditionally we would be in favor of the 12 credit blocks. BUT states across nation are forcing this fee per credit because it is the only way to give students what they pay for. This has implications for financial aid based on the Federal requirements for full time students and eligibility. WV still funds about 22% university funding. CT is down to 11% state funded.

Further discussion ensued regarding advising procedures and the number of credits that students in different departments generally achieve. Concerns were expressed about students who sign up for a high credit load over 21 hours or more and the rate of course withdrawals associated with this. Comments included a reference to the Federal Student Aid policy that a student must complete 75% of courses attempted. Data was requested from the Registrar's Office regarding the number of students that attempt higher credit loads. It was suggested that the Academic Policies & Procedures Committee take this issue up.

Report by Chair of Ad Hoc Committee on Post Tenure Review

The chair of the committee, Wally Hastings, summarized a 3 page written report from the committee that was delivered to the Senate (see attachment). In sum, the committee found that any post-tenure review beyond what already exists is not advisable. There were no questions.

Finance Committee report: Darrin Cox

- The finance committee met last week to discuss merit pay and how it is established for faculty. Concern expressed over the Chairs' discretionary power over merit pay. Discussion regarding the inequities perceived in the variability of the merit pay ratings between colleges
- Evaluation rubrics should be made available to all faculty members at beginning of each school year. These should be both electronic and print. Committee called for transparency campus-wide regarding the interpretation by different departments. Discussion ensued regarding some colleges and departments unwillingness to share this. Dr. Koyzis concurred and recommends the Faculty Senate request this as a recommendation.

Chair: Each department should decide this at first department meeting. This would be a violation of the rules.

Comments: Discussion ensued regarding the interpretation of policies differing among departments, the difference of the point spread for merit pay eligibility, the use of rubrics, and transparency campus wide regarding the different departments faculty evaluation processes.

Personnel and Policies Committee: Linda Cowan, Chair – Committee meeting soon, no report today.

Student Advising Committee: Report given by Robert Gall for Tammy McClain, Chair.

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Their first meeting will be Oct 3. At that time they will identify goals. If anyone has any suggestions, please e-mail her. Some examples of last year's work are that the web site is now a work in progress, and the catalog is available online in PDF form.

Green Committee report: Travis Miller, Chair

10 participants attended the Green Committee meeting, and 5 others are actually interested that were unable to attend the meeting. The grant was written and submitted, but the staff member who submitted it did not obtain signatures, and the grant was denied. Next meeting will be tomorrow at noon. These will be on the first and third Wednesdays at noon. If anyone else interested, please send him an e-mail.

Announcements:

- We have four new senators replacing empty positions.
 1. T. Maurice Lockridge – Administrative Systems
 2. Traci Tuttle – Professor of Education
 3. Ryan McCullough- Communications
 4. Bonnie Porter –Health Sciences
- Web site: We are developing an archive of minutes. Tracy Hutchison has found electronic copies of the minutes from 2009- present and has placed them on the Faculty Senate website. We are working to create archives from further back and have found print copies through 2007. If anyone has electronic copies from those years, please e-mail Tracy Hutchison.
- WV Code – The president of the university is legally supposed to meet quarterly with faculty senate. The Executive Committee sent a memo to the president to make him aware of this and asked him to meet with senate. We have received no response as yet.
- Please consider how the senate can meet with the BOG. Any suggestions welcome. The chair suggested using a December BOG board meeting is during finals week, so that schedules will be more flexible then for a 5pm meeting.

Action items:

1 item: Motion to approve ACF issues. The motion was made and approved with no opposition and 2 abstentions. (See attached)

Faculty Forum:

1. T. Maurice Lockridge introduced himself as new to WLU. He formerly presided over the Faculty Senate as Vice Chair for the last 3 years at Marshall University and never voted for one of ACF issues due to reduction in freedoms.

4 issues: found in 1 month here that are unique to WLU

- The current schedule is harmful to university, and he believes we should deal with it.
- Faculty parking – It is not acceptable that students freely park in faculty parking areas.
- Problems with delays of reimbursement of funds. It is unconscionable that it takes so long to be reimbursed and amounts to a loan to WLU of whatever funds you advanced.

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- The 24 vs. 18 pay period issue. Dr. Lockridge as an CPA believes that there are legal issues with the pay in arrears arrangement that WLU uses. WLU does not meet the IRS conditions for this. Anything else is illegal. Further, the Social Security Administration is getting paid three months late. It is not legal to hold paycheck, you must pay wages concurrently.

- 2. Darrin Cox announced a Renaissance Fair and Medieval History Symposium to be held at WLU on October 1, 2011 all day. Bring friends and family... come one come all.

A motion was made to adjourn and seconded.

The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be in October 18, 2011.

Respectfully submitted:

Tracy Hutchison,
Secretary

2 attachments

Attachment 1:

*ACF Initiatives 2011-12
Report to Faculty Senate by Erik Root*

For Our Institutions:

- Re-visioning and enhancing the quality and delivery of academic programs, including general studies programs and adult education courses, in order to improve student retention, graduation rates and 'time to degree'.
- Addressing those initiatives and recommendations from the September 2010 SREB report. No Time to Waste that best serve our students and help achieve program learning goals and standards – see http://publications.sreb.org/2010/10E10_No_Time_to_Waste.pdf;
- Advocating for faculty personnel issues, including salary compression relief for faculty, engaging retiring faculty, creating fair and supportive faculty sick-leave policies increasing the number of tenured faculty, and promoting shared governance.

For West Virginia HEPC and CCTC:

- Encouraging shared governance at all higher education institutions in the State;
- Advocating for increased percentage of tenured faculty in order to maintain academic integrity for programs, to recruit high-quality faculty, to encourage a strong faculty voice in governance issues, and to provide consistency and oversight of programs'
- Addressing statewide the issue of faculty salary compression;
Advocating for institutions to find creative ways to offer faculty job security in the event of catastrophic illness;
- Encouraging an increased number of CTC long-term contracts for full-time faculty for non-probationary faculty;
- Encouraging and utilizing to a greater degree the Advisory Council of faculty in the work and activity of HEPC and CTC Councils;
- Advocating for institutional support and release time for faculty to serve on the ACF.

For the West Virginia Legislature:

- Providing a systematic funding mechanism for capital projects funding and Higher Education initiatives mandated by the Legislature;
- Continuing to provide funding for faculty salary raises and addressing the problem of salary compress;
- Providing funding to bring WV institutions equality with Peer Institutions.
- Amending code concerning 20% tenure issue for CTC's by increasing the limits to 30%.

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Attachment 2: *Ad Hoc Committee on Post-Tenure Review Report to Faculty Senate by Wally Hastings*

The committee was formed in fall of 2010 by the West Liberty University Faculty Senate to consider the issue of a potential system of post-tenure review, following earlier expression of an interest in such review by university administration. It met twice during the fall semester and again in the spring semester to undertake this task.

The committee concludes that the creation of more extensive post-tenure review policies appears likely to erode the concept of tenure. The existing system of post-tenure review, in which all faculty, whether tenured or tenure-track, are evaluated annually through a self-assessment and reviewed by department chairs, is adequate and any further imposition of post-tenure review should be discouraged in the interest of academic freedom and institutional stability. The extension of the existing annual review procedures to fully tenured faculty already creates more accountability for these faculty than at many institutions of higher education, and no evidence has been put forward that the annual review fails to insure faculty productivity.

Under no circumstances should new post-tenure review measures be adopted unilaterally; insofar as post-tenure review constitutes a dramatic departure from current procedures, any move toward such a system should be negotiated between the administration and the Faculty Senate.

Tenure

The importance of tenure in preserving academic freedom and promoting diversity of viewpoints on the college campus has been recognized for nearly a century and has periodically been revisited by the American Association of University Professors, as well as by commentators in the public sphere. In 1940, the AAUP defined tenure as follows:

After the expiration of a probationary period, teachers or investigators should have permanent or continuous tenure, and their service should be terminated only for adequate cause, except in the case of retirement for age, or under extraordinary circumstances because of financial exigencies.

Academic tenure policies were designed to protect college faculty from retribution for expressing unpopular opinions and ideas as part of the educational process, and secondarily to provide incentive for scholars to enter the academy, a choice that in many cases may mean sacrificing more financially lucrative opportunities elsewhere. Tenure does not mean that incompetent instructors or those who abuse their positions are protected from dismissal.

Procedures are in place at West Liberty, as at other university campuses, to provide for the removal of tenured professors for cause. The tenure system requires that such removal be effected only after due process, and compels administrators to make a case for why a faculty member should be dismissed. A post-tenure review that requires faculty to make a positive argument for their retention transfers the burden of proof from the administration (to show that the faculty member no longer performs adequately) to the individual professor (to show that he

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or she does perform up to current standards); essentially, such a system would turn the existing protections of academic freedom on their heads.

For several years, academic tenure in the American university has been in decline, as an increasing proportion of student instruction is carried out by contingent faculty – short-term adjuncts employed on a semester-by-semester basis or instructors who are hired under contract for a defined period of time, generally for three to five years, with no presumption of continued employment beyond the contractual period. At West Liberty, senior adjunct faculty are hired in several departments to teach almost a full load of courses, comparable to tenured and tenure-track faculty but without the job security and benefits allotted to regular faculty.

The increased use of adjuncts is financially attractive to university administration, especially in a public institution which is accountable to the population of the state. Not only is the per-semester cost of instruction significantly less for adjunct faculty, the long-term financial commitment created by tenuring an individual instructor can be enormous; calculations by the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, a group opposed to tenure on both financial and political grounds, estimate the cost of tenure for a single faculty member may be as much as \$2 million over the course of an academic career.

The same group has argued that truly productive scholars do not need tenure because their work allows them to move from institution to institution; instead, they claim, “Tenure is most often prized by the least productive faculty.... Tenure protects people who become incompetent or ineffective because of changing circumstances...” The argument that tenure protects these “incompetent or ineffective” faculty members has been a strong undercurrent in moves toward post-tenure review.

Little evidence, other than anecdotes, has been advanced for the proposition that incompetent faculty are hiding behind the shield of permanent tenure, either nationally or locally at West Liberty. Further, the claim that “truly productive scholars” can easily move to another institution, so that tenure protections are not necessary, may apply to large research institutions, but that is not the case at smaller regional institutions such as WLU. There is also little evidence that the need for academic freedom and incentives for pursuing an academic career no longer pertains to university faculty in the 21st century; indeed, some of the strongest voices against tenure protections demonstrate by their own arguments the continued need for these protections.

For close to two decades, the professoriate has been attacked for an alleged “liberal bias” – the notorious “tenured radicals” of the ivory tower. Whether or not such a bias exists may be debated. When individual political convictions enter the classroom in inappropriate ways, this may constitute grounds for censure by the university, but such inappropriate behavior must be proven by investigation of the actual classroom performance, not simply by counting the number of bumper stickers in the faculty parking lot. Efforts to remove tenure protections on the basis of individual faculty beliefs self-evidently confirm the need for those protections if academic freedom is to be actual and not theoretical.

Recent events further suggest that faculty are not immune to political pressures. In Virginia, a climate scientist’s e-mails have been subpoenaed by the Attorney General trying to discredit

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scientific findings that are not to his liking. In Wisconsin, a history professor's e-mails were similarly subpoenaed by legislators angry with a column he wrote for the *New York Times*. It is clear from such examples that the protections to intellectual freedom that are embodied in tenure policies remain necessary in the current national academic and political environment. An important concern in regard to post-tenure review is that such reviews could be used to provide cover for politically motivated dismissals, chilling the free exchange of ideas on the college campus.

Financial challenges to university funding in a period of economic stagnation such as the present one are a significant factor in considering tenure. As noted above, the decision to grant tenure to a young scholar can amount to millions of dollars over several decades. Contingent faculty are less expensive and offer greater flexibility in terms of restaffing. Furthermore, it has been argued that no field outside of education has similar guarantees of lifetime employment, so that tenure is inconsistent with good business practices.

However, few other fields require the substantial investment of time required to earn an advanced academic degree, time that is typically characterized by low pay as graduate assistants and/or extensive debt incurred through student loans. Those professions that do require graduate education, such as medicine, law, and some areas of business, typically pay much more than university teaching, allowing individuals to more quickly recoup their investment. And education is unique in a hiring cycle that largely concentrates changes in employment to specific periods; a professor cannot simply leave one university and begin teaching at another the next day. The tenure system, with its regular pre-tenure reviews and economic security upon achieving tenure, helps to ameliorate these economic conditions.

Because salaries rise over the course of a career, more senior faculty involve a greater investment of resources than beginning assistant professors or contingent faculty. In some cases, the payroll savings from the retirement of a senior professor can fund *two* entry-level positions. Tenure is an obstacle to the otherwise unwarranted removal of senior faculty for economic reasons; if post-tenure review is structured to facilitate the dismissal of faculty members, it is not only possible but likely that productive scholars and teachers would be removed to make way for less expensive – but less experienced – personnel. Such rounds of dismissals have been observed in other areas, including non-unionized workers in industry but also such professionals as engineers or nurses.

The university is also benefited by employing full-time, tenured faculty. University teaching carries with it expectations of service to the institution and research that are imposed only on tenured or tenure-track faculty. Heavy reliance on contingent faculty can result in necessary institutional tasks going undone, transferred to staff who may be less aware of the educational needs of students, or shouldered by a shrinking cadre of full-time faculty, thus overburdening these individuals.

Continuation of the tenure system can be a factor in retaining students, a consideration that should be incorporated into any economic cost-benefit analysis of tenure. Over the course of four (often more) years of study, students establish intellectual relationships with faculty, the continuance of which benefits students and institution. These relationships are at least as important as class time in a student's education and provide a sense of assurance in the

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institution's stability. As AAUP President Cary Nelson has observed, "Many part-time instructors who are ineligible for tenure race from campus to campus to cobble together the equivalent of a full-time job. They have only half as much time to spend preparing their classes or advising their students." (*Chronicle of Higher Education*, 3 October 2010) Students are less likely to develop ongoing relationships with such contingent faculty, and if they do so, are more likely to experience disruption of these relationships if and when the faculty member moves on.