

West Liberty University
Faculty Senate Minutes
January 19, 2016

IN ATTENDANCE: Greg Chase, Jeremy Larance, Jeff Pfister, Lihua Chen, Aaron Harper, Ryan Koenig, Jim Haizlett, Margy Bowman, Stephanie Meredith, Michael Aulick, Jon Serra, Sheli Bernstein-Goff, Fuhua Chen, David Blowers, Travis Miller, Matthew Zdilla, Jerry Duncan, Traci Tuttle, Linda Cowan, Chair; Corey Reigel, Vice Chair; Susan Herrick, Secretary

ABSENT: Teresa Faykus, Rick West.
Sylvia Senften (ACF Rep; absent-in Charleston)

Guests:

Dr. Brian Crawford, Provost

Dr. Stephen Greiner (absent-in Charleston)

Ms. Stephanie Hooper, CFO

BOG Representative Jim Haizlett

Meeting Convened at 3:35 PM

Minutes of November 17th approved as corrected

Provost Crawford

In discussion with the deans, we have reduced our operating budget for the 2016-2017 year by not filling existing and retirement vacancies, and only selectively filling vacancies as they occur. We have reduced adjunct positions by approx. \$250,000.

IN the Q&

A, Dr. Crawford elaborated that there is about \$500,000 in contracts, overloads, curriculum and changes that can be trimmed from the budget.

However, the budget does include some funds for faculty development and student travel, though not in the amounts of previous years.

Reorganization of the colleges and elimination of positions are still under consideration. The Budget will be submitted to the BOG in April.

Dr. Crawford called our attention to policies for comment: 202, the selection of academic administrators; 250 on distance education which is important for the HLC visit in March 2018; 219 on class schedules and formalized procedures for supplemental contracts (e.g., overloads and adjuncts); 210, on teaching loads (e.g., if one is teaching more, one might engage in less professional or service activity); 201 revises unit head evaluations –possibly similar to that of course evaluations. New policies being considered to meet HLC requirements are: 1) how credit for prior learning is awarded; 2) the criteria for determining course credit hours.

Stephanie Hooper, CFO

Ms. Hooper discussed the way grants have been and are handled at WLU and the high level budget.

¶ Grants

In the course of her presentation and the ensuing discussion, she stated that grants are handled in one of three ways, by:

- 1) the Foundation by which the researcher receives all the money up front and is obligated to give the Foundation a report on how the money was used. No indirects are involved. To her knowledge, they may have a small administrative fee. Ms. Hooper emphasized that the Business Office has no control over these monies. She further noted that the Foundation is not a granting agency.
- 2) the University, which, in recent history, was fraught with complicated policies, procedures and p-cards. Currently we are attempting to funnel all research grants through the University because we can “front the money”.
- 3) the Research Corporation whereby the researcher is reimbursed by the granting agency for monies spent. The researcher has to prove that money was spent and then the granter reimburses the researcher. Recently, this hampered the spending of grant money. The Research Corporation consisted of the Executive Director, an accounting firm, and grant contractors (to bring in grant money). They had an administrator that assisted in billing for costs to the University. To reduce some of the overhead over the next several months, they[?] eliminated the billing admin. and the Executive Director.

Founded in about 2010, the University loaned the Research Corporation about \$300,000 to get started. Matt suggested that all this money was going to the Research Corp when it could have gone to the University. Ms. Hooper stated she “had no argument with that.”

With regard to “indirects”, typically the grant money is administered through an accounting firm or the salary of the person who does the billing and overhead and indirect costs are billed to the grant. The future of the Research Corporation is currently under review by administration.

Another “struggle” in funding the grants is whether in-kind or a cash match. Ms. Hooper explained that anyone obtaining a grant in the near future should check with the Business Office and the College Dean for advice on who the designated recipient of the funds should be: the Foundation, the Research Corp or the University.

Q&A for Ms. Hooper

Q: Which would be the best choice?

A: If you’re getting the money up front, the Foundation would be the best choice

because it does not have the state policies that may encumber spending. If you use the University and you want to buy a piece of equipment, state policies require us to take bids, etc. which is more time-consuming.

Q: Are there written guidelines to which one may refer?

A: Not at this time; we're trying to work through right now.

In further discussion, Ms. Hooper revealed that there are codes for spending money that must be adhered to, regardless of which of the three methods for handling the grants.

When asked what her vision is for changes in the corporate culture of the University, Ms. Hooper replied that time and increased two-way communication will improve collaboration and that our past difficulties are not predictive of the future but that we all have an impact on the University budget. She assured us that she is very willing to answer our questions via e-mail, in person in her office, and that transparency is her goal.

A senator expressed the hope that our vision for future budgets will include, e.g., a 5-year plan for maintenance and adaptability of the University. Ms. Hooper affirmed that it is. The state gave us a positive review regarding the maintenance of our very old buildings. "Though we have one of the highest square footage in the state, we have the lowest utility costs." She agreed that we do need better planning.

¶ *Budget*

Ms. Hooper reviewed Procedure 10 and the projection of enrollment for the coming year. Our enrollment projection was a 5% decrease when the actual decrease was 12%. Our conservative estimate for next year is an 8% decline. She reminded us that we must maintain a positive attitude and be the embodied advertisements for West Liberty University.

We did not anticipate the state cuts. The good news is that we have a positive reserve – well above the \$4 million. We are succeeding in balancing our 2016 budget and in planning for 2017. The money is invested by the state for us. The Foundation has the legal ability to invest the [private] money through the WesBanko Trust manager.

BOG Representative Jim Haizlett

He raised the fact that there is no faculty, staff or student representative when the agenda is being set by the Executive Committee of the Board nor when decisions that affect these constituents are being made. Jim has requested that the BOG address this. The Chair, George Couch thinks this is a good idea and that it will be discussed with Dr. Greiner. He expressed optimism for greater collaboration among these constituents. The next Board meeting is February 10th in Shaw Hall. Persons who wish to address the Board for up to 3 minutes must sign in before the meeting.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Advisory Council of Faculty, Sylvia Senften: Prof. Bernstein-Goff reported in Prof. Senften's absence that there are 5 bills that we ought to look at concerning higher education and contact our representatives: SB312, SB12, HB4021, HB4041 and HB2393.

Ethics Committee, Aaron Harper

The ethics committee hopes to have a partial draft of the statement on professional ethics to share next month. Prof. Harper has been meeting with Diana Harto (Human Resources VP) to discuss the creation of the ombudsperson position. We have been in contact with Shepherd University to examine how their ombudsperson works.

Green Initiatives, Travis Miller

Dr. Dave Thomas has resumed leadership of the Committee and is working on making improvements to recycling.

Classroom Space Utilization and Facility Allocation, Jeff Pfister

Gave a demonstration of the Committee's database that gives an overview of classroom utilization and the data pooled by Bob Wise has pooled from the Banner System. They are currently working on merging these data sets. The data will help people to see the calendar of usage of specific rooms in each building. The data have revealed information such as the fact that we have an ASRC building and an ASRC2 building. We have discovered that some classrooms are numbered and some have an alpha-prefix and some classrooms are not listed. In the Highlands, some classrooms are listed twice.

General Studies Committee, Traci Tuttle

Training in LiveText will be available this semester, especially in light of a few minor changes. Program directors and faculty will need to submit requests for changes to General Studies Rubric and for data collection on Endpoints and Data Points Project soon. Traci will be sending a memo. The committee has not met as yet.

Finance, Ryan Koenig: No report

ACTION ITEMS

These were discussed before the Announcements suspending the rules of the Agenda order.

¶ Motion to submit a letter from the Faculty Senate to all administrators was discussed. The vote carried was in the affirmative 13 to 2 with 4 abstentions. (See the letter in the Appendix.)

¶ Policy 202 The question was raised whether we should approve this policy in this meeting or not – despite the fact that the comment period has not yet expired but will expire before our next meeting. Several questions and comments raised were concerns to be addressed in the text of the policy were:

- a) Whether the policy applies to both graduate and undergraduate programs;
- b) Some programs have few faculty or few full-time faculty so that the selection process criteria as stated in the policy cannot be met.
- c) It is not clear how many applicants *must* be considered and interviewed for a position – minimum and maximum.
- d) Number 5 discusses a *secret* ranking and not ranking, requiring language calisthenics to convey the committee's preference. The senators want to omit the word "secret". The consensus was that it makes sense for the selection committee to offer an explicit ranking of candidates since the strengths and weaknesses would reflect this ranking and would expedite the selection process.

The motion to approve Policy 202 as written was opposed by a unanimous vote of 14 with 2 abstentions.

A unanimous vote was made to send our constituents' comments for changes to Policy 202 to Prof. Cowan and to the web page, policyproposalandreview@westliberty.edu, as soon as possible (the due date of the comment period is February 2nd).

¶ Policy 250, Distance Education: These concerns were raised:

- a) Quality Matters standards change over time, so there needs to be a means stated in the Policy for keeping track of these changes.
- b) How should changes in the content of the course be addressed? The major policy concern is that the overall structure and content of an online course should not be changed without approval. Minor changes in readings, PowerPoints, and activities that still fulfill the course objectives are under the discretion of the instructor.
- c) Discussion over Sections IIIA and E resulted in the affirmative vote to accept Policy 250 with the amendment whereby the phrase "the standards of Quality Matters or other evaluative criteria recommended or required by the WVHEPC" in IIIE. replaces the phrase "Quality Matters Standards in IIIA.

¶ It is proposed that Criminal Justice 152, Introduction to Criminal Justice be an added to the General Studies Curriculum electives to fulfill the requirement of courses in *Perceptions and Cultures*. The rationale given is that such a course better prepares students to understand CJ, requires no additional faculty and is offered every semester.

Concern over the deadline to accept this proposal was obviated by our ability to call a special meeting. However, the motion to recommend to the Provost that Senate receive an another month to consider GS proposals and they still be considered for the Fall 2016 catalog was carried by a vote of 14 with one abstention.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Faculty Senate must elect a Faculty-at-Large Representative to the Salary Committee. Linda Cowan is the Chair and Ryan Koenig is our Finance Chair. Presumably someone will volunteer to be this Rep. We inform our constituents.

Prof. Cowan requested that senators review the recommendations regarding revisions of the Faculty Senate Constitution and By-Laws for a possible action item in February in preparation for an eventual faculty-wide presentation.

Dr. Cowan explained that there are discrepancies in how faculty representation is apportioned. E.g. Linda's department has 23 faculty though the Provost's Office counts 20 faculty.

FACULTY FORUM

Dr. Zdilla announced that our cadaver lab is now operative and should improve student retention. There were a few puns and quips (referring to donations, zombies, lost students, etc.) leading to a giddy adjournment to a productive meeting at 6:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan C. Herrick, Ph.D.

Professor of Sociology
Secretary of Faculty Senate

APPENDIX



WEST LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
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Dr. Matthew Harder, Interim Dean
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DATE: February, 1, 2016

TO: President Stephen Greiner, Provost Brian Crawford,
College Deans, Department Chairs and Program Directors

FROM: Dr. Linda Cowan, Faculty Senate Chair and Senators

RE: Evaluation, Promotion and Tenure

We, the Faculty Senate of West Liberty University, entrusted to represent the best interests of the academy want to alert you to a dilemma the faculty faces during this time of transition and cutbacks. We completely understand that now is the time for prudent fiscal management. However, cuts to our academic budgets and grant programs, the loss of travel and publication cost support, and other reimbursements, the rising PEIA costs, additional expected budget cuts and stagnant salaries also have consequences for our productivity.

We are concerned about the mismatch between high expectations for professional activity and even fewer tools with which to meet them. According to many of our constituents, the recent changes in policies 214, 216, and 217 have become problematic in this present fiscal crisis. Diminished research capabilities impede fulfilling the goals that are outlined in the ILA of Policy 214. Furthermore, policies 216 and 217 specify that promotion and tenure decisions are made according to comparisons to one's peers. However, applicants for promotion and tenure in the next few years will have had diminished resources, and as a result may not compare as favorably as in the past. Despite less than adequate basic support and resources, our letters still specify our meeting an unchanging level of "significant" contributions. For example, due to the elimination of our travel budget and faculty development funds, many professors aren't traveling and have not renewed their memberships to professional organizations. Many professors are being asked to increase their teaching loads, significantly hampering research. This is particularly a hindrance to professors who are doctoral students. Thus, current actions are deemed unfair and particularly harmful to recently hired faculty.

As a body, we wish to protect our colleagues coming up for promotion and tenure in the near future. They should not be held to a standard that has little foundation and support. We ask that when considering faculty for evaluation, promotion and tenure that these circumstances be taken into account. We ask for the same understanding from our administration, as our administration has asked of us.