



**University Senate Meeting
Monday, August 5, 2013 -- 3:15 p.m.
Weatherby Conference Room**

Draft Minutes

Call to Order:

- Chair Margaret Crowder called the regular meeting of the WKU Senate Executive Committee to order on Monday, August 5, 2013 at 3:15 pm in the Weatherby Conference Room. A quorum was present.
- **Members Present:**
Heidi Álvarez, Jill Brown, Margaret Crowder, Gordon Emslie, Ashley Fox, John Gottfried, Jennifer Hanley, Rlc Keaster, Patti Minter, and Beverly Siegrist.
- **Advisory Members Present:**
Gary Ransdell and Deborah Wilkins.
- **Absent:** none
- **Alternates Present:** none
- Approve May Minutes
 - Approved unanimously with one amendment, Patti Minter was present.

B. Reports:

1. Chair – Margaret Crowder
 - Welcomed the executive committee to another year; lists are in order and are getting updated.
2. Vice Chair – Jennifer Hanley
 - Department Heads must send election results to chair. Just departmental senators are changing this year, not at-large. We are currently sorting out vacancies in departmental senators and filling spaces on standing committees and several at-large positions are available within many of the colleges.
3. Secretary – Heidi Álvarez (no report)

4. Advisory:

a. President Gary Ransdell: remarks on his position regarding the role of the Board of Regents with the faculty handbook

- Wants the SEC to know that the President of the University recommends action to the Board of Regents, so the faculty handbook would become Board policy and would then be out of the faculty's hand. This drags the board into disciplining faculty members and would be out of the faculty's hand.
- The President of the University would then need to read it and edit it; Dr. Ransdell stated that he feels it would make him overly engaged in faculty matters, which he views as wrong. Therefore, he wants the Senate to think this through. Board approval would possibly require edits, and Dr. Ransdell feels that this is not in the best interest of the faculty.
- Dr. Minter provided background; as a member of the Handbook Committee, Dr. Minter was approached by the faculty to bring this issue as an action item. Regent Larry Zielke, who was not approached by Regent Minter, asked at the Board meeting why the handbook was not brought as an action item. Before 2007, changes to the handbook went to the board. Prior to the 18th edition, it had not been revised in a long time. It took 4 years to revise (started under Dr. Burch and finished with Dr. Emslie). Dr. Burch took substantive changes to the Board. Dr. Emslie took 6 changes to the board as information items, not action items.
- Dr. Minter made the point that the Faculty Handbook is an ongoing, living document and should be an annual update on the Board agenda. She stated that having Board endorsement protects the faculty.
- A discussion ensued over which universities in Kentucky have board endorsement of the faculty handbook. Several individuals at the meeting had researched this, but there was not a consensus on the results of the research.
- Dr. Minter said the issue was brought forward because some people questioned why we don't do this.
- Ms. Wilkins stated that administrators would want Board approval of the Faculty Handbook so they could enforce the document.
- Dr. Emslie expressed concern that if the Board votes something up or down, then the positive changes cannot be implemented for a year.
- Dr. Ransdell emphasized that he gives the Provost great latitude to deal with the faculty, stating that he trusts the Provost and trusts the faculty.
- Dr. Ransdell said that he does not recall taking the entire handbook to the board; since 1997, he only recalls sending portions of it to the Board. He reiterated that he does not recommend it and feels it is not in the best interest of the faculty.
- Dr. Minter said that SACS criteria implies that all policies are approved by a governing board. She made a point that though curriculum has to be approved by the board and the state, she does not feel it changes the empowerment of the faculty.
- Dr. Ransdell reiterated that his position is that this would take away the independence of the faculty.
- Dr. Keaster suggested that the Senate design a language that can be used to protect the faculty.
- Dr. Minter stated that this issue does not require attention until it is brought up again by the Handbook Committee. This was approved by the Senate in May with one dissenting vote, but then was rejected by the Provost.

- Dr. Crowder suggested that the statistics of other universities could be brought to the faculty by an independent body for information. Then a discussion of pros and cons can follow based on these findings.
- Dr. Hanley made a formal motion to take this issue to the Faculty Welfare Committee for further investigation. This motion was seconded by Ashley Fox.
- The Provost submits recommendations to the President. The President decides whether or not it should go to the Board. The Provost feels that there are still some changes that need to happen to the handbook first. The Provost believes that Handbook still needs some more changes.
- Dr. Hanley suggested that the Faculty Welfare committee should study what other institutions do. They should revisit the handbook and last year's document in order to further investigate nuances within to have pros and cons and know the implications of it.
- The motion passed.

b. Faculty Regent: Patricia Minter

- Dr. Minter suggested listening to the podcast of Regent Zielke's report and stated that she thinks there is a lot of expertise on the Board of Regents.
- She said that this is a conflict of laws between the handbook and the policy on policies. Dr. Minter expressed that she wants them to be succinct. She wants the policies and handbooks to be in alignment. She said the Provost and Mac McKerral put out a clear presentation.
- Minter spoke against the June 21st use of agency bond for Honors College/International Student Services. Former Student Regent Dodds did not think this building was needed. Though there were not committee meeting minutes or recordings, he outlined that students don't want it. It won't retain students, won't attract them, and he thought we could not afford it. Minter voted no on the budget because the budget included money that could be earned next year.
- At the full board meeting, the agency bond issue was discussed and it passed 8-3. Minter is concerned that the students won't come through and feels it is not appropriate to use student tuition money to pay a bond debt. She thinks this is bad policy and feels that though they voted in favor of this, there is not a lot of board support.
- Minter was the only one who voted no on the contract extension for Ray Harper.
- The Board retreat had presentations that summarized growing inequality in Kentucky.
- The name change for Downing University Center to Downing Student Union did not go through the board. Minter stated that it is a procedural argument; the issue is "similar to the faculty handbook issue, what do you take to the board?"

c. Provost—Gordon Emslie

- It's a SACS year and we are ahead of the game. He met with most of the committees in Atlanta and they are doing a lot of work. The content should be completed by late November, and external reviews will take place after that. There will be a web-based platform. Some departments have not turned in their information yet; the SACS review will be 2012-13 and he is trying to get this wrapped up.
- At the board retreat, Emslie gave a presentation on enrollment. The numbers are fluctuating; comparing 2013 with 2011, the schedule is different for ATP's in these years, so the numbers do not line up. The July statistic suggests that we are down 600 students

but we are budget neutral. Though we lost part-time students and Kentucky resident students, we made up revenue with international students. The head count may be low, but the revenue number may be OK.

- Action plan goals: there is a stagnant budget situation, but the focused strategic goals are up/improved. We are halfway to achieving the faculty to student ratio (19 to 1).
- We started at 33. The goal was 36 but we are at 34.5.
- Salaries \$350,000 plus benefits there are 156 faculty members, who received a modest increase in number for the groups who were most poorly paid compared to benchmark institutions.
- One month after the enrollment number settles, this will be discussed again.
- The number of faculty replacement slots is smaller.

C. Old Business

- Investigation of Study Abroad Fee: Dr. Minter stated that there was a presentation to the Board at the June meeting that identified problems with the process, use of fee, and identified risk. The Board received a report, an action taken for better control on the process. A study-abroad form that discussed fee and what it would be used for was approved. There were problems with transparency and this made it a better process.

D. New Business:

1. Policy 1.5031

- Motion to approve by Ric Keaster, Seconded by Ashley Fox.
- Item passed unanimously

2. Policy 1.2150

- Discssion: Minter asked if ther will be a policy for faculty for consortium programs; Provost Emslie clarified.
- Motion to approve by Jennifer Hanley, seconded by Ashley Fox.
- Item passed unanimously.

3. Policy 1.5041

- changes to original policy: go back to senate minutes; In paragraph 5 in page 3, the senate version is different. This is fairly consistent with the senate version.
- Motion to approve by Ric Keaster, seconded by Ashley Fox.
- Item passed unanimously.

4. Policy 1.4033

- Changed one word, excuding to including
- Motion to approve by Ric Keaster, seconded by Ashley Fox.
- Item passed unanimously.

E. Information items: none

Meeting adjourned 4:44 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Álvarez, secretary