

May 10, 2011

To: All Faculty

From: Julian Onderdonk, President of Faculty Senate

Subj: Senate End of Year Report

The Faculty Senate had its last meeting of the year on April 15, 2011. Dr. Weisenstein and Mr. Eli Silberman, Liaison to Senate from the Council of Trustees, were our guests and spoke engagingly on issues currently facing the university. Elections of Executive Committee members for next year were also held.

By way of concluding the 2010-2011 academic year, below is a bulleted overview, organized by different headings, of the most prominent Senate activities undertaken this year, as well as a brief review of some of the topics presented and discussed at meetings. As always, detailed information about these and other activities, in the form of committee lists and approved meeting minutes, is available on the Senate website,
http://www.wcupa.edu/_facstaff/facultySenate/default.asp. Please also feel free to email me at jonderdonk@wcupa.edu or contact the Senate representative from your School or College or any of the At-Large members to answer any questions you may have.

1) Correspondence with parties at and outside of WCU:

- Letter to Dr. James Moran, PASSHE Vice-Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs, requesting reconsideration of the PASSHE Board of Governors' Academic Policy 1990-06-A. Written jointly with WCU Council of Chairs. November 2010.
- 35 Letters to House and Senate leaders in the Wisconsin and Ohio legislatures expressing support of public employees' collective bargaining rights. March 2011.
- Open Letter to the WCU and Local Community urging students, alumni, families and concerned citizens to contact their legislators in support of State public education funding. Distributed to all WCU email users, and placed on the President's Budget Update e-link and on the WCU online community news page; also published in the *Daily Local News* on 4/28/11. Written jointly with WCU Council of Chairs. April 2011.

2) Shared Governance:

- Six Senators, specifically appointed by the Senate, served on 3 different administrative-level search committees this year. An additional Senator was specifically appointed to serve on the President's Strategic Planning Steering Committee.
- Four Senators met with members of the Council of Trustees to participate in the routine cyclical review of the WCU President.
- One Senator joined other PASSHE Senators in Harrisburg to meet with the Board of Governors to review Dr. John Cavanaugh's tenure as Chancellor.
- Two Senators represented the Senate in meetings with an outside consultant in a review of the WCU Office of Sponsored Research.
- The WCU President and Provost both visited the Senate during the course of the year to give presentations and discuss issues of concern to Faculty.

3) Campus Climate:

- Ten Senators served as Senate Liaisons to 11 different university committees that focus on campus climate issues. Liaisons attended meetings of these committees and reported back to the Senate.
- Senate representatives attended a number of campus climate events, notably the LGTBQA webinar and the presentations of the results of last year's Campus Climate Survey given by Rankin and Associates.
- Student Veteran issues were highlighted this year, with a presentation by military veteran Matthew Benko, graduate student in Counseling, and follow up discussions in later meetings by the Provost and the Student Welfare Committee. (The WCU Veterans Center, 624 S. High Street, officially opened this Spring.)
- The WCU CARES program (West Chester University Campus Allies Regarding Emotions of Students), sponsored by the Student Welfare Committee, continued its work of training faculty about resources that can help students with emotional problems.
- The Associate Provost, who coordinates the WCU campus climate initiative, visited the Senate to discuss the Senate's evolving role in this area.

4) Presentations on Other Topics:

- The Academic Year Model Task Force (Jen Bacon, English)
- The Middle States Accreditation Visit (Anne Herzog, English, and Darla Coffey, Associate Provost)
- WCU Student Studying Habits and Expectations as reported on the NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) and BCSSE (Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement) (Idna Corbett, Dean of Undergraduate Studies and Student Support Services)
- WCU Student Athletes and the Classroom (Craig Stevens, Kinesiology)
- APSCUF Contract Negotiations (Cliff Johnston, Mathematics)
- “Quality of Research Day” (March meeting)
 - Qualitative Research (Stacie Metz, Health)
 - Human Subjects and the Institutional Review Board (Paul Smith, Kinesiology)
 - Departmental and College Research Money Dispensation (Marc Gagne, Geology and Astronomy)

5) Senate Committees:

- Student Welfare – continues its sponsorship of WCU CARES and is working to include issues related to student health and well being in WCU's Strategic Plan. The Committee has also worked to raise awareness of student military veteran issues by coordinating events and drafting a statement about student veterans needs to be used by WCU Faculty in their syllabi.
- Faculty Welfare – created and distributed a Qualitative Software Needs Assessment On-Line Survey to all WCU Faculty. The completed report was delivered to appropriate WCU Administrators, including Sponsored Research, Information Services, Academic Computing, the WCU Research Consortium and all College Deans. The Committee's conclusions about the urgent need for the University to purchase software specially geared to qualitative research received overwhelming support from the Senate.

- Membership and By-Laws – ran the Spring elections and has begun revising the Senate By-Laws. The Committee plans to have a new version of the Constitution for Senate review in place by Fall 2011.
- Communications – maintained the website and advanced plans to switch the posting and discussion of Senate documents over to SharePoint in Fall 2011.
- Facilities and Sustainability (ad hoc) – worked with the Sustainability Activities Council to monitor sustainability efforts across campus.