

DATE: August 14, 2011

TO: WVSU Faculty

FROM: Tim Ruhnke, Chair, Faculty Senate (ruhnketr@wvstateu.edu)

RE: State of WVSU from the perspective of the Faculty Senate Chair

As your Faculty Senate Chair, I have attempted to keep you informed of issues of importance to WVSU, especially those that affect the future of the campus. I have been actively working with our BOG representative, Tom Guetzloff, as well as administrators and staff, in order to affect positive change. The purpose of this communication is to bring you up to speed on the events of the past year, so that any discussions that may arise during our meeting Tuesday can be more fruitful. Below are thoughts and information on some of the initiatives of the Faculty Senate, in addition to areas that should be of major concern to the WVSU Faculty.

- **Honors Program.** A campus-wide honors program is being established at WVSU in the coming year. Genia Sklute is the Chair of the new Honors Committee of the Senate. As this program develops, it is likely that a faculty member will be appointed as Director of the Program. I have had discussions with Dr. Byers about the new program. The institution must recognize the effort that it will take to get such a program off the ground, and support this new program with appropriate resources.
- **Changes to Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy.** The major change that resulted from a Senate ad hoc committee was a substantial change is SAP as it applies to financial aid. The full report is at link 1 below. Students who fail all courses in a semester will be immediately suspended from financial aid, unless extenuating circumstances are present. This will end the worst abuse of aid, but it still a reactive policy and does not help deal with students who have low academic persistence. It is my opinion that the institution still needs an administrative withdrawal policy. What I hope to do in the coming semester is to compile data on the academic performance of first-time full-time freshman. I think we can identify the percentage of those students who are likely to have low academic persistence (e.g., risk of retention, failure to meeting on-time graduation). I think we should be able to craft a policy that will help improve our reporting numbers for FTFT students.
- **Opportunity Scholarship.** A scholarship (really, a tuition discount) has been established through WVSU Finance for students who do not meet the requirements for the Promise Scholarship. Requirements for the Opportunity Scholarship are a High school grade point average of 2.90 or above, and a composite score of a minimum of 20 on the ACT or 910 on the SAT. To remain eligible for the scholarship the student must maintain a minimum 2.75 grade-point average each semester, full-time enrollment and reapplying each year by May 1. My opinion is that the qualifying requirements are a bit generous, but the requirements to continue receiving the discount could be quite helpful in helping us increase our graduation rate. I would be in favor of examining the requirements for the scholarship.
- **New residence halls.** Vice-President Bryce Casto has spearheaded an effort to build new housing stock on campus. The plan is to have a company build on campus, and essentially "lease" the facilities to WVSU. This approach is becoming more popular on college campuses instead of bonding. An independent needs study must be completed per HEPC dictate before the project can go forward, but new dorm space could be a reality within two years.
- **Institutional fundraising.** Discussions of a capital campaign were ongoing for two years before AY 2010-11. As of March, 2011, this planned capital campaign was

rendered inoperable, and the administration committed to a “fundraising” campaign of 12.5 million dollars. Goettler and Associates prepared a report this spring on WVSU’s ability/preparedness to conduct a capital campaign. This executive summary of this report was secured through a FOIA request (see attachment). Documents in the WVSU Foundation indicate that in 2006, individuals from Marts and Lundy were in discussion with WVSU Foundation officials about the prospect of a capital campaign. No such campaign was launched at that time. In 1990, Marts and Lundy completed a study recommending a capital campaign effort of two million dollars to begin in 1991 (see link 2 below). I am not aware of the history of this effort, but I do not believe it was carried out. It does not appear that critical points of the 1990 report were addressed. Earlier this spring, a faculty member responded to me “It seems that the observations and advice of the 1990 feasibility report are as applicable today as they were then and call into question the university’s inability or refusal to make timely, progressive decisions”. In the past year, WVSU secured the services of Ruffalo Cody. Tom Guetzloff attended an August, 2011 meeting with a consultant from Ruffalo Cody. As of the date of that meeting, key personnel responsibilities related to fundraising had yet to be delineated. In addition, a critical component to institutional fundraising is a complete and accurate database of living alumni. Ruffalo Cody conducted a phone campaign to alumni on behalf of WVSU, and also “cleaned up” our alumni database. Even though the phone initiative yielded little money, I thought it a good that the alumni database issue was being addressed. However, Tom Guetzloff learned in the meeting with Ruffalo Cody that there are large holes in the alumni database previous to 1990. I have estimated that WVSU has between 20 and 25 thousand living alumni. So we have no contact with thousands of our alumni. Keep in mind that the cohort of alums in question range in age from the mid-40s on up. This would be a key demographic to target for giving. The consultant stated that WVSU was an “outlier”, that is, our giving numbers did not match other institutions with which Ruffalo Cody has worked. We simply have neglected developing our alumni as a donor base.

- **Administrative re-organization.** Following the release of the Goettler report – I sent the following text to the faculty: In the Faculty Senate meeting Friday, President Carter announced that administrative re-organization will take place at WVSU. The institution will adopt a Provost model. In May, the WVSU Faculty passed the following resolution unanimously: *The faculty recommends to the Board of Governors that they do not adopt any measure of reorganization until after the faculty has had a chance to give it full consideration.* President Carter went forward with re-organization. The BOG was informed of this action, but their approval was not needed. The new model subsumes most of Administrative Services into Finance. Dr. Whyte has been retained by the President as a Special Assistant. Planning and Advancement became Institutional Advancement. Institutional planning will be conducted out of the President’s office. Student Affairs will report to the Provost. President Carter’s rationale for the re-organization was to give him time to focus on fundraising, but he maintains day-to-day control of the university. General, such a duty would in large part be the Provost’s.
- **Strategic plan.** WVSU was without an active strategic plan for a period of a least year. That did not affect how the faculty teach students (the core mission of the institution that seems to be consistently overlooked), it was a negative in terms of accreditation. A plan was hastily put together. As such, the faculty were not able to fully participate. The plan was approved as a draft by the BOG, and there are plans for faculty input. I have not had the time to examine the document carefully, but from my brief review, there are some things (e.g., the Centers of Excellence) that don’t make a lot of sense to me. If you have the inclination, please review this planning document and forward your

comments to me. I will collect and forward these comments to Dr. Byers on behalf of the WVSU faculty.

- **Enrollment.** Head count at WVSU for the past two falls in 3575 and 3190. Over the past several years, enrollment has either been flat or declining. WVSU will be at or under 3000 students for this fall. It is likely that some or most of the loss is due to fact that a student can register for courses at KVTCT take them on the WVSU campus and save hundreds of dollars per semester. And given economic circumstances, why would we expect such a thing to happen. Given this, administrators at WVSU should have been planning to shift recruiting to a different type of student. However, the administration has not supported recruitment efforts at WVSU with the sufficient staff and fiscal resources. Currently, WVSU supports a recruiter and an admissions staff of three, including the director. For comparison, the admissions office at Fairmont State lists eight staff, excluding the director. Vice-President Casto indicated that recruitment staff have approximately fifty thousand dollars available to offer in scholarships in a recruitment year.
- **Insufficient base budget/lack of legislative support.** As the date approaches for complete departure of KVCTC from the WVSU campus, funds that it provides to WVSU in the administrative service agreement decrease. This reality, combined with the reality of KVCTC's failure to fully pay monies owed in past "charge-back" agreements, have put WVSU in a poor fiscal situation. WVSU's bid to get the legislature to recognize these facts and provide funding for the severance of the CTC was not successful. No action was taken on our request to be treated the same as Marshall and Fairmont State in terms of base budget increases to offset CTC fiscal losses. I asked President Carter directly late last semester whether he had met with Senate Education Chair Plymale about this issue. My understanding as of this writing is that no such meeting has taken place. The amount of the service agreement for the final year is 1.6 million dollars. Securing severance funding for departure of KVCTC is now critical, as complete departure of KVCTC will bring the reality of very tough budgetary choices.

Links

1. <http://library.wvstateu.edu/facultysenate/acadyear2010-2011/handouts2010-2011/AdHocProbationSuspPol-Apr08-2011-Ladner.pdf>
2. http://library.wvstateu.edu/facultysenate/acadyear2010-2011/handouts2010-2011/MartsLundy_1990.pdf