

Senate Executive Committee Emergency Meeting

Dec. 6, 2018, Helm Library 108B

Attendance:

Committee Members: Kirk Atkinson (Chair), Lauren M^cClain, Carl Dick, Jim Berger, Jim Fulkerson, Heather Strode, Colin Farrell, Susann Davis, Joe Shankweiler, Stephen Mayer, Elizabeth Gish, Lawrence Hill, Dan Clark, Mary Wolinski

Guests: Kristina Arnold, Guy Jordan, Matt Nee, Margaret Crowder, Charlotte A. Elder, Helen Sterk, Donna Scheiss, Jen Hanley, Rico Tyler, Mac McKerral

The meeting began at 4:30 PM.

Kirk Atkinson [KA]: Moved for resolution that Eric Kondratieff serve another term on the Benefits Committee, with KA as alternate.

Heather Strode [HS]: First

Lauren M^cClain [LM]: Seconded the motion

The motion passed.

KA: The purpose and scope of the resolution to the President from the Senate should be simple, but strong

Susann Davis [SD]: The resolution should be a strong statement on the mission of the university. There is a lack of transparency and use of questionable data. Policies are subject to suspension when convenient. The President and Provost were unaware of the notification policy [Policy 1.2000] when they started. Is their plan to lay off instructors being aborted or postponed? Instructors will lose jobs. There is a bad economic situation. How do we know whether the university will just wait to suspend the policy? Senate approval is not required to change policy. We need answers in writing.

KA: Does SEC agree with SD's statement?

Larry Hill [LH]: Agrees. More information is good. Instructors need to know.

KA: [Mass terminations] violate the spirit of policy 1.2000.

SD: Will not let the administration get away with the argument that [Dec. 15] is a bad deadline. Demands transparency.

KA: Would we like to see something in writing? Asking. There is no intension to suspend that policy.

HS: Would like to see something in writing.

James Berger [JB]: The Provost can still ask for changes from the President's Council.

Mac McKerral [MM]: We have no input.

Elizabeth Gish [EG]: Systematic problem. Administration does not know WKU culture. Not sure we can address that with resolution. What can we say in resolution to inspire Administration to act in different ways? How can we raise this high enough?

LH: Faculty should be involved whenever policy is changed.

LM: Policy on policies allows Administration to make changes.

Mary Wolinski [MW]: Why not put notification dates in Faculty Handbook?

CD: Broader thing. It is a struggle to write a resolution by committee. It can be either a list of gripes and complaints OR a list of best practices.

SD: We told President Caboni our expectations. We appreciate his commitment to faculty and transparency. Enhance education mission. Show a need for something stronger.

LH: Come up with a couple of positive things.

KA: Likes the idea of giving the notification dates in the Faculty Handbook. Becomes de facto.

SD: But not part of our solution. It is a pity that only SEC members can speak.

KA: I rescind the statement about only SEC members being able to speak

HS: All faculty were disturbed. What is the most effective way to deal with this? How do we move forward? Don't want to be reactionary. How can we make a difference? Must be thoughtful. It must be understood that what happens in the future must be transparent.

KA: We [KA and Claus Ernst, Faculty Regent] met with the Provost until almost 7 PM. Her email shocked us. One of the things I see a problem with is communication. We got her to agree that the Senate Chair would sit in on CAD [Council of Academic Deans] meetings. We got her word not to suspend the policy 1.2000. Not binding, but her word.

CD: Wait until CAPE is done [to lay off faculty]. Wait until Dec. [2019] or blow up the policy

KA: Have her word not to suspend policy and to wait until Dec. 15, 2019

Margaret Crowder [MC]: Needs to be in writing. They can change. Likes more shared governance concerning policy. Likes some say in how policies are changed. It is not just an attack on instructors. An attack on functioning of the institution. Everyone should be concerned. It's an attack on academics. Progressive loss of morale in past 16 plus years. It has never been academics' turn. I've never heard that we are an athletic school. Meanwhile WKU is cutting unfilled faculty positions. We need to stop backing up every time the administration takes away from academics. It is time to draw a line in the sand. No more blood to give. Faculty is faculty. You will find another way to address budget shortfalls. That means they put athletics on the table.

Stephen Mayer [S M]: If we prioritize academics, we promote retention. Bad publicity hurts recruitment.

MM: There is no diminishing nastiness of the [termination] letter. The letter is just a skirmish. The war is through the budget. It tries to see how much we will take. We are told by the President and Provost

that recruitment, retention, layoffs and suspension of tenure-track hires are on us. Teaching more classes is on us. The way to balance the budget is an attack on academics. At the same time, there are high administrative salaries, buildings under advisement, higher tuition and fees, unwanted meal plans, new dorms and higher dorm fees. Bottom line: we need a resolution that this will stop. If not, [the administration] will pay for it by bad press. MM will write legislators not to fund the University. No transparency. The administration's data is not true. CAPE is a disguise. They want us to fire our colleagues. Ludicrous. President told the Senate that he saved custodians in his building from being laid off. Now he lays off many. To the Provost: Are you going to defend faculty? Instead she said that she will do what the president says. To solve the budget problem, there is a systematic gutting of academics. We're here to teach, not here for administration to build up their resumes. Athletics can pay 1.2 million on coach. The attack on academics needs to stop. If the administration will not defend us, we have to do it ourselves.

Guy Jordan [GJ]: We have to take action. If not now, what will it take? The resolution can have general statements and specific ideas. Whereas the President claims to put academic first as the core value, the football program will be cut. Without academics there will be no athletics. It must link academics to athletics in a tangible way. Can be a part of resolution. Something has to come of this meeting.

CD: The words resonate with me. We have to come to grips. What kind of leverage do we have?

MC: The media. Legally we are not allowed to unionize the faculty. However, we can do certain actions that are like collective bargaining actions in order for something to take place in the future. That is why I lead the AAUP chapter. We need something as close to union protection that we can get. If we want to do something we have to take action to walk out, to make a determination of what we will do in the future: either, or. Faculty have been sheep for a long time, being led to slaughter.

LH: As a new faculty, here only 2 years, is neutral on the Provost. The sky isn't falling. Doesn't see this problem as an attack by the administration. How do I see it your way?

MW: The Provost isn't bad-intentioned, just inept.

EG: Her intention was to send [the termination letter] to all tenure-track faculty. Feels profoundly counter to academic freedom. Not evil intentions. Lack of awareness of continuance deadline. Signals more than ineptitude.

Helen Sterk [HS]: What is the evidence of her planning to terminate tenure-track faculty?

EG: I was told by my department head.

KA: I heard that, too.

Matt Nee [MN]: If we push too hard, it can create [for the administration] exigency. The whole Faculty Handbook goes in the shredder. No one is safe. Don't force their hand into a fallback position. Keep in mind as we do this that the administration's response can be going into exigency.

MM: Correct. The state legislature allows the President to offload faculty. Is willing to gamble. I'd bet it won't happen. Has no ill will toward the Provost. Heard her talk. My experience with former Provost Emsley: Could be irritating, but one-on-one he knew what his job was. One major moneymaking scheme: the bi-term scheduling plan. It was completely shot down. In SEC he stated it was revenue-

generating. New Provost is doing what she was told. Not her decision to back out of the termination letter. Person at top says, "Go march." Not a matter of personalities. Systematic attack to solve the budget problems. Give us our money back from athletics. Former President Ransdell told MM that, if athletics becomes a money pit, we'll step back. This needs to stop. We have no leverage. Ransdell gutted the authority of the Senate. He changed it from a Faculty to a University Senate. Bring a resolution to the Senate. Let the Senate decide.

LH: Trying to write down some concrete things.

KA: We want the Senate to be involved with future academic policies. After the next Senate meeting, on Friday [Dec. 14] he will advocate more faculty and Board of Regents [BOR] interaction. Is willing to drop this on the table. What do you think? Needs something that is clear. Let's give them a chance.

MM: We've been asking for 15 years for transparency. The health insurance reserve was turned over to the Foundation. We recommended having more faculty representatives on the Benefits Committee. They rejected it. We need a resolution that says stop this attack. The SEC should do its business. They've heard the key points. Let them craft a resolution.

Joe Shankweiler [JS]: That is the reason we met.

EG: Agrees that there has been an attack. Reason for resolution?

MC: They should put athletics on the table. WKU is about education. A clear thing.

LM: The Provost didn't try to circumvent policy 1.2000.

JS: But she did circumvent it.

LM: These are not the previous administrators. Need to remember that. Has 6 years experience. At first she believed all. But, year after year she found that it was not true. [These administrators] are in their 2nd and 1st years. We have to be careful. We need them on our side. They are not 100% on our side, but while it was terrible, they did pull it back. They did listen. We need to work with them. We need to be clear. Academics first. It is in the way that we do it. They can think that they have been trying and we are still mad at them. Don't alienate them from us. We need them on our side. [What they did was] wrong, but people make mistakes. I'm not defending them. They walked into the fire. They did not know the extent. It is terrible that academics are cut and athletics is not on the table. What the administration didn't do would have mattered a lot. [Cutting] administrative salaries and buildings would have mattered a lot. Find balance.

Dan Clark [DC]: Agrees with Lauren. [Find a] way to offer a tiny fig leaf. Foster some good will. From the other side, if we put athletics on the table, it can't be just SEC. Before we put something big, we need to get others to care about it. Need scores of faculty to walk picket lines, otherwise we need to be careful.

SD: She gave us the choice to suspend policy 1.2000.

KA: Not present when Claus Ernst came up with the idea. He didn't think it all the way through. [He just] wanted her not to send anything out.

LM: Claus suggested to suspend policy?

Donna Scheiss [DS]: Morale is horrible. We are the first line of defense in retaining students. There were grief counsellors last spring due to the cuts.

EG: [In order] to change long-term issues, we need to think about it.

MC: We have to have the backing. Is concerned that things peak and nothing happens. Is concerned about fading off. One thing is simple Get information right about the instructors. We want it in writing that they will not negate policy 1.2000. That is the least that can come out of it.

LH: We need numbers. Need [more than] just the faculty members on the [SEC].

Charlotte Elder [CE]: Activists at Missouri State system. Reach across to football players to support faculty.

HS: Something substantial [is needed] for the resolution. Academic quality and faculty welfare. Don't lose sight of larger issues.

Jen Hanley [JH]: Part of resolution should be the issue of data, which[can] misrepresent reality. Course enrollments need to take[enhanced] honors sections into account. Accurate interpretation of data is needed.

KA: The Provost showed us [the course enrollment data]. KA advised the Provost to show it to the Department Heads. KA wanted the Provost to send just few pages of problems to the heads.

Ricko Tyler [RT]: Policy 1.2000 doe snot bother me. The problem is that the big decision is not resolved. Any resolution needs to state problems that were caused and give 2 or 3 things that are insisted on that refer back to the immediate problem. Commitment to do further. Something to happen now.

DS: [Prefers] not to tie this to the football team. Look at buying out retirements. Other things can be done rather than cutting football team.

AK: Each year WKU supplements athletics, but academics is subsidizing it.

MM: Athletics are not supporting themselves. Encourages SEC to draft a strong and simple resolution. We want everyone to be part of the resolution. Everything attacks the academic environment.

LM: Need to be strategic. Will stand up, but need to be thoughtful. Quality of data [is important]. Basing CAPE on inaccurate data [is wrong].

SM: Has a [SGA?] representative on Executive Budget Council. Can provide data. He supports us.

CD: Anyone of us can resign and go somewhere else. What sort of leverage do we have?

JB: Agrees. Some things are mistakes. Agrees that there is some lack of understanding. 2004 report [shows that] academics used 70% of the budget. In 201[9] Academics Affairs [is] 38.8% of budget. What has happened to retention: bolster budget for academic affairs. If you want us to cut instructors, then let's look at other models first. [Look at] ways to support those instructors so we can improve retention.

LM: RAMP is transparent. Athletics is a drain and the administration supports that. Draw on RAMP models that show that academics are self-sufficient. Other parts are not.

MM: Knows some think he is maniacal. His experience as a reporter tells him how things work. Our budget is not a mission statement. Jerelle Webster gave Mac thanks for his service.

KA: Make the resolution more strategic or make it more localized. This [situation] didn't happen overnight. Has been here 18 years. Let's chip away, not address everything at once. Once we make a gain, make sure we don't lose it.

Kristina Arnold [KArn]: Stunning numbers (of Berger). Make a strong whereas. Whereas academic budget has dropped. Had heard that academic affairs was more (50%). It is a big shift from 38.8%.

JB: Go to <https://wkumoney.wordpress.com/> Analysis of budget for fiscal year 2019: Academics is 38.8%, Athletics: 5.8%. A lot of good data. Go to WKU Budget: Expenditures page. Pie chart with table and numbers. Changes over time. 2004-2016: Academics increased 43.4%, while athletics increased 137.2%, etc. Student affairs increased 5.7%. Academics is the larger number budget-wise, but its percentage of the budget has not grown as much.

DC moves a resolution

LH seconded.

MC: Notification date protection must not be removed.

KA: Had said to Provost, "Who will teach out the programs?" Made it strong to Provost. Instructors will be angry.

MC: Needs to maintain a notification date of Dec. 15 or earlier.

Colin Farrell [CF]: What are other institution deadlines? What are benchmarks?

KA: NKU has later dates.

MW and EG: Do not support using benchmarks.

Various suggestions were given to revise the resolution.

CD: 4th item: Future decisions need to be based on data from departments.

EG: [They could] use bad data.

SD: Provost hadn't considered salary and rank on rehiring. No understanding of entire situation.

EG: Provost should be competent.

MN: A big problem

KA: Faculty involvement is critical in data analysis.

JB: Use expertise on campus before making decisions.

KA: Needs to get in writing to keep the Senate Chair and Faculty Regent involved in decisions.

LH: Urgent, affects people now.

EG: Resolution is clear and crisp. Is in Administration's interests to keep accurate data and not anger faculty.

KA: Creating climate of fear. Students will transfer. Hard to recruit and retain. Lauren McClain and Heather Strode, Can you inform your committees [Faculty Welfare and Academic Quality, respectively]? Work on this jointly. Should work on things of what nature?

LH: Addressing mismatch of athletics and academics. Getting faculty involved with changes in policy.

KA: Research of what other schools are doing to increase enrollment.

KArn: % of cuts and budgets. Move academics closer to 70%.

EG: 1. Get data right. 2. Get Faculty more involved. 3. Address program and class availability.

MN: Request answers to specific questions. Why aren't athletics on the table? Get their position.

KArn: People aren't going to football games. Believes in athletics. Women's sports aren't usually expensive.

LM: Good handle on what we have

LH: Should find a way to put in that we need a strong statement from leadership. Clearly say what you are going to do.

Further revisions.

Resolution passes unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 6:44 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Wolinski