

## Faculty Senate Report to the Missouri Association of Faculty Senates

Northwest Missouri State University

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### Important motions/issue addressed by the Faculty Senate:

- The Senate is in its third year of a comprehensive review of the faculty evaluation process. An *ad hoc* committee has developed a proposal for revision of the evaluation process, particularly paying attention to the evaluation of teaching. Recently Faculty Senate has decided to run a pilot program of this evaluation process, with the intention of making necessary modifications in the fall of 2012.
- Our Faculty Welfare committee is in the process of making modifications to the Faculty Handbook, in conjunction with University counsel and the administration. Some of the modifications being discussed include:
  - The establishment of a new rank (Senior Lecturer) to recognize our colleagues who have been long term members of our community despite the fact that they are not on tenure track appointments.
  - Bringing the Faculty Handbook in line with the staff handbook, which was modified last year. This would include updating language related to sexual harassment and consensual relationships, policies regarding children in the workplace, and implementation of a mandatory mediation/arbitration process.
- Modifications to our curriculum have been a significant undertaking in the past six months. At this point ~ 150 curriculum proposals have made their way through our review process. This has included substantial revisions in offerings in Agriculture and Mass Communications.
- The committee responsible for oversight of our general education program is in the early stages of a review of the offerings in our program. This is the first attempt at such a review in ten years.
- In response to the results of last spring's faculty satisfaction survey, meetings were held with focus groups across campus. The principal driver of faculty satisfaction was issues related to compensation. Every indication suggests that this response has had an impact upon the thought processes of administration. Another driver of faculty satisfaction was issues related demands on time and perception of value given to teaching, scholarship, and service.
- Our University has already adopted numerous changes to our operations budgets and implemented other efficiencies as a result of the cuts to allocations from the state in previous years. Up to this point we have not had to eliminate positions. However, the 12.5% cut proposed for the next fiscal year and increases in other mandatory expenses (total ~ \$4.1 million out of ~\$80 million annual budget) will require substantial changes. Indications suggest the obvious increase in tuition will be considered by the Board, it is unclear how they will approach

the issue of applying for a tuition waiver. On January 24<sup>th</sup>, President Jasinski and Provost Dunham requested that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee begin the process of forming an *Ad Hoc* Reduction in Force Faculty Advisory Committee as specified in our Faculty Handbook. We are in the process of forming this committee and should receive the initial plan from the administration during the week of February 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Important campus news:**

- In December the Board of Regents of Northwest Missouri State University approved a plan to use a portion of the surplus funds from the previous fiscal year to provide a stipend to all faculty and staff that attended a wellness workshop. This was an attempt to provide a short term solution to compensation issues highlighted in the faculty satisfaction survey. The remainder of the surplus was channeled into deferred maintenance needs and the reserve fund.
- As a result of the proposed budget cuts, some searches for academic positions were suspended. This included the search for the new Dean of the Booth College of Business and Professional Studies. Dr. Greg Haddock is currently serving as interim Dean as well as his usual duties as Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate School.
- This January, Northwest received a site visit from the HLC AQIP accreditation team.

**Benefits information:**

Our health care benefits package was recently bid out and awarded to Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City. This bid resulted in a 5% reduction in premium covered by the University and reduced cost for family and dependent coverage. This savings was attributed to ongoing wellness efforts on campus.

**Salary information:**

As a result of the findings of faculty satisfaction survey the administration has made a commitment to addressing compensation issues in the short and long term. The one time wellness stipend was the short term portion of their plan. In addition, the administration recognizes the importance of attracting and retaining existing faculty by providing some adjustment in compensation. Despite the proposed budget cuts, they remain committed to a multiyear plan to make gradual adjustments to compensation levels to bring faculty in line with CUPA data.

**Budget information:**

See above.