



WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

CONTEXT: FROM THE DESK OF PRESIDENT KAREN W. MORSE

<http://www.wvu.edu/president/>

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*This letter is one of several efforts to increase direct communication with faculty and staff on a variety of issues and to provide a context for the important decisions that we face as a university community. This edition of **Context** provides an update on several campus planning discussions. I welcome your suggestions of ways to improve communication — in all directions — and welcome your comments, which you may communicate to me personally, or to President@wvu.edu.*

Karen W. Morse

Warm greetings for the new year! I hope that each of you found an opportunity to rest and rejuvenate in preparation for the busy year to come.

PLANS AND ACTION

Several initiatives will engage the participation and attention of many of your colleagues this winter and spring. My thanks to Senate Chair Bill Lyne for commending these efforts as productive and vigorous collaboration of the Senate and the administration in his report to the Board of Trustees in December. Participation in governance is hard work, and I thank all who are taking the time to ensure that all perspectives are heard as we strengthen the university.

Strategic Planning — Provost Bodman will circulate the strategic planning committee draft in the last week of January. More information on this subject will appear in the Provost's newsletter.

Equity and Compression Study — As a result of discussion in the President's Planning and Resources Council (PPRC) last spring, we have initiated a study of faculty salary equity and compression. The budget for 2006-2007 includes \$250,000 to begin addressing these issues. *(See articles on page 2)*

Policy Committee — Following discussion last spring and fall, in response to campus interest in a clearer process for participation in policy development and a better understanding of the university policies, I have appointed Graduate School Dean Moheb Ghali to chair a 10 member Policy Review Task Force of faculty, staff and a student. The Task Force will develop:

- a standard format for written policies;
- a university-wide process for the development, review, approval, and dissemination of such policies to the campus, president and Board of Trustees;
- the role and responsibilities of a *permanent* Policy Re-

view Committee that will ensure broad participation in the review and recommendation of university policies. The permanent committee will be appointed at the beginning of spring quarter.

The Task Force will complete its work in winter quarter.

Waterfront Committee — I have been very pleased at the interest of faculty, staff and students in the long term development of the campus and its possible extension to Bellingham's waterfront on the former Georgia Pacific property. The committee agreed that now would be a good time to tune in as this possibility moves closer toward a reality!

During winter quarter, the committee and groups who have submitted proposals are working with planners Sal Rinella and Doug Graham to help refine the proposals for the types of programs and facilities Western might place on Bellingham's waterfront. The planners are on campus this week (January 16-20) to meet with the proposers and representatives of the Port and City. This stage in the effort is supported with funds from the Port. The campus is invited to attend town meeting sessions at noon on Friday, Feb. 10 and Thursday, Feb. 23. Watch for announcements and reports from the committee.

[updates on the web at www.wvu.edu/president/waterfrontnews.edu](http://www.wvu.edu/president/waterfrontnews.edu)

Governor Gregoire understands our vision for this unprecedented opportunity to expand our learning environment. She included \$1M of one-time capital funding in her supplemental budget to enhance Western's planning for a presence on the waterfront. The legislature will consider this item during the current supplemental budget session. The requested funding will help us to build on the good work of the campus waterfront committee which developed a framework and process that is guiding the campus through this discussion. Legislative interest has been stimulated by the ideas of faculty, staff, and students who have proposed ways to take best advantage of the space to further Western's mission and serve the community, and we hope that the budget request will prevail.

PLANS AND ACTION, cont'd

President's Planning and Resources Council (PPRC)

Our university is a complex operation of approximately \$202M annually. Sharing budget information is making the budget process and budget decisions more transparent and better understood. The PPRC has an ambitious agenda this winter and spring. The council recommendation for the 2006-2007 annual budget, forwarded to the Trustees in draft last spring, will be voted on by the Board of Trustees in February, to make way for PPRC deliberations on the 2007-2009 biennial budget request. (*See highlights of the 2006-2007 recommendations on page 3.*)

PPRC has been reviewing historical data on salary expenses by division, and tuition and mandatory fees. A few topics to be covered in future meetings include accomplishments and initiatives for each of the university divisions, and the faculty salary equity compression studies.

PPRC membership, meeting materials and WWU budget data are posted to the committee's website, which is linked from my homepage: <http://www.wvu.edu/president/PPRC/PPRCFrontDoor.htm>

Race and Gender Salary Equity and Salary Compression Studies

In order to fully comply with federal regulations, higher education institutions periodically conduct race and gender salary equity studies. The last Gender Equity Salary Analysis for Faculty was completed by Dr. Carl Simpson in 2001, and steps were taken to address the few issues that were raised. At the end of this month, a faculty race and gender salary equity study and salary compression study will be undertaken to review the data and obtain new benchmark measures. This study represents a continuation of Western's commitment to periodically assess and address salary equity issues. Western hopes to conduct similar studies for exempt and non-exempt employees in the future.

Through an allocation of \$250,000 in the 2006-07 operating budget allocation plan, the President's Planning and Resource Council (PPRC) highlighted the need for faculty and administrators to collaborate on these studies. This allocation was recommended by the President and reviewed by the Board of Trustees in June 2005 and will be considered by the Board in February. Study results will determine how best to spend the 2006-07 allocation and how to develop a long-term plan.

At my direction, and in collaboration with the Faculty Senate, a group composed of faculty and administrators was formed to coordinate these studies including: Paul Storer, Chair of the Faculty Senate's Salary and Welfare Committee; Bill Lyne, President of the Faculty Senate; Ira Hyman, Vice President of the Faculty Senate; Paula Rustan, Executive Director of University Planning and Budgeting; Sue Guenter-Schlesinger, Executive Director, Equal Opportunity Office; Joseph Trimble, Director of University Testing, Research, and Assessment; and Val Berry, Director of Human Resources.

Due to the complexity and short timeline for this study, the project coordinators determined that Western should engage the services of Dr. Lois Haignere. Haignere has been conducting research and consulting on equal pay and pay equity issues for faculty for more than fifteen years, and has studied gender and race faculty salary disparities for many U.S. and Canadian universities, and for the entire state systems in New York and Maine. She is the primary author of *Paychecks: A Guide to Achieving Salary Equity in Higher Education*, a publication that has been officially recognized by the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) since 1997. Dr. Haignere will meet with faculty and administrators during her upcoming visit to campus January 20—25, to finalize the research design and begin the process of collecting the necessary data.

We anticipate that the race and gender salary equity portion of the study will be completed by June 2006, and that the analysis of salary compression issues will follow. During the course of these studies, regular progress reports from the project coordinators will be communicated to the President, Provost, Faculty Senate and campus community.

2006-07 OPERATING BUDGET ALLOCATION PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

At its meeting on January 10, the President's Planning and Resources Council considered the annual allocation plan for 2006-2007. The committee revisited the plan that was submitted to the Board of Trustees in draft form in June of 2005. Technical changes in the budget and relatively minor adjustments anticipated in the current legislative session were noted. The following represents highlights of the plan that will be forwarded to the Board of Trustees at the February 3 meeting.

Compensation

- +5.0% September 1, 2006, faculty and exempt staff salary increase (1.6% + 3.4% local funds)
- \$164,844 for faculty promotion and tenure increases
- \$250,000 for faculty salary equity and compression
- \$100,000 for faculty & exempt staff recruitment and retention increases
- +1.6% July 1, 2006, classified staff salary increase (would require legislative action to extend beyond June 30, 2007)
- \$106,000 for classified staff salary survey adjustments, effective July 1, 2006
- \$220,449 for classified staff longevity step increases

Other highlights

- Funding for an additional 15.00 FTE new tenure-track faculty positions (\$1,058,400)
- Increased funding in the following academic areas over the current year budget:
 - An increase of \$50,000 per year for operating costs in colleges and departments
 - An increase of \$70,000 per year for library purchases
 - An increase of \$50,000 per year to enhance faculty start-up
- Funding for support of financial aid applications, degree audit and transfer articulation, internal controls, tutorial and academic skills center, university police, improving cash flow and billing, and various operations.
- 6% increase in undergraduate tuition and resident graduate tuition

A spreadsheet with the full annual budget allocation will be posted to the PPRC website as a link from the January 10, 2006 meeting:

<http://www.wvu.edu/president/PPRC/PPRCFrontDoor.htm>

Faculty Union Election

Beginning February 1, the faculty will have an opportunity to choose whether to elect a local faculty union affiliated with the Washington Education Association and Washington Federation of Teachers to represent them in determinations of wages, hours and working conditions. Ballots will be sent out by mail on February 1 and must be returned to the Public Employment Relations Commission (PERC) by February 22. PERC will count the votes in Olympia on February 23. A majority of those voting will determine the outcome.

Eligible voters include all tenured and tenure track faculty, and all adjunct and temporary faculty who had a teaching appointment of at least 1/6 over the course of winter, spring and/or fall quarters of 2005 and are likely to be hired in the future. Department chairs and academic program directors are included. This election involves 774 faculty, including 454 tenured and tenure track faculty. (*updated to reflect final numbers*)

I urge the faculty to talk with each other and with campus administration about the costs and benefits of this potential change in Western's governance structure. The statute does not discourage such communication and it is important for the implications of this critical vote to be fully explored. The statute provides "The expressing of any view, arguments, or opinion, or the dissemination thereof to the public, whether in written, printed, graphic, or visual form, shall not constitute or be evidence of an unfair labor practice under [RCW 41.76], if such expression contains no threat of reprisal or force or promise of benefit." (*RCW 41.76.050*)

The law also makes clear that the employer cannot take steps that "interfere with, restrain, or coerce faculty members in the exercise of the rights guaranteed by this chapter."

The vote on whether to make this change should be made by a majority of the faculty in a well informed faculty vote. I encourage faculty to participate in faculty discussion forums, scheduled for **January 26 and January 30 at 4:00 pm.**, and to review closely the election guide that will be distributed by the Faculty Senate. Other materials distributed by faculty, discussions to be held around campus, and the experience of faculty unions at EWU and CWU also may be instructive.

Minor Works Move Fund - Pilot Project

Historically, division or department moving expenses associated with minor works capital appropriations were largely funded from those appropriations. However, in 2004 and again in 2005, the legislature prohibited the use of minor works capital appropriations for moving expenses. In order to protect divisions, departments, programs, and organizations on campus from having to absorb such moving expenses, I have approved a one-year pilot project that will take effect immediately, wherein moving expenses such as transport services, information and telecommunication services, maintenance services, locks, temporary signage, and extraordinary custodial services, will be covered by institutional reserves over which University Planning and Budgeting has oversight. After the pilot project, a permanent allocation from the state operating budget will be required to support these ongoing expenses.

Division or department-initiated moves related to rearranging space or office assignments, consolidating division functions, etc., will continue to be covered by the respective department or division. Moving costs related to emergency moves or strategic moves required by the institution may be covered by institutional reserves.