



## Notes from the Montague House

Paul T. Wilson, President

### Ex Officio and Consensus Building Procedures

Since the formal process of our 2008 negotiation is about to begin, I thought it would be useful to clarify the role of the WMU-AAUP president, along with a few comments about other negotiation procedures.

According to our By-Laws, the Chapter president is an *ex officio* member of the negotiation team. *Ex officio*, as a term and as a standard, seems to have different meanings depending on whom you consult. All of us know that the Latin meaning, idiomatically, is "by virtue of the office." To understand this operationally, however, one must look for guidance to Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR), 10th ed., our official parliamentary authority; I also consulted Sturgis (2001), which is used by the Faculty Senate. In all essentials they agree.

RONR (10th ed.), p. 440, indicates that, "As an *ex officio* member of a committee, the president has the same rights as the other committee members, but is not obligated to attend meetings of the committee and is not counted in determining the number required for a quorum." Further on, it is clear that *ex officio* members may make motions and vote like other members. Sturgis (2001) agrees, but asserts that *ex officio* members should count in determining the quorum.

This summer, I will play my usual Chapter role in chairing the meetings of the Executive Committee; however, when it comes to the Negotiation Team, I serve at the pleasure, and at the direction, of Professor Carr, our Chief Negotiator. As for decisions of the Team, although the parliamentary authorities agree that an *ex officio* member does have the right to vote, our current view in the Chapter is that it's best to be cautious regarding the policy and strategy

deliberations of the Negotiation Team. Thus, I will not vote.

The most important point here is that the Team works almost exclusively by consensus; no one person's agenda should be driving the work of the Team so it is unlikely that the Team would ever vote. What, then, is the basis for the Team's efforts to reach consensus?

The Officers, the Executive Committee, our Chief Negotiator Professor Carr, and the Negotiation Team members have all made significant efforts during this year to find out what issues are on your minds by visiting 38+ departments and other groups on campus, and by the four online surveys. (Thanks are due, by the way, to Dr. Donna Weinreich, Executive Committee representative for the College of Health and Human Services, for developing the survey questions.) The result of all this work is the qualitative notes from the department visits and meetings, and the quantitative and written response data from the four surveys.

The Team continues to scrutinize this data in great detail to help decide which articles to open, and which policy positions to advocate. The Team's most important responsibility in these matters is to be driven by your sense of priorities, to represent you and your interests in the best ways possible based on both the data and regular consultation throughout the summer with you, the Association Council and the Executive Committee. When viewed in the context of all your input, a failure to honor your sense of priorities, constitutes inappropriate political in-fighting or self-serving grandiosity; in fact, it conflicts with our commitment to effective representation.

Disagreement is neither squelched nor discouraged; rather it is treated with

#### Officers

President  
Paul Wilson  
Vice President  
Jo Wiley  
Contract Administrator  
Heidi Douglas-Vogley  
Grievance Officer  
Lisa Whittaker  
Secretary  
Dominic Nicolai  
Treasurer  
Galen Rike

#### Executive Committee

Academic Support Services  
Galen Rike  
A&S - Humanities  
Marilyn Kritzman  
A&S - Science & Mathematics  
Bruce Bejcek  
A&S - Social Sciences  
Allen Zagarell  
Aviation  
Dominic Nicolai  
Business  
Leo Stevenson  
Education  
Nancy Mansberger  
Engineering  
P. Daniel Fleming  
Fine Arts  
Stanley Pelkey  
Health & Human Services  
Donna Weinreich  
International Programs  
and Services  
Ila Baker

respect accompanied by concerted effort to understand and resolve all issues. If there is any difficulty interpreting the data, or with the logic of particular proposals, the Team will bring the issue to the Executive Committee for a broader perspective and guidance. All key decisions are brought to the Executive Committee for discussion and approval before moving forward. The purpose of this conversation is to build unity and a shared passion for our cause. Only through consensus, unity and shared goals can we move forward effectively.

### References

Robert, Sarah Corbin, Henry M. Robert III., William J. Evans, Daniel H. Honemann, & Thomas J. Balch. 2000. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised. 10th ed. Perseus Publishing: Cambridge, Massachusetts. (typically referenced as RONR (10th ed.), p. #, l. #-#)

Sturgis, Alice. (2001). The standard code of parliamentary procedure. Fourth Edition, Revised by the American Institute of Parliamentarians. McGraw Hill: New York, NY.

### Workload and Sweeping Faculty Lines

The sweeping of faculty lines back to the Provost's office has emerged as one of our persistently troubling issues. It came up in more than 30 of our 38 department visits this year, either as a present reality or an anticipated (retirement driven) challenge. The loss of experienced faculty does not just mean fewer of us to teach classes, but imposes a real decline in our collective wisdom -- in our ability to develop and maintain our courses and programs. Such losses also mean an increase in workload for the faculty who remain because there are fewer of us to engage in all of the curriculum-related service activities.

During the 2005 negotiations, one of our initiatives on workload (Article 42.§5 Measuring Workload), conceived by our then Chief Negotiator, Jon Neill, was to allow faculty in a department to "develop guidelines for measuring workload in terms of credit hours." This means that department faculty may, in consultation with their chair, develop and embody the guidelines in a table of credit hour equivalents for all of the department's various work assignments. When approved, the table can be used to measure faculty workload.

The discussion of this point in the 2005 negotiations was quite interesting in the context of the loss of experienced faculty. Though Western agreed to allow guidelines, they asserted that the guidelines could not be created in a way that would require the hiring of new faculty to deliver the department's programs. In other words, whenever faculty create a table of credit hour equivalents, they must satisfy the criterion that the department's programs can be delivered solely with currently available resources. This point is captured in the *Agreement* by a seemingly

vague sentence: "The guidelines will be based on the department's program requirements and priorities."

Some departments have created these tables, while others have not. It is, in the long run, a very good idea for every department to take advantage of this provision of the *Agreement* because it gives us a tool we can use to tell the truth about how much work our faculty are actually doing. Thus, it should cause us very great concern if Western were to propose in the 2008 negotiations to take this away, i.e., that we no longer would have the right to articulate credit hour equivalents. Even with this right, however, there is a basic and ongoing problem with the logic of sticking to currently available resources.

What happens to the validity of a department's table of credit hour equivalents if your department loses faculty? What position is your department in if, at the time you begin working on your table, you have had relatively recent losses of faculty who have not been replaced? These are situations that are exacerbated by the sweeping of faculty lines, by departments not getting back 100% of the salary dollars that were lost, and by shoring up full time tenure line faculty losses with part timers and term appointees. The plan to return 70¢ on the dollar for lost salaries actually means that departments are always pressed to maintain their academic and research core.

I believe that credit hour equivalents are a necessity for preserving faculty control of the curriculum, keeping workload reasonable, and maintaining our commitment to a high quality education for our students. However, I think the time is also approaching when we must have much more serious conversation, campus wide, about the faculty resources that are necessary for Western to develop the identity -- in research, in creative activities, and in instruction -- that we seem to be heading hesitantly towards. I will write more on this shortly.

### Part-Time Faculty Organizing

Some of our part time faculty got interested this year in collective bargaining and began talking with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), the union that organized our teaching assistants. When we learned of their efforts, I requested a meeting to inform them about AAUP policies and practices. At this meeting, after I asked about their pre-existing commitment to AFT, they claimed to have a genuine interest in the AAUP as an alternative; they did, however, have their AFT representative present. They took notes quite avidly while I explained the AAUP and our view of campus conditions and politics, so I believe that they learned a lot from the presentation.

Toward the end of the meeting, two points emerged with some clarity. The first was their problem with Western hiring more full time faculty because this would mean fewer jobs for part time faculty. The second was their

anger at the WMU-AAUP. They blamed the AAUP, rather than Western, for letting them languish in their horribly underpaid positions for so long. Upon my departure, they immediately voted unanimously (and with some animosity, I was told later) to affiliate with the AFT.

We need to be aware that some of the part timers' goals may run counter to our own. To me there is no question that we need more full time, terminally degreed, tenure line faculty. This is good for Western because it enhances our ability to provide our students with a very high quality education; and it is good for us because it enlarges the community of scholars – colleagues who will stimulate us to continue to do our best work. It would be most unfortunate if there were a divisive struggle between full time and part time faculty over what is best for Western. Do we really need to debate whether we should have more full time faculty?

I believe that we would all be stronger (as is the case at other universities) if the full and part time faculty were in

the same bargaining unit, and that we had a clear sense of the proportions of full and part time faculty that allow us to deliver the programs in the best way possible.

I would prefer that we continue to work on ways to reach out to our part timers to find common ground and work together toward shared goals. We could argue in negotiations, for example, for part time faculty to become eligible for access to benefits by becoming a member of our unit after they have taught, say, 30 hours of classes; such faculty would then have preference for classes in subsequent semesters, access to professional development activities, and an improved hourly rate for teaching their classes.

Please let me know your views on this, either by writing me directly or speaking with your Association Council representative or Executive Committee member. If we can bring people together, it could be good for all of us.

## Faculty Specialists, Promotions, and Tenure

*Jo Wiley, Vice President*

Our *Agreement* with Western Michigan University has included the faculty specialist category for the past six years, yet confusion persists regarding some aspects of faculty specialist appointments. Article 20, Faculty Specialists, provides a *Statement of Principle* which identifies the five types of specialists: lecturers, clinical specialists, professional specialists, aviation specialists, and language specialists; identifies their “special” *Characteristics and Rights and Privileges*; gives a *Description of Types of Faculty Specialists*; and identifies *Exclusions* from the category.

What is not as clearly laid out, and what generates the most frequently asked questions of WMU-AAUP staff and officers, is how these faculty appointments fit into the rest of the *Agreement*. While, for the most part, the *Agreement* pertains uniformly to Faculty Specialists, that is not always the case. Our *Agreement* makes specific references to Faculty Specialists in eight articles (excluding Article 20 and general definitions): Article 16: Evaluation of Faculty; Article 17: Tenure Policy and Procedures; Article 18: Promotion Policy and Procedures; Article 23: Faculty Participation in Departmental Governance; Article 25: Layoff and Recall; Article 32: Economic Compensation; Article 35: Retirement; and Article 42: Work of the Unit. (If you want to find these references quickly, use the following URL to get to the electronic copy of our *Agreement* and then do a “faculty specialist” search of the document: <http://www.wmuuau.net/ChapterDocuments.html>)

Of course, it is also important to note where the faculty specialist category IS NOT included: Article 17.§14: The Relationship Between the Tenure Award and the Award of Promotion to Associate Professor and 18.§16 (same title). This exclusion, without explanation, has created some confusion and frustration for Faculty Specialists who assumed a promotion would be linked to tenure.

The reason for not linking promotion and tenure for faculty specialists is because (as is noted in Article 18.§2.2: Length of Service in Rank) a Faculty Specialist I is eligible for promotion to Faculty Specialist II after (only) three years of service as a Faculty Specialist I. Eligibility for promotion to the next rank, Master Faculty Specialist, requires serving at least six years as a Faculty Specialist II. Qualifying requirements for tenure (Article 17.§3), however, are that “Faculty members shall serve a probationary period which shall not exceed six (6) consecutive recognized years...”

The faculty member who is hired at the rank of Faculty Specialist I, then, has the opportunity to progress through the promotion and tenure processes in three-year increments:

- Hired (Faculty Specialist I)
- Promoted to Faculty Specialist II
- Tenure
- Promoted to Master Faculty Specialist

Departmental chairs are required to notify faculty of their eligibility for promotion and/or tenure. However, it is to your advantage to keep track of your own timelines, as preparing a promotion or tenure dossier is very time consuming and, currently, notification from the chair comes only one month in advance of the submission deadline. Another confusing aspect of the timeline is that, while the *Agreement* states you must serve "X" number of years to be qualified, the promotion/tenure process is begun in the fall prior to when you will have completed your time in rank. For example, if you were given a Faculty Specialist I appointment beginning Fall Semester 2007, you would submit your materials for review in October 2009 in anticipation of a promotion to Faculty Specialist II for the Fall 2010 semester.

Know your contract. Only then can you be your own best advocate and protector. Remember, though, if you need help interpreting or clarifying any of your rights and responsibilities, seek assistance from your Association Council Representative and/or members of the Chapter leadership.



## 20th Annual Faculty BBQ

The annual BBQ will be held  
Tuesday, September 2nd  
From 5:00-7:00pm



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**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**