

## Faculty Senate Report 2-19-15

Six months ago, faculty senate leadership organized a retreat to identify, discuss, and clarify faculty concerns. Five major concerns were identified which became the priority of the senate to address. We share where we are in working with administration in addressing those concerns.

**Faculty compensation:** To compensate relatively lower salaries paid to WSU faculty compared to faculty in sister USHE institutions (notably UVU), faculty senate and administration agreed a few years ago to increase faculty pay after successful tenure and promotion decisions. But this excluded more senior faculty from such performance-based increases.

*Administration and Faculty Senate worked together to propose the Performance Compensation Plan, which rewards senior faculty who remain highly productive.*

**Academic freedom and student due process:** Faculty are concerned that their academic freedom to run classes as they see fit is being undermined by overly complicated and unnecessary procedures for students to complain and exercise their due process rights.

*A working group composed of representatives of faculty, administration, legal and students are working to reaffirm principles of student due process in 6-22 (the Student Code) and to streamline and make more flexible the due process procedures that are to be followed by all university entities that sanction students.*

**Inconsistencies in policies and practices across colleges:** Faculty are concerned by inconsistencies across colleges in the application of university policy and practices. Although acknowledging that different colleges may have unique policies and practices, those that are university wide should be implemented consistently according to best practices. For example, there is policy to review course evaluations as a measure of teaching, but how those data are interpreted is inconsistent across colleges.

*The Teaching, Learning, & Assessment committee is charged with reviewing the national literature on best practices in the valid and reliable use of course evaluation data and will be holding university-wide discussions on the topic.*

**Concerns about Developmental Mathematics:** Faculty are concerned about Developmental Mathematics and want to have input on the curriculum and rigor of the program. This concern cuts both ways with some concerned that the Developmental Mathematics program is insufficient to prepare students for the demands of some majors and others concerned that the program is too demanding, resulting in a hurdle to graduation.

*Although the topic remains an active topic of Regent discussion, faculty senate is working with Developmental Mathematics to provide formal input from a variety of sources, including the Mathematics Department and other entities on campus, on curricular and program changes.*

**Concerns about General Education:** Faculty are concerned that the General Education program is too large and ineffective in its mission.

*Faculty senate sharpened the mission of General Education ("The purpose of Weber State University's General Education Program is to provide students with foundational knowledge and skills that enhance and transcend their academic program of study") and is now working to streamline the present General Education course requirements and provide interdisciplinary alternatives to traditional General Educational classes.*