

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### Senate Liaisons to Board of Trustees' Committees

The Board of Trustees has turned down our request to have non-voting faculty/professional member(s). See Mr. Mazzola's letter in this Senate packet for the Board's reasoning. As Mr. Mazzola states in his letter, much of the Board's work is done in their committees which meet about 5 times per year. It's important that we have strong voices there. As per past practice, the Senate Executive Committee will recommend liaisons and seek the approval of the Senate. But, this year our process will be different.

- At the first meeting of the Senate, we will ask for approval to name a representative only to Student Affairs. This liaison position is slightly different than the others as the person is also legally a member of the Board of the Student Services Corporation, a separate legal entity with oversight over student funds. This board position must be confirmed by the WPU Board of Trustees at their next meeting on Sept. 26, so we have a time constraint. The Executive Committee will recommend that Kate Makarec continue in this role.
- For the other committees, especially given the new emphasis on representation indicated by the willingness of the Board to include faculty input, we will ask people to nominate or self-nominate to be the Senate's liaisons to Educational Policy, Finance & Audit, and Institutional Advancement. This will place this process in line with our process for naming people to Senate Councils, except that these will be one year appointments. These nominations should be sent to Esther Martinez, Vice-Chair, no later than September 23. The Senate Executive committee will recommend a liaison to the Senate for a vote at the Oct. 13 meeting.

### Foreign Languages as a Graduation requirement

The General Education committee has requested clarification on the place of Foreign/Second Languages in our curriculum. In its meeting of April 22, 2008, the Senate voted to recommend that Foreign Languages be made a Graduation requirement until such time as a new GE program was implemented. Then the Foreign Language requirement would be covered (or not) in a new GE program. By making it a Graduation requirement temporarily, we kept the Foreign Language requirement in effect for all students while we completed our full discussion of the undergraduate curriculum.

This change was required due to a law change in NJ. Starting in fall 2008, students transferring from a New Jersey community college with an A.A. or A.S. degree are considered to have completed their GE requirements. The community colleges do not require foreign languages for their degrees. By the state law that mandated this transfer protocol, we cannot require the students to take additional lower level "GE" courses. Because that would have included foreign languages if they had remained a GE requirement, the Undergraduate Council recommended the removal Foreign Languages from the GE curriculum and the inclusion of that as a "graduation requirement," as are the Upper Level Electives and the Non-Western course. The change has no impact on our native (non-transfer) students or on students who come without completing their

Community College degree. It also does not impact those programs without a Foreign Language requirement. The time limit, i.e. until a new GE program was implemented, was instituted so that the direction of a new GE program was not being mandated by this action (see minutes of April 22, 2008).

Now, the GE Council seeks clarification: is it the will of the faculty that Foreign Languages remain a Graduation requirement or should the GE Council include Foreign Languages in their proposals? The first option would make Foreign Languages a requirement for all WPU undergrads, while the second would mean that transfer students would not be required to take these courses/meet language proficiency requirements.