Faculty Organization and Academic Senate Report
To the Board of Trustees

November 5, 2012

The EWU Faculty Organization and Academic Senate has had an unusually active fall, approving the creation of a new, hybrid Student Success and Retention Committee, beginning a review and revision of the Faculty Organization Constitution and Bylaws, and working to make the process of university academic policy revision more efficient, effective, and empowering. We’ve also been working with a variety of EWU leaders to make our university more focused on supporting students and the work of the faculty serving those students.

Most significant in our work this year has been the Senate approval of a hybrid Student Success and Retention Committee. This is a high profile committee, which will have its first meeting—a three hour planning session—on November 9. A document articulating the committee’s charge and membership is attached. I believe this will be a highly motivated and effective group, my hope for which is both big, transformational thinking, and nuts and bolts transactional implementation of initiatives.

In addition to transformation through committees, we’ve also been working to make academic policy revision more effective, efficient, and inclusive. Additionally, I’ve been meeting with administrators to make other university policies more rational, most notably those regarding faculty travel and other spending that impinges upon faculty/student interaction. There can develop a kind of institutional inertia that can lead to policies and processes that begin to seem designed primarily to serve the offices that administer them, rather than faculty and students. That’s probably a natural institutional phenomenon, though not desirable. What encourages me is how attentive the people are who I’m working with to make these policies and procedures better support our faculty and students.

Other work we’re involved with includes building closer relationships between the faculty and Eastern’s deans. FO Vice President Julia Smith and I have been meeting with college deans this term, and will meet with them every quarter, our objective being to discuss how faculty can better support the efforts and initiatives of the deans, and how deans can better support the efforts and ambitions of faculty. These meetings have been instructive and productive and will lead, we believe, to stronger working relationships between faculty and their college administrators.

Finally, we’re off to a strong start to the academic year. The faculty are energized and engaged in the work of challenging our students intellectually and academically. I look forward to reporting our further accomplishments as the year unfolds.

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Ligon
EWU Faculty Organization President
Associate Professor, English & Creative Writing
Charge: The Student Success & Retention Committee (SSRC) shall advise Academic Affairs and the Academic Senate on standards, policies, planning, and practices that pertain to student retention and success at EWU. Areas of focus may include, but are not limited to, the study of existing knowledge about student success and retention, differing definitions and measures of success, and the experiences of other institutions regarding student success, advising, and retention. The committee will recommend strategies to improve student success and retention, and, in particular, should consider strategies that involve collaboration among units at the university, or that involve new institutional approaches. As part of the campus wide commitment to student success, the committee is encouraged to rethink how faculty, administration, and staff might work together to: a) foster collaboration between faculty, the various advising systems, and student support services to better meet students’ academic and advising needs, b) strengthen student relationships to faculty and the broader campus community, and c) develop systems to assist students in planning their progression through the university experience.

The SSRC may form subcommittees to research and report back to the committee on specific issues related to student success and retention or on proposed strategies.

The SSRC will communicate progress and findings to the EWU faculty and administration through quarterly reports to the Senate.

Membership:

- 1 Faculty Member from the College of Arts, Letters, and Education
- 1 Faculty Member from the College of Business and Public Administration
- 1 Faculty Member from the College of Science, Health, and Engineering
- 1 Faculty Member from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences and Social Work
- 1 Faculty Member from the Library
- 1 Faculty Member from the United Faculty of Eastern (UFE) executive board
- 1 Faculty Member associated with ACADA
- President of the FO, or designee
- 1 Academic Adviser from a college
- Director of General Undergraduate Advising
- Director of Institutional Research
- Provost or designee
- VP for Student Affairs or designee
- OIT representative
- Learning Commons representative
- 2 Student members, appointed by ASEWU.

The SSRC will be co-chaired by the FO President and the Provost, or their designees.

Meeting Schedule: The SSRC will meet monthly.