

WPCC administrative changes approved

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Western Piedmont Community College trustees Monday night approved the reorganization of the college administration by President Jim Richardson.

In the quarterly trustees meeting at the college, Richardson said the changes will streamline decision-making and will spread more authority among the senior staff. "The right hand will know what the left hand is doing now," he said.

Trustees approved the changes after an earlier 30-minute executive session by the personnel committee and another, shorter private session by the full board. Other matters were discussed as well, including the elimination of professional leave for instructors, and other matters. But trustees took no other action afterwards in open session.

Originally planning to make his recommendations in July, Richardson said he moved the proposed changes up because of the ease of transition since he became president Sept. 4.

The reorganization reduces the number of senior-level administrators from seven to six. No new administrator was hired after former president Wilmon Droze stepped down June 30. Richardson, the former vice president for academic affairs, said the reduction was possible through a shifting and combining of duties.

In the reorganization, trustees approved the permanent appointment of three administrators. Harold Olsen was named assistant to the president, George Fouts, vice president for academic affairs and Richard Greene, dean of instruction.

The men had been working in an interim appointment since Richardson's hiring.

Also, Nancy Moore, former vice president for student services, was named to a new position, vice president for institutional development. In the new role, she will serve as a college public information officer, a liaison to the Western Piedmont Foundation and supervisor over outside grants. Student services, which include counselors and other student assistance programs, was transferred to academic affairs.

And, Billie Meeks, coordinator of counseling, was appointed acting dean of student services in the academic affairs department to replace Mrs. Moore.

Richardson also reported that the college may have to refund \$30,000 to the state because of state budget cuts. If so, some college classes may have to be canceled.

The N.C. Department of Community Colleges has asked WPCC to list possible cutbacks this year if a forecasted \$112 million state budget deficit proves true later this spring. College officials are expected today to begin seeking ways to cut expenses for their part in the budget revision, "a crash course to determine exactly where we stand," said Vice President for Fiscal Affairs Kenneth Clarke to trustees. "All plans and efforts are tossed to the wind."

After the meeting, Fouts would not rule out possibly cutting part-time instructors or even spring quarter classes if the state does ask for the budget cuts.

"We're on a good roll this year," Clarke told trustees, pointing to this year's record enrollment at WPCC. "This (possible budget cut) could kill that."

Last year the college refunded \$8,600 to the state.

The reason for the projected deficit is reduced state tax revenues due to the recession.

Also, college officials reported that they are preparing a \$2 million federal grant request for March. Mrs. Moore said the request was for a federal Title III grant, one of the few federal educational grants that have not been cut by the Reagan administration yet.

One federal grant which will not be received is a renewal of the hearing impaired program for next fall. Richardson said the program, which hires tutors and offers other help for deaf students at WPCC, will have to be eliminated unless money for the program is found by fall.

A federal, non-renewable grant of \$49,750 started the program last fall, and when enrollments exceeded expectations, mostly because of part-time students from the neighboring N.C. School for the Deaf, an additional \$27,000 from the state was obtained.

Richardson called for a special General Assembly appropriation for the WPCC program. "We will only receive \$16,000 of state funds (for such programs)," Richardson told trustees. "That will not even pay for a coordinator-counselor."

A college committee is exploring possible donations and other grants to continue the program.

Only four such special state appropriations for community colleges were granted this year, Richardson added.

No action was taken on the hearing impaired program Monday night.

The Title III grant would be used for new programs and could not be used to continue the hearing impaired program.

College officials tentatively plan to use the \$2 million federal grant to establish a satellite campus in eastern Burke County, begin a public relations training program, improve staff training and for other projects.

A report on a proposed eastern Burke County satellite campus was not ready for trustees Monday. College officials have discussed starting some WPCC classes at East Burke High School or some other rented location in the eastern part of the county to attract Burke County students now attending Catawba Valley Technical College in Hickory. A study group has not completed its recommendation, college officials said.

Also, college officials are preparing another federal grant request for new computer-video equipment.

Olsen also gave trustees his first detailed report on a WPCC program evaluation. All college programs are being evaluated this year for possible elimination, reduction or expansion. "This data has shot a lot of misconceptions," Olsen said afterwards.

Olsen said it is too early to say which courses may be changed following completion of the evaluation next month. He presented trustees with statistics on enrollments and other data on occupational and college transfer courses to determine which programs are the most worthwhile. More statistics, such as how many WPCC students have jobs in their fields of study, is still pending, Olsen added.

"We're going to be tying dollars to our programs," Richardson told trustees. "I don't know if we are going to be eliminating any programs or not."

One program which will not be created is a licensed practical nurse program. After meeting with area hospital and nursing educational officials two weeks ago, Richardson said, it was decided a program was not needed now. Broughton Hospital and Western Carolina Center employees were to be the prime recipients of the proposed program.