

Trustees pick acting president

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Dr. James Richardson Monday night was named acting president of Western Piedmont Community College effective when current president Dr. Wilmon Droze steps down June 30.

Richardson, WPCC vice president for academic affairs, will handle the college's administrative duties until a permanent replacement for Droze is selected. Droze, who became president of the college July 1, 1979, resigned last month.

The WPCC Board of Trustees also authorized a five-member committee to search for a new college president. The committee consists of board members Clyde Brinkley, Robert Byrd, Charles Digh, Allen Fullwood and Mrs. Edward Phifer Jr. Brinkley will chair the committee.

Droze recruited Richardson to Western Piedmont in August 1980. Droze called Richardson "qualified" for the presidential position. After all, he said, "I brought him in here with that in mind, that'd be acting in my absence"

Western Piedmont's bylaws state that the vice president for academic affairs act as school president while the college is without a permanent president.

For the past eight years Richardson, a former classroom teacher, has worked for the N.C. Department of Community Colleges, the last six years as coordinator for institutional evaluation. During that time he visited WPCC three times on accreditation visits.

In his Raleigh job, which began in the curriculum lab, Richardson developed means of teaching community college instructors how to teach a course, using references such as workshops and manuals.

Born in North Wilkesboro, Richardson attended Appalachian State University on a basketball scholarship and later returned to North Wilkesboro to teach. He also coached basketball at Isothermal Community College in Rutherford County and taught in Naples, Fla., and at Peay State University in Clarksville, Tenn.

Richardson did master's degree work at East Tennessee State and earned his doctoral degree at Duke University.

Since he arrived at Western Piedmont, Richardson has been accessing the needs of Burke County and the



Dr. James Richardson

programs that the college offers and updating the curriculum to better meet these needs.

Richardson is responsible for "everything that has to do with academics and continuing education," he said.

In addition, he has started a five-year assessment plan for WPCC — a needs assessment study that includes existing and planned facilities, personnel, programs and budgets.

More recently, Richardson has been evaluating the results of surveys that were sent to many Burke County industries and adults. The surveys were designed to indicate what the community feels is most need at the college.

Both the naming of Richardson and of the search committee came after the trustees spent about 15 minutes behind closed doors.

The first meeting of the presidential selection committee will be 6 p.m. Wednesday in the WPCC Board of Trustees' room. The meeting is open to the public.

After Monday's meeting, Brinkley said the committee will try to have the selection process finalized within five months. "We're going to try to have somebody aboard by September 1," he said.

Brinkley said the committee probably would spend about two months collecting resumes, another month interviewing candidates and still another reviewing their findings.

The committee, Brinkley said, "will probably have to stop taking them (resumes) July 1."