

DRAFT

**Resolution from the Western Kentucky University Faculty Senate
To the Western Kentucky University Board of Regents**

Safeguarding the Academic Mission: A Faculty Call to Reassess the RAMP Model and Institutional Priorities

Date: April 2, 2025

WHEREAS, the Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University is charged with protecting the academic mission of the university and integrity of its academic programs, as well as advocating for the welfare of its faculty and students;

WHEREAS, the Resource Allocation, Management, and Planning (RAMP) model was implemented with the intent to enhance fiscal transparency and promote strategic decision-making aligned with institutional priorities;

WHEREAS, the current financial environment marked by stagnant or declining growth in Net Tuition Revenue and State Funding challenges the assumptions upon which the RAMP model was predicated;

WHEREAS, the RAMP model — in the absence of revenue growth — is resulting in a progressively declining budget base for academic units, leads to internal competition for scarce resources, and creates disincentives for mission-driven collaboration;

WHEREAS, this internal competition has contributed to the expansion of administrative support structures and administrative units which, while often well-intentioned and designed to enhance institutional capacity, could be drawing resources away from direct academic support and the university's core educational mission;

WHEREAS, the reallocation of limited resources away from faculty development, academic support, and classroom instruction is resulting in increased class sizes, diminished faculty-student engagement, and compromised academic quality — in short, degrading the very elements that have long defined the distinctiveness and value of a WKU education;

WHEREAS, the university's planned transition from course-specific fees to standardized college-level fees beginning in Fall 2025 will shift control of significant student-generated funds to college deans, whose practices of faculty involvement in budgetary decisions vary widely and lack consistent transparency or shared governance structures;

WHEREAS, public statements from the university have suggested that these fee changes were reviewed and accepted by the Faculty Senate, including a recent quote from a university spokesperson indicating that the fees were presented to faculty for approval—when in fact, no such formal presentation, deliberation, or endorsement occurred through the Senate or its standing committees;

WHEREAS, the faculty — who are entrusted with the stewardship of the university's academic mission — are increasingly concerned about the erosion of the resources and support necessary to fulfill their responsibilities as educators and mentors; and recognize that continued disinvestment in these core areas will ultimately result in graduates who are less prepared to succeed after graduation;

WHEREAS, in the face of these systemic shortfalls, it has been the unwavering dedication of WKU's faculty that has sustained the academic integrity of the institution — faculty who, despite limited resources, continue to serve students, maintain academic standards, and uphold the reputation of the university;

WHEREAS, these financial shortfalls are not the result of faculty action or inaction, but rather reflect the inability of senior leadership — particularly the president — to secure meaningful increases in state appropriations, attract new student populations, or cultivate philanthropic support at the level required to sustain and grow the academic enterprise;

WHEREAS, the perceived shift in institutional priorities away from academic investment and toward administrative expansion and leadership preservation bears troubling resemblance to corporate or hedge fund models that prioritize short-term financial positioning over long-term educational sustainability;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of Western Kentucky University urges the Board of Regents to:

1. **Re-examine the long-term viability and equity of the RAMP model** in an environment where revenue growth is not assured and with attention to its effects on academic units, faculty workload, and student learning outcomes;
2. **Re-center institutional budgeting priorities on the university's core academic mission**, including sustained investment in teaching, research, faculty development, and meaningful student engagement;
3. **Recognize and support the essential role of faculty** in ensuring academic quality and student success, and acknowledge that continued disinvestment in faculty support jeopardizes the very mission of the university;
4. **Commit to transparency and shared governance** in future revisions or assessments of RAMP, ensuring meaningful input from faculty stakeholders across disciplines; and
5. **Exercise fiduciary responsibility** not only in financial terms, but also in preserving the educational mission, faculty excellence, and student-centered values that have historically defined WKU.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this resolution be formally transmitted to the Board of Regents, the Office of the President, and other relevant administrative bodies for consideration and response.

Respectfully submitted,

The Western Kentucky University Faculty Senate