Let me begin by thanking the members of the Hearing Committee. They are Scott Ferguson, Christina Isabelli, Bob Leekley, Dave Marvin, Valérie Orlando, and Mike Young. They have all been excellent and dedicated colleagues. We have met very often this year and many of those meetings have been long.

In 2002, the Illinois Wesleyan Faculty approved a motion from the Hearing Committee to develop an informal procedure for complaint resolution and to test the procedure over a one-year trial period. The Hearing Committee was to report back to the faculty by March 2003 regarding the success of the procedure over this trial period. If the new informal procedure was deemed successful and desirable, then the Hearing Committee was charged with the responsibility of making a formal recommendation to the Faculty for the necessary changes in both the Constitution and the Faculty Handbook. This was needed in order to establish an Informal Procedure for Complaint Resolution. However, the Hearing Committee did not have any requests for the procedure during the trial period. As a result, in March 2003 the Hearing Committee requested a one-year extension of the trial period. At that time the Hearing Committee also recommended three changes in the trial procedure, one of which would require that an informal mediation subcommittee consist of three rather than two members of the Hearing Committee. The Faculty approved those motions. Hence, we are here today to report on the progress we have made this past year.

The Hearing Committee did receive one request this year for the informal procedure for complaint resolution. A mediation subcommittee of three was drawn by lot and conducted the first informal procedure for complaint resolution. The panel believes that the procedure was successful. I should point out that the rest of the Hearing Committee does not know the details or individuals involved in the case. In the event that the matter would lead to a formal hearing, our committee would have to provide five members who did not have prior knowledge of the case. It is important to note that an informal procedure followed by a formal hearing would require a total of eight members from the Hearing Committee. Currently, the Hearing Committee is composed of five regular members and two alternates. Hence, the Hearing Committee recommends a constitutional change to eight regular members. We also recommend that the Informal Procedure for Complaint Resolution be adopted by the faculty.

Another event has had a dramatic impact this year on the Hearing Committee. This is the first time, I believe, that an Alternate member of the Hearing Committee has been elected Chair. As I reported earlier in the year, this has led us to closely examine how the Hearing Committee would function when called to conduct one of its constitutional procedures. Those functions are as follows:
INFORMAL PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINT RESOLUTION (TRIAL BASIS)

FORMAL PROCEDURE FOR HEARING GRIEVANCES

PROCEDURE FOR REVIEW OF PROMOTION AND TENURE DECISIONS

PROCEDURE FOR DISMISSAL FOR CAUSE

Five documents define the role of the Hearing Committee in each of these roles. They are the Constitution, three sections of the Faculty Handbook, and the approved documents for the experimental informal procedure. All were written at different times and in different levels of detail. With an Alternate member as Chair we had to explore how we would function, if needed, in each of the above roles. We found that it took a considerable amount of time, review and interpretation to determine how to proceed in each situation. We realized that the documents regulating all of these activities should be brought up to date and made more homogeneous in detail. We are now engaged in the process of revising fourteen pages of often inconsistent and imprecise Constitutional and Faculty Handbook language.

We have worked many hours in reviewing and revising the Informal Procedure for Complaint Resolution, the Constitution, and the Faculty Handbook. Currently, we have finished our work on the Constitution and the Informal Procedure for Complaint Resolution for the Faculty Handbook, and we are in the middle of reviewing and revising the Formal Procedure for Hearing Grievances for the Faculty Handbook. However, we found that we needed to proceed slowly and carefully, frequently going back to revisit and revise a topic we had thought finished. Hence, we have decided to request that this work be continued one more year in order revise the pertinent sections of the Faculty Handbook. We feel that the Hearing Committee should be able to complete this large body of work by March 2005.
To: All faculty members
From: Melvyn Jeter, Chair, Hearing Committee

Two years ago the Hearing Committee brought to the faculty a motion instituting an informal Complaint Procedure to supplement our existing processes. The motion was for a year-long trial period. A year ago, a motion extended the trial period for a year and directed the Hearing Committee to refine the Complaint Procedure in order to bring a proposal for a permanent procedure to the Faculty by March 2004. A review of the procedure caused the committee to closely examine the Constitution and the Faculty Handbook and conclude that major revisions were necessary but unachievable within a one-year time frame. The Hearing Committee now moves the following resolution:

*the Faculty shall continue the informal Complaint Procedure for an additional one-year trial period in order for the Hearing Committee to revise the procedure and bring to the Faculty all necessary constitutional and Faculty Handbook changes by March 2005.*