

Minutes of the Faculty Senate

The Faculty Senate met Tuesday, October 7, 2003, for over 2 hours. 59 Senators attended. Speaker Hugh Wilder called the meeting to order and invited the Senate to make corrections to the September Senate minutes. No corrections were offered, and the minutes were approved.

Reports

Fall 2003 Enrollment

Bill Lindstrom, Vice President for Enrollment Management, provided the faculty with many statistics about the College's current enrollment. He noted that there are a total of 180 fewer undergraduate students at the College than there were last fall (10105 F02, 9925 F03), and that the College's goal was to go down to 9700 students. Another goal that is part of the Fourth-Century Initiative is a rise in the freshman retention rate, which for years has stayed around 80%. Last year it was over 81% and the hope is that this fall over 84% of current freshmen will remain. He noted that the minority student retention rate is higher than that of the overall population at over 88%. Another goal of the Fourth-Century Initiative is to raise the number of students who have graduated within six years of beginning at the College; currently this is 55.7 percent. Good news is that the SAT average for this freshman class is 1205 (up from 1185 for last year's freshman class), the highest average of any public institution in SC. The College is now in a position to accept fewer of the students who apply (65% in F01, 59% in F02), and more of these accepted students are choosing to come here (36% in F01, 41% in F02).

Mr. Lindstrom informed the Senate that of the 1088 freshmen from South Carolina in this fall's class, 1077 are receiving a scholarship funded by the state lottery. "We want them to keep those scholarships," Mr. Lindstrom said, adding that it will help students to have midterm grades posted by faculty. Responding to questions by Senators, Mr. Lindstrom noted that provisional students receive extra support from the College, but that their retention rate is not as high as the general population. He also affirmed that these students are not included in computing our average SAT score, but said that if they were, the total average would only go down 8-10 points, and that every institution keeps those numbers separate in their statistics. When asked what students have to do to retain a lottery scholarship, Mr. Lindstrom said they needed to maintain a 3.0 grade point average and complete 30 semester hours in the academic year.

The Speaker, acknowledging the large number of items on the agenda, dispensed with his own report, but briefly announced the Ice Cream Socials being held this week, to which all faculty were invited, and reminded Senators that a consultant for the search for a Senior Vice-President for Student Affairs would be on campus soon. This has been announced in a recent email to all faculty. The Speaker urged faculty to RSVP to this message if they are interested in meeting with this consultant.

Old Business

Mr. Wilder recognized Deb Vaughn for the Faculty Committee on Academic Standards, explaining that this committee had brought a final exam policy to the Senate

last spring, and the Senate sent the policy back to the committee for further work. Ms. Vaughn presented the revised proposal, as follows:

Modified Final Exam Policy:

A. Undergraduate Catalog – Include this policy under section for Final Examinations.

B. Faculty-Administration Manual, Section IV, T, 11: -- Include this policy under this section.

1. A final evaluation will be given in each section of each course each semester. This final evaluation will take a form appropriate to the course, but should be an assignment, exam or performance completed by the student.
2. For courses that choose a final exam (in class written, take home, or electronically submitted) as their final evaluation, this exam will be given or due during the scheduled final exam period. For this policy, any exam that counts for more than 15% of the final grade and is the last exam given during the term (including a comprehensive final) is considered a final exam and will be given during the scheduled final exam period. Exceptions to this rule will include (if final exam is chosen):
Internships
Independent Studies, Bachelor's Essays, Tutorials
Performance Courses
Student Teaching
Laboratory sections that are part of a 4 credit course
3. The Syllabus for a course according to the CHE guidelines will serve as a contract between the student and the instructor. This syllabus should be distributed in the first week of the term. Any assignment that counts for more than 15% of the final grade and is a last assignment of the term (excluding exams) due during the final two weeks of class is considered a final evaluation. For any course that has a final evaluation other than a final exam (as defined above), the schedule of due dates for this assignment on the syllabus is considered a contract.
4. Any change in dates for a final examination or due dates for a final evaluation, as defined above, will require permission of the chair of the department or program director and notification at least 2 weeks prior to the final class day for students.
5. Students have the right to grieve violations of these policies, according to the procedure described in the current Student Handbook and Faculty-Administration Manual. Such grievances should be filed with the chair of the Department as soon as the student finds out about the violation, but not after the day prior to the first day of final exams.

Ms. Vaughn then presented the committee's rationale for the revisions it made to the policy. Its purpose was to "prevent conflicts for students whose professors give exams outside of scheduled exam times, to emphasize the importance of the scheduled exam period so that students might take it more seriously," and to "enhance current exam policy." At the March 2003 Senate meeting, Senators had said the policy needed to take into account take-home exams, the electronic delivery of exams, and other ambiguous phrases. They also suggested that a student grievance procedure could be included, that the Committee should specify where the policy would be placed (Faculty Manual, website, etc), and that the Committee should be wary of added more bureaucracy via this policy. All these things, Ms. Vaughn said, led to the present revised policy.

Senators asked for clarification of the policy. Is a final exam required, Sue Turner (Hispanic Studies) wondered. Vince Spicer (Psychology), who also serves on the Academic Standards committee, said that if the paper is the last evaluation of the class, it should be due during the exam period. Glen Lesses (Philosophy/Religious Studies) said this policy was a better one than the one that had been presented last Spring, but that he was still going to vote against it because it seemed to him to do nothing that was not already covered in the present exam policy. Vince Spicer pointed out that the proposed policy includes a clear process by which students may file a grievance if a professor changes the exam policy. Jane Clary (Economics/Finance) said she believed students needed to be protected from such an event, but that this proposed policy was too bureaucratic. Charles Kaiser (Psychology) wondered if this policy would prevent a professor from putting off the due date of a final paper, even if this were done to help the students, and he said he thought faculty needed more flexibility than this policy would allow. Mark Lazzaro (Biology) said that this proposed policy would be ignored anyway. "If you have tenure and ignore this policy, nothing will happen to you." The only way to enforce this policy, he said, would be through the attention of a department chair. Meg Cormack (Philosophy/Religious Studies) asked that the word "grieve" be changed to "report," which Ms. Vaughn accepted as a friendly amendment. Norris Preyer (Physics/Astronomy) asked if labs would be required to give an exam under this policy. Ms. Vaughn said that they would. Finally, Senators questioned current policy regarding changing an exam time. Frank Morris (Classics) noted that the manual says that a Dean must approve a change. Lynn Cherry, speaking for Undergraduate Studies, said that the section in the manual on changing exam times applied only to students, not faculty, but other Senators said the language in the manual permitted faculty to change their exam times if they had permission from the Dean of Undergraduate Studies. Mr. Wilder asked if there were any more comments, then called for a vote. The policy was rejected on a voice vote.

New Business

Curriculum Committee

Norris Preyer, chair of the Curriculum Committee, presented the following items for the Senate's consideration. All were approved.

1. S03-07 RELS 225 The Jewish Tradition – Proposal to Change a Course
2. S03-08 JWST 200 Introduction to Jewish Studies – Proposal to Change a Course
3. S03-09 B.A. in Religious Studies – Proposal to Change Degree Requirements

4. S03-10 EDEE 323 Mathematics: The Language of Logic – Proposal to Change a Course
5. S03-11 B.A. in Psychology – Proposal to Change Degree Requirements
6. S03-12 HIST 254 History of England to the 18th Century – Proposal to Delete a Course
7. S03-13 HIST 257 Naval History – Proposal to Delete a Course
8. S03-16 GEOL 207 Marine Geology – Proposal to Change a Course
9. S03-17 GEOL 210 Stratigraphy and Sedimentation – Proposal to Change a Course
10. S03-18 GEOL 212 Mineralogy – Proposal to Change a Course
11. S03-19 GEOL 225 Geomorphology – Proposal to Change a Course
12. S03-20 GEOL 232 Introduction to Petrology – Proposal to Change a Course
13. S03-21 B.S. in Geology and Environmental Geosciences – Proposal to Change Degree Requirements
14. S03-22 B.A. in Geology and Environmental Geosciences – Proposal to Change Degree Requirements
15. S03-24 ARTM 360 Building Participation in the Arts – New Course Proposal
16. S03-25 COMM 210 Introduction to Communication Studies – Proposal to Change a Course
17. S03-26 Media Studies Minor in Communications – Proposal to Change Degree Requirements
18. F03-01 PSYC 387 Clinical Neuropsychology – New Course Proposal
19. F03-02 B.A. in Psychology – Proposal to Change Degree Requirements
20. F03-03 PSYC 307 Abnormal Psychology- Proposal to Change a Course
21. F03-04 PSYC 386 Drugs, Brain, and Behavior – Proposal to Change a Course
22. F03-05 PSYC 382 Visual Perception – Proposal to Delete a Course

Committee On Graduate Education

Sarah Owens, chair, presented the following items. The Senate approved all.
 New Course Proposal – CSIS 654 - Software Requirements Analysis and Specifications
 New Course Proposal – SPAN 615 - Topics in Latin American Culture and Civilization
 Program Change Proposal –
 Degree Requirements for the Master of Arts in Teaching – Special Education program.

Resolution on Faculty and Curriculum

At-large Senator Todd Grantham presented the following motion on behalf of faculty member Larry Krasnoff.

It is hereby resolved that the faculty Senate affirms the principle that the content of our curriculum is primarily an academic matter. Decisions about the content of the curriculum, including decisions about what majors and minors to offer, are to be made after full, free and open deliberation of the academic merits of any proposals submitted to the appropriate faculty committees and to the faculty Senate. Such decisions are not to be determined by external political pressure, and especially not when that pressure is based on intolerance or bigotry.

Mr. Grantham's motion was seconded and the floor opened for discussion. Mr. Krasnoff read a statement on why he worded the resolution as he did. He stated that while, in a sense, the principle of allowing faculty to judge academic programs on academic grounds seemed so obvious as to be unnecessary, the faculty had not been allowed to do so in the case of the minor that the LGBT steering committee had been exploring. Mr. Krasnoff noted that the resolution does not prevent the administration from making a decision not to approve a program of study, for whatever reason it chooses. The resolution simply asks that the administration not prevent faculty from debating any proposed course and offering its opinion to the administration before the administration makes the final decision. He also asserted that the political concerns that the administration had in this instance were in a different category than other political considerations. This minor was rejected before it could be offered "because of intolerance of homosexuality." He asked faculty to stand up against this threat to academic freedom.

A lengthy discussion ensued. SGA representative Michael Leitman said the SGA was preparing a resolution that would mirror the language in this one, and that he hoped the Senate would support this one today Susan Farrell (English) read a statement from faculty in Women's Studies, the minor she directs.

The Women's Studies Program at the College of Charleston affirms the principle that a liberal arts education is not simply a matter of acquiring skills, but is also (and most importantly) about deepening one's understanding of oneself and one's relation to the world. Accordingly, we believe that a sustained program of study concerning sexual minorities could indeed be in the best interests of the college.

Just as Women's Studies raises uncomfortable questions about gender roles, the status of women, the rights of women (and men) in different cultural settings, the role (seen and unseen) of women in history, and in general the construction of feminine and masculine identities, so too might an LGBT minor raise uncomfortable questions (about the role that sexuality plays in our self-understanding, about the rights accorded and denied to people on the basis of their sexuality, about the construction of gender around the issue of sexuality). We affirm that such a minor could well ask questions that are currently not being asked of our students and expose them to a vibrant and growing field of scholarship that they would not otherwise see.

We firmly believe that the issues surrounding an LGBT minor are worthy of academic debate, and we believe the faculty deserves the right to make the case for such a minor.

Darryl Phillips (Classics) spoke in favor of the motion, noting that the Senate was "like the Roman Senate under the emperors" in that nothing we did could control the actions of the administration. Provost Elise Jorgens said she wanted to "affirm my deep conviction" that curriculum has to come from the faculty. Mr. Phillips was correct, she added, in saying that the faculty may propose a course, and the administration may then decide it's not in the school's best interest to approve it. "I don't have anything to quibble with" on this resolution, she said.

Frank Kinard (At-large) stated that the resolution was unnecessary. He said that during his years at the College, there has never been any political pressure put on any faculty member for proposing any course. Rich Bodek (History), speaking in favor of the resolution, said that he did not know whether he would support a minor in LGBT studies, but that he believed it was the faculty's right to consider such a question. David Mann (Political Science) said the resolution was unnecessary. We don't need to reaffirm what already exists, he said. Faculty do not debate curriculum when it is presented to the Senate anyway. Also, "we have to remember where we are and we have to remember who feeds us."

Kyle Morris, student and president of the Gay-Straight Alliance, urged faculty to support the resolution. She noted that the Alliance has over 70 student members, and that it has heard from other organizations that are planning to offer their support to the College if such a minor were proposed and then our state funding was threatened. People are ready to offer both financial and legal support to the College, she said, if the state tries to prevent such a program from being offered.

Richard Nunan, a member of the LGBT Steering Committee, responded to Frank Kinard's earlier comment about faculty never having had academic freedom threatened before, saying, "I guess this is a first," and that this was why the resolution had become necessary. Rohn England (Mathematics) asked Mr. Nunan why the Committee didn't go ahead and submit its proposal to Curriculum. Mr. Nunan replied that there was little point in pursuing a proposal when they knew in advance that it would not be approved by the administration. Tom Kunkle (Mathematics) then asked the Provost if the administration would veto such a program if it did get approved by the Senate. Ms. Jorgens replied that the position expressed in the letter that she and the President had sent to the newspaper remained correct.

Further discussion questioned the words "external political pressure" and "intolerance and bigotry," with some Senators wondering if this needed a special mention. Mr. Krasnoff said that since intolerance had been what brought pressure on the administration, the statement should be included. "I don't know what reasons the administration had" for nixing this proposed minor, he said; he knew only that "people who don't like homosexuality, and people who were concerned about people who don't like homosexuality, complained, and those complaints won the day." Frank Kinard said that the faculty had already failed in this case by not sending the proposal to the Curriculum Committee. David Mann stated that the entire resolution was "hypothetical." Bev Diamond (At-large) said, "The situation is not." Glenn Lesses said he thought the resolution was important because the "kind of political pressure" that closed off discussion of this minor now "seems to me to have an entrée." An amendment to change the wording to "internal and external political pressure" failed on a voice vote. Michael Leitman noted that since the Senate was only an advisory body, the wording was not terribly important since the resolution was not going to create any policy. He also said he did not think faculty had failed, but that the administration had taken away their right to bring the proposal before the Senate.

Sheila Seaman asked for a secret ballot. Her motion was seconded and passed on a voice vote. Ballots for the main motion were then distributed, and the votes were tabulated immediately: 35 votes for the resolution, 16 against, and one abstention.

Resolution on Diversity and the New Senior Vice President for Student Affairs

Chris Hope (At-large) moved that the Senate adopt the following resolution, written by Dave Marshall.

A Resolution Concerning Diversity And The Hiring of the College's New Senior Vice President for Student Affairs

Whereas, The College of Charleston is committed to developing a learning environment that celebrates the potential of all the members of the college community as that potential relates to the institution's mission to achieve excellence in teaching, research, and community service; and,

Whereas, The College of Charleston has embarked on the "The Fourth Century Initiative: A Quest for Excellence," which seeks to make the school "a nationally preeminent public liberal arts and sciences university";

Whereas, Diversity is a requisite hallmark of any public institution concerned with modeling responsible hiring practices that reflect excellence and equity; and,

Whereas, The student body of the College of Charleston reflects a rich mix of multicultural, multiracial and multiethnic groups;

Whereas, The College of Charleston has used diversity as a tool to break the gender barrier in the past few years, by hiring and promoting women to key positions; and

Whereas, There are no minority members of the Board of Trustees, nor at the Senior Vice President level, nor among the Deans of the Schools;

Whereas, The aforementioned bodies are making key decisions for a multi-racial, multiethnic and multicultural student body, and

Whereas, Expanding educational opportunities for minorities in higher education sets a good example for students and publicly demonstrates the College's commitment to a diverse workforce; therefore be it

Resolved, The College of Charleston Faculty Senate strongly urges the President and the search committee for the Senior Vice President of Student Affairs to take all necessary steps to make the applicant pool as diverse as possible, actively recruiting historically underrepresented populations and, be it further

Resolved, That the College of Charleston Faculty Senate encourages the President and the Board of Trustees to use this opportunity to make an appointment that best reflects the interests of a diverse student body in order to help foster a sense equality and balance at the Senior Vice President level; we believe this action will ultimately be in the best interests of our students and of the College.

The motion was seconded, and the discussion began with Mr. Marshall explaining the circumstances that led him to draft this resolution. At the beginning of the semester he had spoken to an African American student who had mentioned that at Convocation, the Board of Trustees and senior administrators were seated on the stage, and she had noticed that every person was white. Mr. Marshall said that “frankly, I was horrified” to realize that the student was correct. The leaders implementing the Fourth-Century Initiative looked very much like the leadership of centuries long past, he said. His resolution asks that the search committee for this senior administrative position recruit a diverse pool of candidates, spending as much time as they need to do so. We need to show our students, who are future leaders, a diverse administration as a positive example for them to emulate, he said.

Jane Clary noted that when she served on the Provost search committee, the President charged them with leaving no stone unturned in building a diverse pool of applicants. Mr. Marshall said he believes the President is sincerely committed to diversity, and that he thinks the Senate should endorse this resolution as a way of “publicly, loudly” affirming this. Bishop Hunt (At-large) offered a friendly amendment to the resolution, adding the word “of” between “sense” and “equality,” a suggestion which was accepted as friendly. Chris Lamb (Communication) spoke in favor of the amendment, calling it “an opportunity for us to go beyond what we’ve done” at the College.

Reid Wiseman spoke against the amendment, saying that no “so-called minority” applying for a position at the College would ever be excluded on the basis of race. The resolution, he said, “is terribly biased and racist in itself.” Marion Doig (At-large) wondered why there was a need for the resolution, if the College is already seeking to recruit diverse applicants? Mr. Marshall said he believed that the problem at the College was not one of racism, but of lack of representation. “Look at the room!” he said. Sometimes committees need to search longer in order to get a desirable pool of applicants. This resolution, he said, would affirm that process.

Virginia Friedman said that she is chairing the search committee for this position, and that the President has specifically charged the committee to recruit the most diverse pool of candidates possible. “You’re all invited to be part of that process,” she added. Tom Kunkle asked if the resolution were instructing the committee to hire a minority candidate. Mr. Marshall said this was not what it said, because we don’t know in advance who will be the best candidate. A friendly amendment that changed the word “reflects” in the second part of the two-part resolution to “serves” was accepted. (The phrase became “an appointment that best serves the interests of a diverse student body.”) Sue Turner said that most people in the room seemed to be in favor of what the President was already doing, so she believed they should support this resolution. Christine Moore (Computer Science) asked whether there was more the College could be doing to “open up” the applicant pool. Mr. Marshall said that he believed search committees in the past haven’t known where to look for qualified candidates, and that the College has not made a statement like this that would encourage a qualified candidate to accept an offer. Tom Kunkle repeated his question about whether the resolution specified that the new Senior Vice-President would be a minority, something he did not endorse. Glen Lesses said we should not commit ourselves to extending the search indefinitely. Susan Rozzi (Physical

Education and Health) said that the policy of seeking diverse applicants had been strongly communicated to her department in their recent search for a chair. Craig Plante (Biology) said the wording of the resolution meant that we were saying this position would be filled by a minority candidate. Mr. Marshall said he felt the resolution would affirm the President. Michael Leitman suggested that the Senate might wish to change the phrase “strongly resolve” to “strongly support,” so the resolution would sound more affirmative and less adversarial towards the President.

A motion was made to consider the two resolutions separately, and this passed on a voice vote. David Mann moved to adjourn, and the motion was seconded. The Parliamentarian reminded Senators that a motion to adjourn was not debatable. Mr. Mann’s motion passed on a voice vote. The Senate adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Eichelberger
Faculty Secretary

Fall Semester Faculty Senate Schedule:

First Tuesdays • 5:00pm • 116 Education Center

November 4 (agenda deadline 3:00 pm, Thursday, October 23)

December 2 (agenda deadline 3:00 pm, Thursday, November 20)