

MINUTES OF FACULTY SENATE

The Faculty Senate met Tuesday, 7 September in Room 116 of the Education Center. Speaker Bob Mignone gavelled the meeting to order at 5 p.m. The April 2004 minutes were approved, and the Speaker then took nominations for the 2004-2005 Speaker Pro Tem. Tom Kunkle nominated Susan Kattwinkel, who was then elected.

Reports

The Provost

The Speaker immediately recognized Elise Jorgens, who addressed the Senate as she began her second year as Provost. "It's been a very exciting and eventful year," Ms. Jorgens noted. She told faculty about three important goals that her office is busy addressing. One is the Tenure and Promotion process. After observing the process last year and after meeting with deans, chairs, and the T & P committee, the Provost has implemented some changes to the way material in T & P packets is presented (as detailed in a memo this August). Starting this year, T & P candidates will place their most important material in an executive binder, and this will be the first thing the T & P committee examines. Normally, this binder will be all that travels up the line from the committee to the Provost to the President. Any of these parties may request to see a candidate's full portfolio if they need to, but often this is not necessary, "especially when the decision is positive." The Provost said this is an effort to streamline the T & P process. This is the first year of the new process and the Provost expects that further refinements of the procedure may emerge next year. She believes that candidates will benefit from limiting their materials and narratives to a smaller space, because it will help them to decide how "to put their best foot forward" and make the strongest case for their promotion.

The Provost has also been concerned with improving the College's retention rates. Currently 83-84 % of our freshmen return after their first year, Ms. Jorgens noted. While this is a respectable rate, we would prefer to be retaining students at the same level as the top-ranked colleges in the country, she said, "more like 90%." A consulting firm, Noel-Levitz, will be serving on a retention coordinating team, and they will be "taking the broadest possible view of what it means to improve our retention rate," exploring all aspects of student life that affect a student's decision to continue at the College. Faculty, however, are the most important factor in these decisions, and the Provost will be seeking more input from faculty in the coming year. She noted that the College is "in the process of hiring" an Associate Vice-President for the Academic Experience. At first the College envisioned a V-P to focus on the first-year experience, then on retention, but now they realize the position "needs to focus on the overall academic experience our students have, not just retention numbers," she said, adding that candidates for the position are visiting campus this month.

Finally, the Provost announced, she is interested in examining the College's General Education Curriculum. "I am very cognizant that curriculum needs to originate with you," she told faculty, "but I will have some things to say about where we need to put our

attention.” She has already been looking, at the president’s directive, for ways to emphasize our institutional distinctiveness, and has held a retreat with Deans about this topic in June. All the deans agree that in order to “put ourselves on the map” as a distinctively liberal arts institution, we must reexamine the General Education requirements. “It’s been awhile since you looked at that,” the Provost told the Senate, and it is a laborious process, but worthwhile. There will be a faculty committee, but she will serve on it as well, because she wants the recommendations to be supported by both faculty and administration. Anyone who is interested in serving should contact the Provost or the Speaker.

The Provost then invited questions. Claire Curtis (Political Science) asked when the Associate VP would start. The Provost said she hoped for a January start date, so that the VP could work alongside the Noel-Levitz firm, who will be working for us all this year. Andrew Smeltzer, speaking for the SGA, asked if there would be student representation on the Gen Ed committee. Yes, said the Provost. Mr. Smeltzer then asked for a description of the President’s vision of Gen Ed. What changes were being contemplated? Ms. Jorgens said she wanted these answers to come out of a discussion with the committee. “The President thinks that what we have now lacks the spark that we want it to have,” she said. Our current “basic distribution model. . . does expose students to a broad array of liberal arts, but I would like us to look at something that has a more distinctive character.” This could be “more broadly interdisciplinary” or it could be “much smaller core curriculum.”

Several faculty asked about retention, wondering if the reasons students chose not to return might be beyond our control. Reid Wiseman (Biology) thought online registration might be to blame, and Norris Preyer (Physics) wondered if many students came here with the intention of transferring after a year or two. Frank Kinard (Chemistry) noted that students who transfer in from tech schools are sometimes not prepared to step into our upper-level classes, and Liz Martinez (Hispanic Studies) asked if some students left in order to study programs that the C of C did not offer. The Provost acknowledged all these factors and thanked faculty for their suggestions, saying she looked forward to working with all faculty on these projects.

College Bookstore

The Speaker recognized two staff members from the College Bookstore, Kristen Wing and Whitney Stall. Ms. Wing said that they felt their fall “rush” had been fairly successful, and that they were here to confirm their commitment to serving the faculty. She announced that the Bookstore will be sending out a survey, developed by the Bookstore Advisory Council, next week, which will allow faculty to express any concerns they may have. “How many of you read the newsletter we sent out?” Ms. Wing asked. She said this fully explained their policies and demonstrated their concern for students. Spring textbook adoptions are due on October 15th, she said, and this will enable the bookstore to save students more money through buybacks. A few faculty do use other bookstores for textbooks, and she hopes to discourage this in the future, she said.

Sue Turner (Hispanic Studies) said, “I would like a pledge that books will be in on time and there will be enough ordered. I am sure everyone in this room knows of a horror story” of books not being in stock at the beginning of the semester. “The other unnamed bookstore always does come through,” Ms. Turner said. “In return for getting the orders in on time we would like a pledge that these will be on time.”

“That is our commitment,” Ms. Wing said. She then said that the bookstore does not “order the books right away so we don’t always know publishers are out of stock until the last minute.” She said it took the staff a long time to enter in the orders by hand. Norris Preyer asked if the bookstore wished to eliminate this hand-entry by using the “e-doptions” method of ordering that is on the Bookstore’s webpage. “All those I sent [via e-doption] were lost,” he said. Whitney Stall answered, “I would prefer you to use an email directly to me.” Mr. Preyer noted that there was no follow-up to let him know that no books had been ordered for his course. “We made phone calls,” said Ms. Stall. Mr. Preyer said he only learned of the problem a week before classes began.

Andrew Smeltzer, the SGA representative, read out a number of prices of textbooks for sale at the College Bookstore, and compared these to prices charged by the bookstore that could not be named. In many cases the College Bookstore charged two or three dollars more per book. Even though this is not much for one student, it adds up to quite a lot of extra profit for Follett, he said, if one considers that there are ten thousand students at the College. Ms. Wing said that although Follett did operate the bookstore, the company was constrained by many obligations that stores in the private sector did not have to face. The College Bookstore is obligated to supply every textbook that is requested by faculty, she said, and other bookstores are not, nor do these stores have any financial responsibility to the College.

Lowcountry Graduate Center

The Speaker then recognized Skip Godow, who updated the faculty on the Lowcountry Graduate Center. This is a partnership between the College, MUSC, and the Citadel, formed in 2001 in response to community demand for more graduate programs. Mr. Godow said that the Lowcountry is one of only six areas of its size in the whole country that doesn’t offer a full range of doctoral programs. More high-tech graduate opportunities are needed, according to local and state officials who have studied the needs of the area.

Mr. Godow explained that all 3 institutions contributed a little for the startup of the LGC in 2001. Currently there are Computer Science courses being offered online, and there are two new certificate programs, one in Organizational Communication and one in Statistics. And the state has now come up with \$465,000 which will enable the LGC to offer a program in electrical engineering. This money will mean a savings of \$66,000 for the college. No longer will we contribute \$18000 for the LGC, nor will we pay \$30,000 for rent on the North Campus. The LGC will now cover \$4,000 that the College was paying in fringe benefits, and it will begin paying the College \$14,000 for being the fiscal agent of the LGC. Also, two new staff positions will be added—new lines, not old ones

already dedicated to the College—and there will be three new classrooms and four new faculty offices. All this is at no cost to us, said Mr. Godow, and the total benefit to college is worth \$150,000. Another \$100,000 has been set aside for program support, and faculty are eligible to apply for grants from this fund. Another intangible benefit is that S. C. legislators see this effort as being driven by the C of C, even though the LGC is a partnership with the other 3 institutions. Mr. Godow said that this positively affects our standing with the Legislature.

Faculty asked what programs would be added in the future. Mr. Godow said there has been talk of a doctoral program in policy or in education. Frank Kinard asked how the high-tech offerings could be justified, since they would require laboratory and research facilities that we lack. Mr. Godow said that there were labs available in the community, and there were many courses that would not require labs, according to MUSC. There are also other programs besides high-tech ones under consideration. He added, “If we really need more money for these labs from the legislature, we will be able to get it.”

The Speaker

Mr. Mignone then turned to his own report, which he promised to deliver very briefly, given the lateness of the hour. He noted that the Senate would be meeting in the new library for its October 5th meeting, and that faculty could come early for a tour, at 4:30. He also said that the Ad Hoc Committees on Workload and on Class size should be delivering their reports soon. He reported that the South Carolina Council of Chairs has submitted to the state, at CHE’s request, a draft of a new form of accountability that is intended to replace the “performance funding formula” that is currently in use. Finally, he urged all faculty to come to the full Faculty meeting on Monday, 13 September, since both the Provost and the President will be addressing faculty with important information. Mr. Mignone also noted that, since this is the first Senate meeting of the year, he wished to thank Julia Eichelberger (Secretary), George Pothering (Parliamentarian), and Deb Vaughn (volunteer webmaster and projectionist), and Susan Kattwinkel (just elected Speaker Pro Tem) for their willingness to serve.

New Business

Committee on Nominations and Elections

Rick Heldrich, this year’s committee chair, passed out paper ballots to elect an Ad Hoc Committee on the First Year Experience and to elect a replacement member for the Committee on Graduate & Continuing Education. After the meeting was over, the full count was completed, with these results.

Ad Hoc Committee on the First Year Experience:

Susan Kattwinkel, Theatre
Chris Korey, Biology
Melanie Kyer, German
Jack Parson, Political Science
Phillip Powell, Library
RoxAnn Stalvey, Computer Science
Trish Ward, English

Replacement member, Committee on Graduate and Continuing Education:
Rohn England, Mathematics.

Curriculum Committee

Deborah Boyle, this year's chair, presented the following items. All were approved.

1. B.S. in Mathematics, Secondary Education Track – Proposal to Change Degree Requirements
2. PEHD 438 Advanced Topics in Resistance Training and Conditioning – New Course Proposal
3. PEHD 439 Advanced Topics in Exercise Physiology – New Course Proposal
4. PEHD 498 Capstone Experience in Exercise Science – New Course Proposal
5. B.S. in Physical Education and Health, Exercise Science Concentration – Proposal to Change Degree Requirements
6. Bachelor Degrees in PEHD, EDFS and Secondary Minors in BIOL, ENGL, GEOL, HIST, MATH, PHYS, POLS, SOCY, and Foreign Languages – Proposal to Change Degree Requirements for Fall 2004

The last item presented was a proposal for a new course that was corss-listed as both a graduate and undergraduate course, BIOL 414/614 Environmental Immunology. After discussing the different assignments that determined whether a student would receive graduate or undergraduate credit for this course, senators asked whether this course had been approved by the Graduate Committee. Sarah Owens (Hispanic Studies), chair, said that it had not, and that such courses should be approved simultaneously by Curriculum and by her committee. After some consultations with the Senate parliamentarian, the proposal for BIOL 414/614 was remanded to the Graduate Committee. Without its approval, the Senate cannot vote on the proposal.

Constituents' Concerns

Susan Farrell (English) reported that her department had asked her to raise their concern about the very loud noise that recent street concerts have caused on George Street. This amplified music is very disruptive, preventing English Department faculty from meeting with students or conducting other business in their offices, she said.

George Hopkins (History) announced that he was considering introducing a resolution that the College observe Labor Day, and that he would be interested in other faculty's suggestions on this topic.

The Senate adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julia Eichelberger, Secretary