

**Minutes**  
**Winthrop University Faculty Conference**  
**Special Meeting**

December 18, 2008

4:00 pm

Plowden Auditorium

**I. Call to Order**

Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood, Chair of Faculty Conference, called the meeting to order at 4:04 pm; a quorum was present.

**II. Introductory Remarks from Chair of Faculty Conference**

Dr. Fortner-Wood, Chair of Faculty Conference, apologized for the short notice on the meeting. A great deal of effort has gone into communicating information broadly, comprehensively and quickly in the light of the awful economic situation. No one wants to make the decisions that have had to be made so that we can continue to do the work we do. President DiGiorgio assured Dr. Fortner-Wood that they are doing everything humanly possible to prevent having to do a reduction in workforce. Though we may not like the 'everything humanly possible' this is preferable to not having a job. Dr. Fortner-Wood thanked Dr. Tom Moore (Vice President, Academic Affairs), J.P. McKee (Vice President, Business and Finance), Amanda Maghsoud (Associate Vice President, Business and Finance), and the other Vice Presidents in attendance for adjusting their schedules to participate in the meeting. Dr. Fortner-Wood said she would take responsibility for getting the answers to any questions not answered during the meeting.

The Rules Committee approved a two-minute time allotment for each person's question or comment for the meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to answer questions faculty have about the furloughs and other budget issues. The meeting will have to end at 5:30 as several of those present are members of the platform party and need to prepare for Graduate Commencement.

Communication has been taking place already about this issue. Dr. Fortner-Wood has spoken with the President six times in the past two weeks. Some answers are already posted on the Money Matters section on the Faculty Conference web page. One open question is what is appropriate to share of Winthrop's spending plan. Comments from the President were positive and you should see more from that in the near future.

Dr. Fortner-Wood thanked Dr. Chlotia Garrison for volunteering to take the minutes of today's meeting. Dr. DeNoia, Faculty Conference Secretary, could not fit the meeting into her schedule. Dr. Fortner-Wood also thanked the Rules Committee for their quick responses to requests for their deliberation about the meeting.

**III. Remarks from the Vice President for Academic Affairs**

Dr. Tom Moore thanked everyone for coming on a late Thursday afternoon at the end of a semester. These are tough times on a lot of us for a lot of reasons. The President has been clear in the light of all state cutbacks that we would approach things with three priorities:

- Protecting the quality of our students' academic and personal development experiences at Winthrop
- Continuing to invest in safety and security of the campus community
- Continuing to recruit a high-achieving student body.

As we look to next semester it will be tough on a number of us. The Executive Officer's Retreat will be the first week back in January instead of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> week to discuss the issues of where we are and how we go forward. Dr. Moore has received some feedback about the e-mail he sent the other day about the reorganization in Academic Affairs. Dr. Moore stated that the reorganization removed 2 FTE's (full-time equivalents) and no salary increases or stipends were received as a result of the restructuring. This is a major change with no increase in compensation.

Dr. Moore is aware that many will have additional duties in the Spring because of such actions as combining sections, cancelling sections, increasing section sizes and nine furlough days.

Everyone whose paycheck comes from Winthrop and occupies a full time position, except for people on H1B visas, will have 9 days furlough (or prorated) whether grant or other funded between Jan 1 and June 30.

#### IV. Comments, Questions and Answers

1. What is the probability that the Fall 09 contracts will be at the same base salary as they were this year?

Can not really answer but we have to look at expectations for state appropriations. We expect the state to limit tuition increases. There have been absolutely no discussions of reducing salaries of any current faculty or staff. We do not know the numbers or how we will address them but reducing base salaries is not an alternative that has been considered. One reason furloughs are preferred to salary reduction is that retirement is tied to base pay which is not affected by furloughs. Furloughs do not lower base pay.

2. Would you consider reducing base pay in addition to furloughs?

Nothing is off the table but we would have to be near economic collapse before that came about.

3. People on nine month contracts have more concentration of their pay. How is it fair for them to receive the same 9 days of furlough as those with longer contracts?

It is not fair. It is state law; it is not the choice of the administration. Dr. Moore asked about using a percentage but state law does not allow that. The number of days must be the same. There are ways for 9-month faculty to increase their pay such as by teaching summer school or other employment while not under contract to Winthrop.

4. Concerning the forms for consulting and outside employment, do we still need to do those forms during the summer?

No, only when under contract to Winthrop. And the forms for consulting can now be approved at the dean's level.

What about outside employment?

Outside employment must still be approved by the President. The Deans can advise but outside employment must be approved by the President. Once you have the Dean's approval, you can proceed with contract preparations, but do not sign any contract until you have the President's approval.

5. We have 9 days furlough for the Spring semester. We are not to deprive our students as educators, which extends to class schedules, office hours, advisement and grading papers. The things that we must continue are pretty much everything I do as a Winthrop employee. I do not think there are 9 days between now and May 15 when I will not be doing any of those things. What should I tell my students, what should they be aware of; do I communicate to my students the extent to which I am limited to perform my contractual duties?

The furlough days could be Monday and Tuesday of next week, Dec 22 and 23, the first three days of spring break, and four days the week after Spring commencement which all occur prior to May 17 when the contract ends. There are 9 days when there are no classes scheduled and very few if any students are on campus. These can formally be the 9 furlough days.

I work on those days. My effectiveness as an educator is diminished if I just take those days off.

But there are days that you could furlough when you are not meeting classes, office hours or those things in which students are directly involved.

But, "related university responsibilities continue", that is all my research, scholarship, service, all those things. I do not see 9 days when I am free from these responsibilities. If I am not able to work on those days it would diminish what I am able to provide to my students.

Then let's say we can not meet that letter of the law. But we can do it in a way that we do not have to miss classes, office hours, or advising. We do not have to miss those things where students are around and benefit from our presence.

6. We all appreciate how hard you and other administrators have been working to find ways to deal with the terrible fiscal situation. And there's no doubt that many of the decisions made so far have been wise ones. But there seems to be an immense disparity between the sacrifices that are being ordered and the power that is being exercised. In other words, every member of the Winthrop community is required to sacrifice in one way or another. But only a relative handful of members of the Winthrop community are deciding who will be required to make what sacrifices.

These considerations lead to the following questions:

a-How is this way of making decisions even remotely consistent with Winthrop's commitment as a Learning Community to promoting and facilitating civic engagement?

b-If the University does not facilitate civic engagement in the way it conducts its own business, what kind of example is the University setting for our students whose involvement in civic affairs the University is charged with developing?

c-Do you agree that there should be more participation by faculty (as well as by students, staff, and alumni) in the making of decisions about how to deal with the financial crisis?

d-To the extent you agree, what procedures would you suggest for bringing about this greater participation?

Starting with the last question, what do you see as effective means of participation in decision making?

Several possibilities: Faculty Conference representative sitting at the table when decisions are made having voice and vote. Also have a representative of students and staff. Another possibility is for the Executive Officers to present options to the faculty and let them vote.

Faculty have voice at the Trustee Board meetings but are not present at Executive Officer meetings. It is rare for decisions on these issues to occur without the President and/or Dr. Moore first presenting the faculty perspective as they have gained it from the Chair of Faculty Conference and other sources. Dr. Moore is now considering what we can do to convey a clearer picture of the way multiple perspectives are represented.

Process and how much to reveal. Clemson announced furloughs early. The idea of furloughs was under discussion when we considered things with the first budget cut. We found a way to absorb the cuts that was close to taking bone and not affect the quality of life within the institution; meaning research and travel support, and not attacking department and college budgets per se. Taking that approach we saw that the next round would probably require furloughs without nickel and diming individual budgets. USC is getting rid of non-tenure track people. It was a huge effort to determine how much money we could save through furloughs with the many different categories of people. The decision for the second round of furloughs had to be made quickly and the decision had to be made in a way that both could be implemented at the same time and spread out over the entire semester. Not making a decision eliminates the possibility of certain decisions.

Would you like to see more faculty, staff, and student involvement in the decision making process going forward? More civic involvement?

A very complex issue. The Board has the responsibility for the fiscal well being of the institution. They delegate that responsibility largely to the President. The President and Executive Officers take on that responsibility. One's perspective on responsibility is a topic for a very good discussion. The question is relative to involvement and responsibility in decision making. If one has the responsibility, to what extent does he delegate the authority for making the decision to others? Any of you in different levels of the institution would draw that line in different places than you would as a faculty member. I understand the sense of disempowerment in the decisions that affect you. Nine days of furlough is not non-impactful. I am convinced and confident that the way we operate with the Board, the President, the Deans, and in other ways, that you have more of a voice than you perceive you have. It is more a communication problem and a not creating a sense of voice that is absent. I am not sure how much of that responsibility I am willing to ask the President to delegate.

7. We need to think about how we deal with this economic crisis internally. Some faculty have come up with a few specific suggestions. (A handout was passed out and is included at the end of

these minutes.) Do you think any of these would be appropriate? The Budget Priorities Committee according to the Faculty Manual is supposed to be transmitting budget priorities from the faculty to the President. It would seem during economic crisis; this committee should be entirely active sending information to the President to help aid key decisions. Recommendations:

a. Do not eliminate the Budget and Priorities Committee in this time of economic crisis.

We should create a structure that creates more voice and more participation. Dr. Moore and Dr. Fortner-Wood have had conversations with the President to do just that. Doing away with the current committee and creating a new structure to do what is being suggested is a better way of doing it.

The issue is a committee that does not just report but transmits information up. The Faculty Governance committee should look at the best way to do that: set priorities and disseminate upward.

b. The committee, whatever it is, must have enough information to adequately make recommendations. Should the budget be made public?

c. The President should present an overview of the budget so that we can all understand the measures taken so far and possibly suggest others.

The Winthrop budget has been put in the library on reserve in previous years.

The Chair of the Budget Priorities Committee stated that the Budget Priorities Committee has not been able to meet and has not fed into this process. The committee will try to meet as soon as possible. We need to allow time for the committee to explore possibilities before we act.

8. It is not a sacrifice if I am being told I have to take these days off. That does not treat me as a colleague; I feel as if I am being treated as if I am punching a clock. Say instead, "it's not fair but this is the economic reality. We need to do the best job we can to provide the same level of service to the student. We recognize it might not quite be the same level and it's not fair, but we will convey a sense of shared sacrifice by taking certain issues that have historically had a difference of opinion". Examples: a. The Stone house is not available for faculty meetings. This could be changed to demonstrate shared sacrifice. b. The parking policy could be changed.

9. This seems to be an issue for the Financial Exigency Committee instead of the Budget Priorities Committee. What is the Financial Exigency Committee doing? That committee unlike the Budget Priorities Committee is specifically for such a time as this.

The President has to declare us to be in financial exigency before the committee can meet. This was a change since 1998.

10. Pre-tenure. Is it going to be acknowledged 3-6 years from now when we are applying for tenure that we were in this state of reduced funding for travel and conferences, larger classes, inability to take on special topic courses, etc.

Faculty evaluations at all levels and your annual report will reflect what you were able or not able to do this year. Tenure is a 6 year compilation and hopefully we will not be in this situation for 5 years.

11. It is a fallacy to think that students are only in the building from 8-9 M-F for heating and air. My students work late hours. I have seniors that are being crippled by the 3-week closing of computer labs during Christmas break. They have lost 3-weeks that they can not work on specialized presentations. We need to consider not just what happens to students in the classrooms but their full access to resources.

We have been round and round and have gotten lots of cooperation. I believe we extended the hours in McLaurin, not sure about Rutledge. Take the issue up with your Chair and Dean. We cannot leave the computer labs open when the institution is closed. We just cannot have students having access to institutional resources when the institution is closed.

12. Will salary increases still occur with promotions given the budget situation? Have there been discussions of not giving the increase or of denying promotions because of the budget situation?

The President said they are doing everything possible to not have 'dry promotions'. Deans have been asked to estimate the number and amount and they are working that increase into the budget. The increase would be the same amount as people received last year. There is no automatic raise at all associated with tenure; this has been true for the last several years.

13. What is appropriate to communicate to students and parents about who is mostly responsible for our current situation and who can help us out of it, that is, our state legislators?

The change in the SC state tax structure (property taxes versus sales taxes) is responsible for the shortfall in state revenue. The push is to change that tax structure. Higher revenue, however, does not mean more revenue will go to higher education. The Higher Education Study Committee has a good report. There are 3 people in the state legislature that largely control what goes to higher education: Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr, Chair Senate Finance Committee, Robert W. Harrell, Speaker of the House, and Daniel T. "Dan" Cooper, Chair House Ways and Means Committee. Dan Ravenel is Chair, Higher Education Study Committee.

You cannot use Winthrop resources or time to lobby on behalf of Winthrop. You can send letters and e-mails from home about the need to support higher education and the need to reform the tax structure. Dr. Fortner-Wood will send a link to recommendations for appropriate civic engagement as a state employee. [Update, a link to the document was sent the next day and the document has been loaded to the Faculty Conference webpage.]

14. State legislators respond to things that will get them elected. If we keep doing our jobs the way it has always been done and students and parents do not see a difference then it will not change how they vote. How do we convey to our students and their parents that they also need to lobby?

A graduating senior approached one faculty member and thanked her for taking the furlough. Maintaining the quality of the educational experience in the face of furloughs speaks to students.

Many students may not be aware of the furloughs.

The President did communicate to students through e-mail that faculty are being furloughed.

15. Students think that their tuition is high because faculty salaries are high. Frequently Asked Question #86 on the Money Matters page about why tuition is so high has higher in bold related to salaries. If I do not read the entire answer I think that tuition is high because salaries are so high. This is what our students will tell their parents. Why is higher in bold?

There is a context in which that resides.

16. Create an ad-hoc group of faculty to find ways to help junior faculty meet tenure criteria in light of the fact that they will not have money to supplement travel expenses. Some faculty have already put together a starting list of ideas. Contact Dr. Fortner-Wood if you would like to be on such a committee to create concrete ways to help junior faculty. Examples: Have some peer-reviewed on-campus events where faculty can present their scholarship and creative works and receive the required peer review without travelling. This would then be accepted for a certain period of time as the same level as an off campus event.

No motion can be made because the agenda consisted of a single item, to discuss budget issues.

I would like to get the talking points already created posted online.

[Update: Dr. Moore and Dr. Fortner-Wood met the morning after the meeting to begin the process of getting such a group together.]

17. Academic Council was told there are only three ways to make cuts: tuition, cutting line items from the budget, and salaries. Further increasing tuition is contested. We were told we could not remove line items from the budget because once they are taken away they can never be brought back. The biggest portion of the budget is being spent on salaries. What is being done in the future to keep salaries from being used to fund budget cuts? Also, faculty are now not only contributing to the growth of the university through our talent but we are funding the operation of the mission through our salaries. Does the President's dynamic change since he is not just spending someone else's money, he is now spending our money?

You say we are all contributing to the operation of Winthrop through our furloughs. That is a true statement, by substitution.

18. We would all like to see more transparency. We are not able to make informed decisions when we are not given all the information. The Money Matters is a good start, but, what I hear from colleagues is that I do not want to be dictated down to. We want more transparency. We will do anything for our students, we do not mind sacrificing, but we want to feel like we are a part of it. I think that is what we are hearing from everybody.

19. We are told we have to make sacrifices but we are not truly a part of the conversation in a way we can have influence. We are told to act individually knowing that collective action is the only way we are able to rest concessions away from institutions like the state of SC. My anger will not be placated by a large group meeting where we can vent and then do nothing. I am not satisfied with doing nothing and I regret being told that I can do nothing with the people in the legislature as a collective body because that is who we are. I want action items. I want to know

what we can do as an institution to deal with this awful circumstance that has been created by the lawmakers.

A partial answer is that very relevant things will be discussed at York County Day on Tuesday March 31, 2009. That is an opportunity for people to go together to Columbia.

20. We probably as a whole have not been involved enough in state politics. Should state lobbying be more a focus for us? Should we have a "Winthrop goes to Columbia" project and educate our legislatures about what we do? We could educate our legislators in conjunction with our students.

It is against state law to use state resources to lobby the state. My direct experience says they may not be educible, it is bureaucratic. The Commission on Higher Education is charged with articulating the role of higher education and the improvement, the economic development of the state. This is a place where we might lend some support. I am not sure what effect a group of faculty and students going to Columbia would have. I do not want to discourage it but I just do not know if it would do any good.

21. How many have called our state officials? I made a call to Wes Hayes a couple weeks ago, he was not in his office, but his office called him at home and he called me right back. Wes Hayes is a friend of Winthrop. I am sure if we all called it would have an impact, I am sure it could not hurt.

22. Consider that we have come to May 17 and we have made it through with these hardships without any deletion of our core mission. What will Winthrop's response be if the governor then decides we did not need that money in the first place?

I think the governor is absolutely convinced of that right now and nothing we can do between now and May 17<sup>th</sup> would change his mind. Our response is that people can survive and even thrive perhaps under very difficult circumstances and hardships for an amount of time but that is not sustainable. The institution cannot sustain under these conditions. We can not sustain the quality of what we do under the current conditions.

One of the ways we respond is change the way we do some things. It is much more likely that we will have to change the way we do some things than that the circumstances will change between now and July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Are we shooting ourselves in the foot by doing our jobs?

I do not think so. Not doing our jobs will not change the governor's mind; that is definite.

23. If we are looking for a way to speak the language that the legislature might understand, we should use the language in the Commission on Higher Education Report. That is a good way to start. If even 50% of what has been recommended were put in place we would be in good shape. I suggest that we make that available. When we contact our legislatures by letter, e-mail, or phone say: you commissioned this and here is what your experts have said and we support these items because of what it will do to improve the state of higher education.

The wording should be to improve the economy of the state of SC. It has to be in terms of economic development. The report could be put on the Money Matters Page. Dr. Fortner-

Wood will save a copy and put it on the Faculty Conference page. [Update, the document was loaded on the webpage the day after the meeting.]

24. Coming here to vent is not enough. But, as far as we know the staff have no voice at all. We would like to have an ad-hoc group that includes faculty, staff, and maybe students. Students are hurting too, student loans are gone. We are all in this together. Staff and students might have perspectives that we would never think about.

The Emergency Relief Fund first created by the board and primarily funded by the Alumni Association now has over \$33,000. This money is available for students that need temporary assistance. When you hear of students who would not be able to return because of economic issues let them know about the fund. Faculty can make donations to the fund of any amount. Send the donation to the Winthrop Foundation.

How do students know about the fund?

There was an article in the Johnsonian and Financial Aid knows about it. An idea has been presented to put the information on Wingspan. Formal procedures are still being refined.

## V. Adjournment

Dr. Fortner-Wood thanked everyone for their questions, and thanked the Executive Officers for coming and for their answers. Dr. Moore thanked everyone for coming. He emphasized that everyone here is acting in the best interest of the institution and the education of our students. He encouraged everyone to do the best we can.

Dr. Fortner-Wood adjourned the meeting at 5:35 pm.

Full Text of Question 7.

### **Special Meeting of Faculty Conference – Budget-Related Resolutions for Discussion/Consideration December 18, 2008, 4:00-5:30pm**

- 1. Faculty Conference should retain the Budget Priorities Committee in any future changes to faculty governance** precisely because the present economic times, and all economic times, require a greater faculty voice in setting budget priorities and participating in budget decision-making within the university governance structure.
- 2. Faculty Conference should direct the Budget Priorities Committee to perform its role as designated in current faculty governance** (see boldfaced statements below).

Winthrop University Faculty Manual [http://www.winthrop.edu/acad\\_aff/FacManual/appendix1.htm](http://www.winthrop.edu/acad_aff/FacManual/appendix1.htm)

#### **Appendix 1: Faculty Governance**

##### **Article VII: Committees**

**Section 10** The Committee on Budget Priorities shall be responsible for presenting to the Faculty Conference an annual report on the University's short-and long-term budget priorities and proposing to the Faculty Conference resolutions on budget priorities for transmittal to the President. The committee shall present its report at the last regularly scheduled fall semester meeting of the Faculty Conference. **The report shall include an analysis of the priorities reflected in the expenditures on academic and all other University activities in the most recently ended fiscal year and an assessment of revenue and expenditure patterns over the preceding several years.** In addition, the committee shall be **responsible for remaining informed of the coming fiscal year's**

**budget deliberations through inviting reports from administrators and staff as deemed appropriate.** The committee shall request that during the spring semester the President provide the committee with a report which addresses **the budget recommendations of the faculty** as they are reflected in the coming fiscal year's budget proposal. The committee shall report on this budget at the last regularly scheduled spring semester meeting of the Faculty Conference and make any recommendations deemed necessary for additional faculty resolutions on budget priorities. **During the fiscal year, the committee shall make additional reports to the faculty as deemed necessary.**

Membership of the committee shall consist of six tenured faculty members: one elected at large by the Faculty Conference and one member elected by the faculty assembly of each major academic division – and one nonvoting member from the administration who may be appointed by the President. The chair of the committee shall be a voting member, shall be elected by the committee's voting members, shall serve a one-year term, and shall attend the Board of Trustees' Finance Committee meetings. The terms of the voting members shall be for three years and staggered as determined by Faculty Conference regulations.

**3. In the interests of providing the Budget Priorities Committee all of the information it needs to adequately perform its role in faculty governance, and so that all faculty, staff, and students can be more informed and participate more fully in the constant conversation at Winthrop University, and because we are a public institution, Faculty Conference should request that the Winthrop University administration make the Winthrop University budget public,** especially when decisions are being made that involve unpaid furlough work days, salary cuts, potential job loss, etc. Since we are a community that we each care about so deeply, and we are all being asked to share in the collective hardships of our current economic times, let's all be asked to share in the collective decision-making, as well.

**4. In the interests of working together to both share the inevitable pain of the economic situation and to take advantage of the creativity of the staff and faculty at Winthrop University, Faculty Conference requests that President DiGiorgio present an overview of the budget so that we can all understand the measures taken so far and possibly suggest others.** Moreover, we need to anticipate even more drastic possibilities for the next fiscal year. If we truly are 'down to the bone' in a state whose economic outlook is as dismal as present projections suggest, both staff and faculty must be able to prepare themselves for some very unpleasant fiscal realities. **To that end, a detailed presentation by the President along the lines of the one he made several years ago regarding the building program on campus would go a long way to help allay the sorts of concerns that emerge when there is a deficit of information. Such a presentation should be the centerpiece of the next Faculty Conference but staff must be invited to attend also.**

**5. In the interests of working together to both share the inevitable pain of the economic situation and to take advantage of the creativity of the staff and faculty at Winthrop, Faculty Conference should reach-out to staff in an effort to establish a place and space where faculty and staff can meet together to discuss such issues as the current budget situation and its impact on our lives. As of now, no place or space exists for faculty and staff to meet and talk together. Faculty Conference should designate such a time, place and space.**