

MINUTES

Winthrop University Faculty Conference

October 10, 2008

Plowden Auditorium

I. Call to Order

Dr. Cheryl Fortner-Wood, Chair of Faculty Conference, called the meeting to order at 2:07 PM.

II. Procedures

It was moved and seconded that we proceed without a quorum. The motion was approved without dissent.

III. Approval of Minutes

Minutes from the August 22, 2008 meeting of Faculty Conference were approved without modification.

IV. Report from the Chair of Faculty Conference

Dr. Fortner-Wood characterized our current situation as “grim” in the face of daily bad economic news both nationally and within South Carolina. However, she pointed out that on reflection, there are a number of positive aspects, including:

- We know our priorities are maintaining: the quality of our students’ academic and developmental experiences at Winthrop; the safety and security of our campus community; and the ongoing recruitment of a growing student body that reflects our dedication to high achievement, inclusiveness, and social responsibility.
- We are as well informed as we could hope, with information from Columbia provided in a timely fashion and the president using various means to communicate with faculty.
- We have excellent representation based on our Budget Priorities and Faculty Concerns Committees, with a set of committed department chairs and deans, and a VPAA who teaches and thus shares our academic and classroom concerns and experiences. All of these contribute various perspectives to practical suggestions for saving money.
- In a recent conversation with the President, Dr. Fortner-Wood asked for his assistance in explaining why faculty raises seemed to be one of the first things cut in addressing budget concerns. She was pleased to hear that faculty raises were actually the last consideration in the list of cuts.
- We can expect an ongoing dialog on what/how/where to cut expenses as the state government comes to a conclusion on the level of budget cut we will sustain.

V. Report from the President

Dr. DiGiorgio was unable to join us and sent his report by email prior to the meeting.

VI. Report from the Vice President for Academic Affairs

Dr. Moore began by saying the one thing of which he is certain is that “we don’t know” yet exactly what will happen with budget cuts. Right now he is holding back any action on replacement position requests that were not previously approved. He expects that we

may be able to fill vacant positions but is unwilling to proceed now without further information from the state decision-making processes. The situation will be re-examined after October when the State Legislature has decided what to enact. Meanwhile, the more we can “proceed as normal”, the better.

Dr. Moore provided the following highlights of activity:

- During advising for spring course selection, we should watch carefully to avoid overlap between classes scheduled in the old and new timeslots as we transition to the new class scheduling times to be implemented fully in fall 2009.
- Preparation for SACS review has slowed due to an unanticipated resignation but will be supported.
- Regarding our core commitments, there is now a link available online to the PSRI data and additional announcements will be forthcoming.

He also noted that he has just realized that having more money in the budget would not change any of our academic priorities (Touchstone, core commitments, etc.). What we need to do is focus on these core fundamentals and continue to deliver a quality Winthrop experience to our students.

An invitation for questions produced the following:

- Q: has there been any discussion of raising tuition in January? A: yes, the executive officers have met on how to find the money we must give back. While there was no tuition raise anticipated for the first \$700K return, it is not off the table to meet the much larger goal likely to develop.
- Q: what about faculty travel? A: Other schools seem to have cut that first or early. Dr. Moore also noted that the President is working to protect travel funds as long as possible.

VII. Special Election Requirement

With Gloria Kelley’s retirement, we will need to elect a replacement to the Budget Priorities Committee. We anticipate conducting this election via electronic mail. Details will be forthcoming. Continuing members include: Antje Mays (chair), Tim Boylan, Sandra Neels, Sue Spencer, and Jane Thomas. [Note: the electronic voting concluded with Deana Morrow being elected to replace Gloria Kelley.]

VIII. Committee Reports and Introductions

A. Academic Council

Dr. Beth Costner reviewed the information and recommendations being presented to Faculty Conference.

The following changes proposed by the Department of Political Science in the College of Arts and Sciences were approved by Faculty Conference without dissent:

Modify African-American Studies minor:

Change 1: AAMS 318/ENGL 312 - There was an error in the previous program which incorrectly listed the ENGL course as ENGL 318. The proposed change would correct the error.

Change 2: Addition of AAMS 322/SOCL 320 - The addition of this course to the AAMS minor was approved by the CAS Curriculum Committee on August 17, 2006. The change that we are currently proposing would add this course to the list of offerings that satisfy the "Africa component" of the AAMS minor.

Change 3: Addition of AAMS 339/HIST 338 - The addition of this course to the AAMS minor was previously approved by the CAS Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Conference. The change that we are currently proposing would add this class to the list of offerings that satisfy the "Africa component" of the AAMS minor.

Change 4: Addition of AAMS 390. The addition of this course to the AAMS minor was approved by the CAS Curriculum Committee on August 17, 2006. (**modify program**)

The following notifications to Faculty Conference generated no questions or discussion:

Department of Sociology

Add ANTH 324 (3), Amerindian Warfare and Ritual Violence. (new course)

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Add ACAD 102(1), Relational Critical Thinking and Study Skills. (new course)

The proposal to add ANTH 203: *Introduction to Language and Culture* to the list of courses meeting the Global Experience and Social Sciences requirements was not discussed.

B. Budget Priorities

Chair Antje Mays noted that there is no new information beyond what has been provided in their report. She recommended that we check the various web sites (links provided in the report for SC government and for local news outlets) for updates. She is hoping to replace email notifications to the faculty with a special web link in the future.

C. Admissions Advisory

The Committee expects to send a report later in the semester via electronic mail.

IX. Unfinished Business

- Governance Review: Dr. Tom Polaski reported that meeting with various groups to review the initial recommendations are currently in progress. The Committee expects to review the feedback from such meetings and revise as necessary. Their goal is to present a set of recommendations to Faculty Conference for our January meeting.

X. New Business

- none

XI. Announcements

- Registrar: Tim Drueke reminded us that fall break is coming October 17-20 and advising begins on October 22. October 24 is the last day for students to rescind

S/U designations and to drop courses with an 'N' – these actions must be completed and forms submitted in the Registrar's office by 5 PM on 10/24. Early registration for spring classes will begin on November 5.

- **TALONS:** Tim Drueke noted that a majority of the budget is slated for the software itself and cannot be modified. However the committee is investigating how else they might cut expenses in the transition, to save money. So far, over 2100 person-hours have been invested in training for the Finance module. The Student system comes next, starting mostly in January.
- **Retention:** Dr. Gloria Jones informed us that the President had appointed a task force to identify early those freshmen not showing signs of success. Online reporting that is easy to use will be available to many instructors, especially those teaching ACAD, CTQR, and other early courses. We currently lose about 28% of freshmen, not all for academic reasons. If we could retain just 100 more of these students, we would keep \$1 million in our revenue stream. All of us need to assist in such retention efforts. To that end, there will be a retention seminar, *What Every Faculty Member Needs to Know about Retention*, on Thursday, November 20 in Plowden Auditorium from 1-2:30 PM. It is designed for all who want to help but are not sure how best to do so. Please sign up on the University College web site. "All we need," she said, "are warm bodies and open minds."
- **LEAP:** Dr. Frank Pullano noted that mid-term grade reports have already been mailed to LEAP students. Only 75 of the 90 faculty provided the information requested; he really needs the rest to respond immediately. He also pointed out that each College has assigned major advisors to the new freshmen LEAP students, but these people cannot sign drop slips for the LEAP students. There is a special registration hold applied that prevents LEAP students from dropping courses. In response to a question, he said there is no indication on Wingspan that a student is in LEAP. We should call Ginger or Frank if we need to check what a student has told us.
- **Touchstone:** Dr. Tim Daugherty said we could anticipate an invitation by electronic mail to encourage participation in teaching ACAD 101.
- **Dacus Library:** Dean Mark Herring announced a celebration of Gloria Kelley's retirement would be held on October 23; she will be taking a position as library director at Central Piedmont Community College. He particularly asked us to send testimonials supporting PASCAL, the South Carolina state colleges and universities arrangement to share library materials. Database losses could begin in January. If we experience any difficulty with the online submission of testimonials, we should send them to him and he will ensure they get submitted.
- **Dr. Moore** said he saw an electronic mail message from VP McKee to the President that in the recent heavy rainstorms, we had no roof leaks of which he was aware. This is definitely worth celebrating as a result of all the hard work and construction projects that were involved.
- **Dacus Library:** Ms. Antje Mays thanked everyone for the support extended last week for the Library's auction.

XII. Adjournment

Dr. Fortner-Wood formally adjourned the meeting at 2:49 PM.