

# Winthrop University Faculty Conference

26 February 2021

2:00 p.m., Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

## Agenda

- I. Approval of Minutes for November 13 and November 20, 2020  
Faculty Conference meetings
- II. Report from the Chair Adolphus Belk, Jr.
- III. Report from the Interim President George Hynd
- IV. Report from the Provost and Executive Vice President for  
Academic Affairs Adrienne McCormick
- V. Academic Council Kelly Costner
- VI. Committee Reports Mike Matthews
  - A. Faculty Committee on University Priorities
  - B. Faculty Personnel -- Elections
- VII. Presentation: Ombuds Office Jackie Concodora
- VIII. Registrar, Office of Records and Registration Gina Jones
- IX. Unfinished Business
- X. New Business Kimarie Whetstone
  - A. Resolution from the Faculty Committee on University Priorities
- XI. Announcements Kimarie Whetstone
  - A. Office of Online Learning
- XII. Adjournment

# Winthrop University Faculty Conference – Special Session

13 November 2020

3:30 p.m., Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

Minutes

(Note: A video recording of the meeting can be found [here](#).)

Dr. Belk welcomed and thanked everyone for attending the Special Session of Faculty Conference. Next, he asked for a motion to suspend the rules to do business electronically. The motion was made, seconded, and passed.

## I. Consideration of Motions from Academic Council

Kelly Costner

### Motion 1: Expansion of S/U policy for Fall 2020

Academic Council moved to reinstate the S/U component of the Spring 2020 modified grading policy in Fall 2020. This would allow undergraduate students to elect the S/U option *for any or all of their courses* for Fall 2020.

Because the overall modified grading system is already in place, this modified S/U option would result in a final grade of S for the equivalent of an A through C-; a final grade of CR for D+, D, or D-; and a final grade of UN for the equivalent of F.

The motion was made and since it came from a standing committee it did not require a second. Jason Tselentis and Wendy Sellers offered further explanations.

- Tselentis noted he put forth the proposal in Academic Council given issues he heard from students in September and then in October during advising. This represented an opportunity to extend grace to students during hard times.
- Sellers also supported the proposal because some students have figured out that if they try less and get in the D range, then their GPA is protected in a way that is not possible if they are limited with the S/Us. She added that the measure had nothing to do with the Spring 2021 semester. Rather, it is simply to reinstate the full modified grading policy for the Fall to close the “loophole.” Many faculty members identified this “loophole” in the faculty survey.

### Discussion:

- Michael Lipscomb asked how might this be modified to accommodate the Honors Program. Acting parliamentarian Jo Koster responded that a friendly amendment could be added to the motion to accommodate the program. A student must earn a final grade of B or better to receive honors credit.
- A faculty member said she gets questions from graduate and professional programs asking what “CR” means. She understands we do not want to damage their GPAs, but fears the CR grade does not provide a clear picture of how the student performed in required courses. Sellers replied that this is a valid point and we will have the opportunity to discuss the bigger issue of CR and no CR at

Faculty Conference next week. For the moment, the immediate concern for this special session is closing the loophole for the Fall 2020.

- Motion 1 *only* applies to undergraduates.
- Someone asked if students could S/U courses in their major field of study. There were accommodations made last spring but will departments suspend their rules this semester? The answer was that departments have not had the opportunity to discuss the issue.
- Faculty members stressed the significance of academic advising—especially during this time. Faculty efforts in this area were recognized.
- If this motion passes, then the S/Us for this semester *will not* count against the overall five S/U maximum.
- The current motion would close the “loophole” by providing students a way to continue to work on getting at least a C- or better without negatively impacting their GPA. Without its approval, thus leaving things as they stand, students could actually benefit if they are on the fence by doing less work.
- Students will need to be reminded that S/U *is not* an option for a course that requires a C or better.
- Costner accepted the friendly amendment. The newly amended motion read:

Academic Council moves to reinstate the **S/U component** of the Spring 2020 modified grading policy in Fall 2020, including the specific requirements for students enrolled for Honors credit. This would allow undergraduate students to elect the S/U option *for any or all of their courses* for Fall 2020.

Because the overall modified grading system is already in place, this modified S/U option would result in a final grade of S for the equivalent of an A through C-; a final grade of CR for D+, D, or D-; and a final grade of UN for the equivalent of F.

Any voting that was done electronically will be superseded by what is done here now.

**Vote for Motion 1**

Yes	69
No	7
No Response	14

The motion passed.

**Motion 2: Clearing advising flags on Monday, November 16**

Academic Council moved that all advising flags for both undergraduate and graduate students be cleared by Records and Registration on Monday, November 16, 2020, to enable all students to register for Spring 2021 classes.

- The motion was proposed by an Academic Council member on behalf of the Vice Provost for Student Success, Jamie Cooper.
- Cooper stated this will enable students to register on Monday and would give us a week to work with students before they depart for the Thanksgiving Break when we return to virtual instruction. At the time of the special session, 525 students had advising holds in place. Removing the hold would allow everyone who connected to those students help them get registered. Doing so would not undermine academic advising, which still matters a great deal. Rather, if the motion passes, then Cooper could provide a list of students whose flag was lifted so that faculty members could reach out to those students and also do registration verification once we know they have registered. If the flags are cleared on Monday, then certain tools could be employed to ensure such students did not fall through the cracks.

### **Discussion**

- Although the advising period is coming to a close, that does not prevent a faculty member from reaching out to advisees who did not make contact. If the motion carries, then advisors can initiate contact with students to inform them of the change.
- One faculty member said only having two options (advised and not advised) creates liability. This person was uncomfortable with lifting the flags of students who were not seen. Accordingly, is it possible to add a third option such as, “advising waived by student”? Tim Drueke responded that this would require IT to modify the advising site. This would require time to reprogram the page.
- It was noted that advising is more than just signing up for classes. It also includes checking in with students regarding their professional and personal goals, career track, etc.
- A faculty member wanted to make sure new transfer students had a chance to meet with their academic advisors but automatically lifting the flag would not give them the opportunity to do this.
- Another concern about advising flags is that there is a great deal that happens at advising that people who are not advisors might not recognize. A faculty member recalled that he or she might end up reminding Music Education majors to take the Praxis or impress upon students their need to stay on track. Advising is about much more than talking with students about course schedules. Moreover, speaking as an ACAD instructor, the professor said he or she did not have all of the information for other majors. “I feel like our students are getting too much information from too many people.”
- Someone else commented that lifting flags discourages students from contacting their advisor or responding to the advisor’s attempts to reach out. “I am not comfortable with doing this.”
- Academic Council is trying to act swiftly to get this out by Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. Rightfully so, a point was made about being out of order and doing this by the book to maintain the integrity of the process and of the faculty conference governance structure. If we were to change the flags in the matter of taking more

time to reprogram the advising page that will take away from the urgency to have something in place by November 16<sup>th</sup>.

- A concern is that Winthrop's most vulnerable students will slip through the cracks—especially in this virtual environment where they might not respond to emails.
- EAB suggests both a strong advising culture and removing barriers to advising like advising holds. Hold reform is a major area that institutions across the country are examining to address retention and progression barriers.
- Winthrop is still working to attain the “Wildly Important Goal” (W.I.G.) and enrollment is especially significant in this context.
- Advising is obviously crucial to student success and well-being but the flags also inhibit registration which, in turn, affects student enrollment, retention, and success.
- A member of the Faculty Conference remarked, “I’m available to my students throughout the semester, however advising is a good time for students to check in with a list of questions of their own because they know it’s a good time to connect with us.”
- Someone else asked, “Are we talking about removing flags for immunizations, parking tickets, library fines, etc. or just the flag for not being advised?” It was then reemphasized that the motion only applied to advising holds.
- Another faculty member spoke in favor of the motion. “I can understand the barrier argument and there are excellent points for removing them. Speaking from the past 15 years working with students, some students only come to see me once they are out of time and their advising flag needs to be removed.”
- Others expressed unease about advising over the break. “In this time of university-wide furloughs, many of us will be on furlough during that time. If we do not lift the flags will there be paid employees available in all colleges over the break to advise these students?” The answer was that the responsibility will probably fall to chairs.
- While academic advisors are accustomed to the flag tool, the university is in a crisis moment regarding enrollments. If we have barriers that inhibit students registering for courses, then our commitment to process might have an unintended consequence of negatively impacting enrollment.
- Cooper’s offer to provide a list of students for whom flags were lifted is important to keep in mind. If a list is delivered to advisors, then faculty members can view these students’ schedules and contact them if necessary. Thus, nothing would prevent advisors from making contact with students who had their flags lifted but did not check in during advisement. Advisors would still be able to assist and mentor those students in all the ways that matter.
- Someone inquired about the research behind EAB’s endorsement of dropping flag requirements, wondering if it was based on some type of retention yield analysis. In response it was noted the recommendation was likely informed by empirical data analysis. EAB is studying institutional changes and practices that are linked to enrollment increases.
- In closing the discussion, it was stressed that the motion would apply to a single semester’s change, not a permanent adjustment.

A motion was made to call the question. It was properly seconded and approved.

**Vote for Motion 2**

Yes	65
No	16
No Response	9

The motion passed.

**II. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:24 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Tenisha L. Powell, Ph.D.  
Secretary, Faculty Conference  
Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education  
Winthrop University

# Winthrop University Faculty Conference

20 November 2020

2:00 p.m., Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

Minutes

(Note: A video recording of the meeting can be found [here](#).)

Dr. Belk asked for a motion to suspend the rules and do business electronically. The motion was made, seconded, and passed.

### III. Approval of Minutes

Faculty voted to approve the minutes as amended from the October 2, 2020 Faculty Conference meeting, as amended.

### IV. Report from the Chair

**Adolphus Belk, Jr.**

The Chair's Report was shared via email earlier in the week. (See Appendix 1.) Dr. Belk asked if there were questions or concerns relating to the report. Hearing none, he moved to the report from the interim president.

### V. Report from the Interim President

**George Hynd**

First, Dr. Hynd wished everyone a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving. He encouraged faculty members to visit the Winthrop Coliseum (north parking lot) to get tested for COVID-19 to make sure we were safe in our holiday plans.

Next, Dr. Hynd shared news on campus initiatives and ambitions for the remainder of the academic year, summer, and possibly early fall. They were as follows:

**A. Revisiting [Winthrop Plan](#).** The university has met several goals outlined in the plan, including enhancing diversity amongst the faculty and professional staff as well as improving retention and graduation rates. Still, nearly five years have gone by since the plan was launched, so now is a good time to evaluate the plan to determine what has and has not worked. After Thanksgiving Break, Dr. Hynd will ask the Working Group Chairs to reconstitute their teams to revisit the plan's objectives to determine how Winthrop should move forward.

**B. Budget challenges.** Dr. Hynd wants to develop a budget model that allows the university to look out over a 3- to 5-year period. A new model could also free up resources to address issues like faculty and staff salaries, funding for faculty and student research, and professional development and travel.

**C. Academic Master Plan.** This process presents a "wonderful opportunity" to study the vitality of Winthrop's degree programs. Key questions include: How well are we attracting students to existing programs? Are there programs for which we need to provide greater support? Would it be wise to discontinue certain programs and redirect those faculty lines to new opportunities?

- D. Campus Facilities Master Committee.** The Request for Proposals (RFP) should go out shortly. The process will include staff, faculty, alumni, and community members. Together, they will envision what our campus facilities need to be.
- E. Campus Beautification Initiative.** The spring semester presents an opening to spruce up the campus by providing attention to the flowerbeds and artwork. This is also a great opportunity for volunteerism in support of the institution.
- F. Campus Comprehensive Fundraising Campaign.** Dr. Hynd is working with the Advancement Team to develop a Campus Comprehensive Fundraising Campaign to go public in two to three years. Pre-Campaign work will be done during Summer/Fall 2021. In the meantime, the focus will be college-specific priorities for fundraising. Winthrop must generate revenue because it cannot rely solely on state funds, grants, and contracts. Philanthropy needs to play a significant role as well.

#### Questions and Comments for Dr. Hynd

- **Q:** What is the status of Byrnes Auditorium?
- **A:** We have made significant progress and will share more information about its status in the future.
  
- **Q:** Students have experienced trouble with WiFi on campus. Can you share anything about this?
- **A:** Some residence halls have suffered interruptions in service over the past couple of weeks. Dr. Hynd will follow up with Patrice Bruneau about any upgrades to the WiFi for more reliability and report back.
- **A:** Justin Oates added Winthrop's 5-year Capital Plan submitted to the state included a \$1.3 million WiFi upgrade. Had the university received a capital allocation for FY21, then this would have been one of the top projects on campus. Between FY17-FY19, Winthrop received \$15.3 million in allocations that are committed to roofs, windows, fire alarms, and Byrnes—\$4.5 million which is on hold awaiting insurance claim.
  
- **Q:** In listening to the [State of the University](#) presentation, you mentioned a consultant as part of a visioning process for a Campus Master Plan. Many faculty members are concerned about hiring a consultant during a time of financial duress that has included furloughs. How much will a consultant cost, how Winthrop will pay for it, and why it is a good idea?
- **A:** It is a positive thing for the campus because everyone would be able to contribute. It also helps Dr. Hynd make an argument to the state legislature and to get the support of the Board of Trustees to have a plan in hand. Winthrop has restricted auxiliary resources that can pay for things like this. It will not be taken out of faculty and staff position savings. Lastly, going through this process will provide confidence to those who fund at the state level and to those who provide gifts and other support to the university.



- **A:** Dr. McCormick added that hiring a firm to help prepare a Campus Master Plan is fairly standard in higher education. The architectural and facilities work involved goes well beyond what typical university facilities staff can provide.
- **Q:** Can you assure the [Return-to-Work Survey](#) sent out on November 13<sup>th</sup> was anonymous since we were required to login with our university credentials?
- **A:** Dr. Hynd assured the faculty it is anonymous. University leaders are trying to get a feel for any concerns about returning to campus.
- **Q:** You mentioned campus beautification as a priority, however focusing on flowerbeds seems like a hard pill to swallow while we are sacrificing salary on furlough and discussing fully eliminating degree programs. Can you help us understand how costly this will be, how we will pay for it, and why this is a priority over things like classrooms, maintenance, or competitive compensation?
- **A:** The interim president and First Lady Dr. Alison Hynd have discussed buying and donating the seeds. The interim president has also spoken with benefactors willing to provide financial resources to assist with campus beautification efforts. Lastly, Dr. Hynd would like for faculty and staff help, too. He believes such an initiative would be good for the campus community.
- **A:** Dr. Belk responded that the faculty and staff have supported students and the institution in a number of ways including making donations to the [Student Emergency and Assistance Fund](#) (charity registration no: 237378001), helping with the new [Food Box](#) from the Department of Human Nutrition, contributing to the [ArtsWinthrop Scholarship Gala](#), as well as making gifts to the Black Alumni Council Scholarship Fund or other efforts.
- **Q:** How will Winthrop consider program cuts and needs beyond credit hour production while thinking about the long term needs in the state?
- **A:** This institution was founded to teach future educators and has a strong liberal arts foundation. Still, there are other opportunities to consider. Now is the time to examine degree program productivity and what faculty we have to service these programs. It makes sense to consider how the university could improve.
- **A:** Dr. McCormick added that student credit hour (SCH) production will be one of the factors used to evaluate degree programs. Other variables include enrollment, economics, and performance metrics.
- **Q:** What will happen to tenured faculty in the affected programs?
- **A:** Tenure's home is at the university and tenured professors can stay if they find another academic home or they can choose to leave the institution. Dr. McCormick added that she (and the deans) will have to work on specific recommendations for tenure and non-tenure track positions in the event of program elimination recommendations.

**VI. Report from the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs  
Adrienne McCormick**

The Provost's report was shared via email. (See Appendix 2.) She highlighted the following items for the faculty:

**A. Academic Master Planning:** Several interconnected processes are in the works:

- **Program health metrics: Model will launch starting next academic year**
- Beginning in AY 2021-2022, Winthrop will launch an annual process to monitor enrollment, economic, and performance metrics for each program.
- This will result in recommendations to sustain, grow, transform, or eliminate programs. Such decisions will remain at the dean level unless a change plan is warranted.
- Cannot be implemented for immediate recommendations since we do not track expense or Student Credit Hour (SCH) production at program level, but by department.

**B. College-level budget allocation model: Will commence immediately**

- Immediate budget allocation decisions will be based on credit hour production as a measure of productivity that takes into account both major SCH production and non-major instructional SCH.
- Deans will use data from [AAAS](#) and Budget vs. Actual expenditure reports to monitor enrollment, economic, and performance metrics for each department and the overall college profile.
- Initial recommendations for areas where the institution might put growth or transformation plans in place will be based on this initial data analysis at the department and college profile level, with Deans identifying particular program drivers and how they impact college profile health.

**C. Integrating academic planning with budget planning:**

- Identifying budget reductions that sustain cuts from FY20 and FY21
- FY22 model forecasts an additional decline of 2 percent in enrollment and a 10 percent cut in state allocation. If this forecast overestimates reductions, then we will reallocate to support strategic initiatives.
- Academic Affairs is analyzing how to sustain the \$2.9 million in reductions made in FY20 and FY21 and identify an additional \$1.272 million in ongoing cuts for FY22 and beyond.
- Dr. McCormick stressed that we must look at everything to identify potential efficiencies and free up capital to innovate and come out of the pandemic in a stronger financial position. The key is to do this while preserving both academic quality and our core values.

**D. Summer Session revenue share and compensation restructuring proposal:**

- Fall 2019: Extended Education charged with reviewing Summer Session to propose revenue share opportunities to incentivize more course offerings
- Spring 2020: COVID-19 shift to online combined with tuition discount led to increased Summer Session enrollments and revenues; proposal on hiatus

- Fall 2020: Deans asked to resurrect revenue share proposal *and revise and simplify compensation structure*, noting inequity and lack of consistency in application of the current complex salary structure
- Exploring new two-tier compensation structure (to take effect for FY21, if approved):
  - Full-time faculty: Flat rate with minimum enrollment; slightly higher compensation for sections with 30+ students
  - Adjunct faculty: Increase in compensation in all colleges as incentive to offer more sections in Summer Session; slightly higher compensation for sections with 30+ students would apply for adjuncts as well
- Exploring limits on number of sections per faculty member in each term
- Exploring net profit revenue share (to take effect FY22, if approved): 70 percent to institution and 30 percent to department

**E. Fall 2021 schedule planning:**

- ALC members and course scheduling staff are working on the fall 2021 schedule. With a nod to how skilled faculty members have become at building the plane while in flight, Dr. McCormick also acknowledged the significant challenge of finding efficiencies while a pandemic continues to rage around us.
- The university will approach fall 2021 with pre-COVID assumptions. Administrative leaders hope (fingers crossed) this is the last time faculty will have to build a semester with our current process, as the state is soon opening bids on our new scheduling, calendaring, and room assignment solution, but in the meantime, the provost asked Tim Druke to work with AAAS staff to get DegreeWorks data to department chairs to inform scheduling decisions.
- We also hope (fingers crossed) COVID physical distancing measures will be in the rear-view mirror by August 2021 and that a robust vaccination program is in place. However, without assurances, the institution must have contingency plans in place. Deans will share guidance on how to build a robust fall 2021 schedule that meets the needs of students while also remaining responsive to whatever public health conditions may dictate at that time.

**F. Winter Term exploratory effort:**

- In response to inquiries about a potential winter term at Winthrop, and with Dr. Hynd's support, the provost asked Dean Jack DeRochi to build a committee of cross-divisional representatives to develop a proposal for Senior Leadership for January 2022.
- A short January term provides a chance to support students in meeting annual degree progression goals, as well as an additional opportunity for faculty compensation and new revenue generation for the institution.

**G. QEP topic selection:**

- ***Career Readiness – with emphasis on advising and experiential learning.***
- Alumni strongly supported this topic as an area where Winthrop could improve in preparing students for changes in the workforce.
- Next step: Create and charge QEP development team to identify action areas.
- Many thanks to Dr. Meg Webber and the QEP topic selection committee for its work in getting us to this point. This is an exciting opportunity to advance collaborations across Academic Affairs and Student Affairs in doing what the QEP is designed to do—enhance quality in a targeted area.

**H. Extension on pre-tenure, tenure, and post-tenure review timelines:**

- All faculty subject to pre-tenure, tenure, or post-tenure review will be given a one-year extension on their current pending deadline.
- Details will be shared by the deans via department chairs with deadlines for faculty to choose to opt into post-tenure review (due in January 2021), pre-tenure review (due in February 2021), or tenure review (for cases due in fall 2021).

**I. Pre-tenure review committee membership:**

- Current members: Peter Judge (CAS; convener), Bettie Parsons Barger (COE), Adolphus Belk, Jr. (FC Chair), Alice Burmeister (CVPA), Melissa Carsten (CBA), Dwight Dimaculangan (CAS), Jackie McFadden (Dacus), Scott Werts (former Faculty Personnel Committee Chair), Ginger Williams (CAS), and Adrienne McCormick (ex officio).
- Potential new members include Jo Koster (CAS) and April Mustian (COE). The provost is looking for more volunteers.
- This group is being repurposed from its current charge to now serve as an Ad-hoc Personnel Policies Task Force (coming later in the agenda). It will include current members who are willing to stay onboard. The committee will also seek volunteers who want to serve. The team will deal with remaining charges from the Task Force on Tenure and Promotion, starting with the use of student course evaluations in faculty reviews, with intent of starting research on and bringing recommendations back to Faculty Conference in April 2021.

**J. Advising/retention initiatives:**

- The November 13<sup>th</sup> specially-called meeting of Faculty Conference resulted in a vote to lift all advising flags on Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>. Messages were sent to all students reinforcing the need for ongoing advising and consultation on course selection.
- Some asked why the advising flag was lifted but not all others. The simple answer is the advising flag is controlled by Academic Affairs. Other holds were modified in spring 2020. For example, Student Financial Services

reduced student balance amounts owed to the university that would trigger a hold barring registration.

- The Retention Work Group formed by Dean Jamie Cooper will continue studying all holds that might impede student progress. Some are limited by rules external to the institution. The team will continue to review others that can or should be revised based on advice from EAB and data on what will advance student success. They will also study the impact of this decision on retention for spring 2021.
- Cooper has also successfully procured a license for the EdSights Chatbot, a texting tool that will enhance communication with students, provide evidence-based strategic nudges, and generate analytics on student responsiveness and risk indicators. He hopes to roll out this tool in time for use in spring 2021—maybe even December.

**K. Ombuds update:**

- The Ombuds website is live! <https://www.winthrop.edu/ombuds/>
- Winthrop's faculty/staff Ombuds Jackie Concodora stands ready to support you with any inquiries via remote services.
- The effort to find a permanent location for the Ombuds Office is underway.

**L. Capital projects update:**

- Chris Johnson has launched a current capital projects site: <https://www.winthrop.edu/facilitymgmt/projects.aspx>
- Roof replacements in Johnson and Dinkins Halls should be completed in December 2020, with interior repairs in Johnson underway already. The latest torrential rains *did not* produce leaks in Dinkins, so that is cause for celebration!
- Oakland Avenue/Cherry Road monument signage project and work on the McLaurin Hall roof and windows are set to begin in December.

**Questions and Comments for Provost McCormick**

- **Q:** Why was 2017 the reference point for restructuring budget-related issues?
- **A:** They were reviewing budget increases over the past four to five years. It was just the time frame they were studying to see where the growth trajectory started in terms of our budget allocation.
  
- **Q:** Faculty cannot be asked to teach during summer 2021 without knowing the pay structure. I understand the timeline is tight but I hope chairs have an opportunity to revisit the schedule should faculty change their minds once the pay structure is known. If compensation is cut, then chairs might have a hard time filling courses. What is the timeline on the summer session revenue share and the pay restructuring proposal? Would the new structure, if approved, go into effect in 2021 or 2022?
- **A:** The summer session pay structure has been under investigation since Dr. McCormick started in her current role. If this is in place for summer 2021, then it would have been a 1½ year process. It would be a 2½ year process if put in

place in 2022. The deadline for submitting summer schedules was extended because this matter is not resolved. No one is expected to commit before knowing what the compensation will be. The implementation of this structure is in the report and, if we can get approval in a timely manner, the new pay structure may go into effect for this summer FY 21. However, the revenue share will not kick in until FY 22.

- **Q:** Did summer enrollment go up last year when tuition was reduced? If so, would you consider a similar action to incentivize students to enroll in the upcoming summer term?
- **A:** Yes, we are considering that and it must be a motion that goes to the Board of Trustees.
  
- A comment was made about the excitement of the possibility of adding a Winter Term.
  
- **Q:** Will common time make a return for the Spring 2021 semester?
- **A:** It will not return in the spring. The decision was made to eliminate common time for the full academic year. We are starting to have the conversation for Fall 2021.

## VII. **Academic Council**

**Kelly Costner**

Met on Friday, October 30, 2020, at 3:00pm

Met on Monday, November 9, 2020, at 1:30pm

Met on Friday, November 13, 2020, at 2:00pm

- Materials for those meetings were distributed to FC in advance
- Minutes and all meeting materials will be posted on [the AC webpage](#)

AC members considered two proposals in special meetings that were as follows:

### **Friday, October 30:**

Expansion of S/U policy in Fall 2020 (no action)

### **Monday, November 9:**

Expansion of S/U policy (revised) in Fall 2020 (approved)

Removal of advising flags as of Mon Nov 16, 2020 (approved)

*Both proposals were forwarded to Faculty Conference and approved in a special meeting on Fri Nov 13, 2020.*

On **Friday, November 13, 2020**, in a regularly scheduled meeting:

### **CUC:**

*There were no curriculum items requiring action beyond CUC approval. Those actions were reported to FC via email and can be found at [this link](#).*

### **GNED Curriculum:**

- 16 course recertifications (15 in HPER and 1 in SOCS) **approved** and require no further action. (See list [here](#).)
- 2 courses **approved** as **new inclusions** as follows:

A motion was made to approve the following new inclusions to GNED:

Global                      PLSC 508: National Security Policy  
Natural Sciences      NUTR 222: Introduction to Nutrition Laboratory

The motion passed.

Also, on **Friday, November 13, 2020:**

- [Report to Faculty Conference on Modified Grading System in Spring 2020 and Fall 2020](#)
- AC members discussed a draft version of the report and approved a [final version](#) by email vote on Monday, November 16<sup>th</sup>.

Based on the outcomes of the report, AC offers the following motion:

Based on data comparing Fall 2019 and 2020 interim grades and Spring 2018-2020 final grades (found in the [Academic Council Report on Modified Grading System in Spring 2020 and Fall 2020](#)), **the faculty currently (as of November 20, 2020) intends no changes to the normal grading system** (as published in the *Academic Regulations* section in both the undergraduate and graduate catalogs) **for Spring 2021.**

Because use of the normal grading system will be a departure from recent practice, the faculty requests **extensive messaging to students** through all possible channels, including special statements on individual course syllabi.

The motion passed.

## **VIII. Committee Reports**

### **A. Faculty Committee on University Priorities**

**Mike Matthews**

A report from this committee on its activity over the last several weeks was shared via email. (**See Appendix 3.**)

### **B. Rules Committee**

**Trent Kull**

- Please note the Graduate Faculty Assembly bylaws have a new web location: <https://www.winthrop.edu/graduateschool/graduate-faculty-governance.aspx>

- Proposed additions to the Faculty Conference bylaws
  - Both concern temporary exceptions to committee membership
  - Article VII (Rules for Committees of Faculty Conference), Section 1 (Membership). A slight word change was made in the proposal: all instances of the word “exemptions” were replaced with the word “exceptions.”
  - Article VIII (Standing Committees of the Faculty Conference), Section 5 (Rules).
- Request for exception (pending approval of proposal above)
  - Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Promotion
    - The Dacus Library Faculty Assembly requests an exception to allow a tenured library department chair to serve on the Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Promotion Committee. While serving on the committee, the library faculty member must recuse herself or himself from deliberation if a hearing or a grievance from a library faculty member comes before the committee.
    - The Dacus Library Faculty Assembly requests this exception for a duration of two years, the standard committee membership term.
  - Faculty Committee on University Priorities
    - The Dacus Library Faculty Assembly requests an exception to allow a tenure-track library faculty member to serve on this committee.

The motion to make the additions to the Graduate Faculty Assembly bylaws passed.

The motion to allow a tenured library department chair to serve on the Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Promotion Committee passed.

The motion to allow a tenure-track library faculty member to serve on the Faculty Committee on University Priorities passed.

**C. Ad Hoc Committee on Pre-Tenure Review** **Peter Judge**

- The pre-tenure review letter will be mandated for inclusion in the tenure portfolio effective for new hires who join the faculty in Fall 2021 and after.
- Faculty hired prior to Fall 2021 will have the option to include or omit the pre-tenure letter. One’s choice must be made known when his or her tenure committee is formed.
- Furthermore, the pre-tenure review committee proposes:
  1. To expand its scope to become the Personnel Policies Task Force,
  2. To partner with the Provost’s Office in completion of outstanding recommendations from the Task Force on Tenure and Promotion Protocols (including review of Student Course Evaluation); and,



3. To undertake a plan to revise the Rules Document and Design and implement a training program.

The motion was seconded and discussion ensued.

Dwight Dimaculangan said, at the onset, he was strongly opposed to mandating the pre-tenure letter be included in the tenure portfolio. He thought doing so would change the nature of review, as the pre-tenure review was mostly formative. Dimaculangan was also concerned that the process was moving too quickly without adequate time for developing training programs for chairs and committees. If we are going to change this, then we need to really look at how people are evaluated and we need to make sure the evaluators are fully trained with what we expect. Having served on the ad hoc committee, he now supports this as an entire package.

A faculty member asked if a candidate under review had the opportunity to respond to the pre-tenure review letter to address potential errors. In response, it was noted there would be a response mechanism in the process. Many colleges already have a response process and that may simply roll over into the new procedures.

A vote to call the question passed.

A friendly amendment was accepted to reflect the following:

- The pre-tenure review will be mandated for the inclusion in the tenure case portfolio effective for new hires who join the faculty in Fall 2021 and after.
- Faculty members will have the opportunity to respond to the pre-tenure review.
- Faculty hired prior to Fall 2021 will have the option to include their pre-tenure review or not. Their choice must be made known when their tenure committee is formed.

The motion passed.

**IX. Registrar, Office of Records and Registration** **Gina Jones**

- Due to the last day to S/U being on December 3, we will not turn on grading until after all S/Us have been applied. This is a manual process, and if spring was any indication, we will process over 1500 S/Us in the last two days. Your patience is appreciated as we work through that.
- Grades due for all degree candidates: Wednesday, December 16<sup>th</sup> at noon
- Grades due for all students: Thursday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at noon.
- An email will be sent with important grading reminders, but I want to bring to your attention a new detail:

- If you assign a UN or IUN (F and IF grades will not be available), and the student never attended the class, please enter a 0 (zero) in the Hours Attended Column. Previously, we had asked you to leave the last date of attendance blank, but this way, we will know whether the student failed due to non- attendance.
- Please continue to put last dates of attendance for students for whom you assign a UN or IUN. This is for federal financial aid purposes.
- [Grading for fall 2020 - Undergraduates](#)
- [Grading for fall 2020 - Graduates](#)
- I will also send an email with a list of degree candidates who are enrolled in your courses to remind you that those are due early. We are having an in-person diploma pick-up on Saturday, December 19 and all students must be cleared for graduation in order to receive their diplomas.

#### **X. Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business.

#### **XI. New Business**

There was no new business.

#### **XII. Announcements**

- Greg Oakes wanted to make sure everyone was aware of the [Graduate Program Rigor Policy](#). It was developed by the graduate faculty and approved by Academic Council. If you have a course simultaneously offered to undergraduate and graduate students, then you must have two distinct syllabi – one for undergraduate-level credit and the other for graduate-level credit. For five hundred level courses in which only undergraduate or only graduate students are enrolled only one syllabus is needed.
- Save the Dates for all spring diversity and inclusion workshops will be sent out by the deans offices next week and updated on [the CPE website](#).
- The Diversity, Equity and Inclusion workshop on Gender Equity, Feminism and Intersectionality will be December 4<sup>th</sup> from 2-5 pm.
- Library and Archives will be closed to the public December 11<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> and then from January 4<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>.
- The 3-Minute Thesis Competition has been renamed to the 3-Minute Graduate Showcase! Information will be coming out soon with specific details on how students can submit their work. The deadline for submissions will be in mid-January.

**XIII. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 4:09pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Tenisha L. Powell, Ph.D.  
Secretary, Faculty Conference  
Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education  
Winthrop University

**Appendix 1**  
**Winthrop University Faculty Conference**  
20 November 2020  
2:00 p.m., Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

**REPORT FROM THE CHAIR**

**I. Report on Board of Trustees Meetings and Committee Meetings**

The [Executive Committee](#) of the Board held a session in Columbia, South Carolina on Friday, October 23, 2020. In addition, the [Board](#) held committee meetings and a full meeting on Thursday, November 5 and Friday, November 6, 2020, respectively. They are summarized below. Please note that the faculty and student representatives delivered oral reports to the Board on November 6. My report to the trustees can be found below in Appendix 1.

**October 23: Executive Committee Meeting, 1230 Main St., Suite 700, Columbia, SC**

**Agenda**

- Review of November 5-6, 2020, committee and board meeting agendas and dashboards
- Consideration of recommending resolutions for Board vote
  - Resolution to honor Donna Glenn Tinsley Holley for meritorious service to the Board
  - Resolution to honor Dorothy “Dot” Barber for 50 years of meritorious service to the University
- Report from the interim president
- Executive session

**November 5: Committee on Academic Quality Meeting, Owens Hall, Room G01**

- Provost’s Report
- Report from the Faculty Representative
- New Business Action Items:
  - B.S. in Cybersecurity program proposal
  - Bachelor of Design (B.Des.): Experience Design, Graphic Design, Illustration, and Interior Design
  - M.S. in Athletic Training
  - MBA program modifications
- Report from the Deans

**November 5: Committee on Compensation, Polly Ford Conference Room**

- Furlough update
- New policy review
  - Recruitment and appointment
  - Telecommuting

- Title IX employee-related updates
- Review of HR-related metrics
- Executive session

**November 5: Committee on Enrollment and Retention, Owens Hall, Room G02**

- Graduate School enrollment update
- Undergraduate new student recruitment
  - Fall 2020 recap
  - Fall 2021 recruitment plan overview
- Test optional update
- Scholarship funding update

**November 5: Committee on Finance, Richardson Ballroom B**

- Review on the 2019-2020 results and audit
- Update on the 2020-2021 budget
- Review of budget modeling
- Report from Risk Management and Compliance
- Update on Housing Debt Committee

**November 5: Committee on Institutional Advancement and Development, Richardson Ballroom A**

- University Advancement update
  - 2020 Winthrop Fund
  - Campaign readiness update
- University Relations
  - Report on UCM FY 2020 Work Plan for Continuous Improvement
  - COVID-19 institutional support

**November 5: Committee on Student Affairs and Athletics, Richardson Ballroom A**

- Student Affairs
  - COVID-19 update
  - Title IX update
  - Changes to Career & Civic Engagement
  - Student experience
- Athletics
  - Fall sports to Spring
  - Basketball scheduling updates
  - NCAA legislative changes
  - NCAA COVID testing guidelines
  - Athletics revenue and budget impact

## **November 6: Full Board Meeting, Richardson Ballroom**<sup>1</sup>

### **Agenda**

- Public comments were delivered by a group former Winthrop student-athletes, current students, and alumnus, former York County Councilmember, and tennis enthusiast [Rick Lee](#). [They urged the Board to reconsider its decision to disband the tennis programs. Clips of their speeches can be found on the Save Winthrop tennis Facebook page.](#)
- Executive Session
- Report of the Executive Committee and Chair of the Board
  - Resolution to honor Donna Glenn Tinsley Holley for meritorious service to the Board
  - Resolution to honor Dorothy “Dot” Barber for 50 years of meritorious service to the University
- Report from the President
- Committee Reports
- Report from the Representatives to the Board

### **Actions taken by the Board**

- Trustees unanimously approved [a resolution](#) honoring **Mrs. Donna Glenn Tinsley Holley** for nearly twenty years of meritorious service to the Board. Holley represented Congressional District 2 from 2004 to 2020.
- The Board also unanimously approved [a resolution](#) to “acknowledge, commend, and honor” **Ms. Dorothy “Dot” Barber** for “the distinguished lifetime of service to the University.” Ms. Barber joined the Dacus Library staff as a clerk typist in 1970. She and Ms. Ellen Owens were [the first Black professional staff employees](#) at Winthrop. Over the years, Barber has held various positions in accounting, technical services, and as an executive support specialist. Barber has also served as a mentor for generations of Winthrop students. While she [retired in 2008](#), Barber continues to work at Dacus on a part-time basis.
- Lastly, the trustees unanimously approved resolutions establishing the following degree programs:
  - [Master of Science](#) in Athletic Training
  - [Bachelor of Science](#) in Cybersecurity
  - [Bachelor of Design](#) with concentrations in Experience Design, Graphic Design, Illustration, and Interior Design

## **II. Concluding Remarks: “[We’]ll keep holding on...”**

In 1985, the British soul and pop band Simply Red released its debut album *Picture Book*, which included the instant classic, [“Holding Back the Years.”](#) Frontman Mick Hucknall’s delivery of the song’s refrain made it an earworm before we even had the term: “I’ll keep holding on.”

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<sup>1</sup> Although the meeting started at 9am, I was unable to participate until 2pm due to my children’s virtual school schedule. I joined in time for the committee reports and to deliver my oral report to the Board.

Well, during the last eight months it has felt like we have been holding back the years. We frantically shifted to remote learning during the spring semester. We spent the summer cramming for WOTC 101 and 102 in preparation for the fall term. Then, the fall brought furloughs and heightened anxiety about [a worsening public health crisis](#). Now, we are almost done with what feels like the longest semester ever. We have seen it all, been through it all. We are weary and worn, but we keep holding on.

The fall term will soon come to an end. I hope that the upcoming break gives you an opportunity to be still and rest. You have earned it.

Thank you, be safe, and be well.

Sincerely,

Adolphus G. Belk, Jr., Ph.D  
Chair, Faculty Conference  
Professor of Political Science and African American Studies

## Appendix 1 [Chair's Report cont.]

### Quarterly Report to the Winthrop University Board of Trustees from the Chair of the Faculty Conference and Faculty Representative to the Board November 5 – 6, 2020

The Faculty Conference held meetings on August 21 and October 2 via Blackboard that averaged 221 participants, well above the usual turnout for in-person gatherings (about 135). The meetings and resultant actions are summarized below. Lastly, this report highlights faculty concerns expressed to the Faculty Representative since the last quarterly report, particularly regarding: (1) COVID-19, (2) Winthrop's financial status, the furlough program, and academic master planning, (3) faculty-Board relations, and (4) public comments delivered at the August 25 and September 25 Board meetings.

#### I. In Memorium

With sorrow, the Faculty Conference acknowledged the passing of Drs. [Anthony J. DiGiorgio](#), Winthrop's ninth president, [James Bond](#), Professor Emeritus of Accounting and former chair of the Department of Accounting, Finance, and Economics, and [Michael Williams](#), Professor Emeritus of Music, Director of Percussion Studies, and 2004 Winthrop Distinguished Professor. Each made wonderful contributions to the university over long and distinguished careers. They are remembered and missed.

#### II. Recognition of Faculty

[Several faculty members](#) earned tenure, were promoted to Associate Professor or Full Professor, or were granted Emeritus status at the conclusion of the 2019-2020 academic year. They are as follows:

##### Faculty who earned Tenure (15)

- [Fatima Amir](#), Chemistry, Physics, and Geology, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Bettie Parsons Barger](#), Curriculum and Pedagogy, College of Education
- [Gregory Bell](#), History, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Andrew Besmer](#), Computer Science and Quantitative Methods, College of Business Administration
- [Joni Boyd](#), Physical Education, Sport, and Human Performance, College of Education
- [Crystal Glover](#), Curriculum and Pedagogy, College of Education
- [Tracy Griggs](#), Management and Marketing, College of Business Administration
- [Jessie Hamm](#), Mathematics, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Clifton Harris](#), Chemistry, Physics, and Geology, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Dustin Hoffman](#), English, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Kathryn Kohl](#), Biology, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Wanda Koszewski](#), Human Nutrition, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Aimee Meader](#), Mass Communications, College of Arts and Sciences



- [David Schary](#), Physical Education, Sport, and Human Performance, College of Education
- [Lindsay Yearta](#), Education Core, College of Education

Note: [Anthony Hill](#) (Social Work) and [Donald Rakestraw](#) (History), both of the College of Arts and Sciences, earned tenure through expedited review effective January 1, 2020.

#### **Faculty promoted to Associate Professor (16)**

- [Abbigail Armstrong](#), Counseling, Leadership, and Educational Studies, College of Education
- Bettie Parsons Barger, Curriculum and Pedagogy, College of Education
- Gregory Bell, History, College of Arts and Sciences
- Andrew Besmer, Computer Science and Quantitative Methods, College of Business Administration
- Crystal Glover, Curriculum and Pedagogy, College of Education
- Tracy Griggs, Management and Marketing, College of Business Administration
- Jessica Hamm, Mathematics, College of Arts and Sciences
- Clifton Harris, Chemistry, Physics, and Geology, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Justin Isenhour](#), Music, College of Visual and Performing Arts
- Kathryn Kohl, Biology, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Marvin McAllister](#), Theatre and Dance, College of Visual and Performing Arts
- [Jeffrey McEvoy](#), Music, College of Visual and Performing Arts
- Aimee Meader, Mass Communications, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Seth Rouser](#), Fine Arts, College of Visual and Performing Arts
- [Michael Whitney](#), Computer Science and Quantitative Methods, College of Business Administration
- Lindsay Yearta, Education Core, College of Education

#### **Faculty promoted to Professor (9)**

- [Nicholas Grosseohme](#), Chemistry, Physics, and Geology, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Matt Hayes](#), Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Jason Hurlbert](#), Chemistry, Physics, and Geology, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Willis Lewis](#), Accounting, Finance, and Economics, College of Business Administration
- [Michael Matthews](#), Management and Marketing, College of Business Administration
- [Douglas Presley](#), Music, College of Visual and Performing Arts
- [Darren Ritzer](#), Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences
- [Jason Tselentis](#), Design, College of Visual and Performing Arts
- [Janet Wojcik](#), Physical Education, Sport, and Human Performance, College of Education

### Faculty granted Emeritus status (8)

- Laura Gardner, Professor of Fine Arts
- Mark Herring, Dean of Library Services
- [Gloria Jones](#), Associate Professor of English and Dean of University College
- Antigo Martin-Delaney, Associate Professor of Psychology
- Linda Pickett, Associate Professor of Elementary Education
- [Joseph Prus](#), Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychology
- [William Rogers](#), Professor of Biology
- Anna Sartin, Associate Professor of Theatre

Unfortunately, given that the meeting took place online, we did not introduce new faculty members as we have done in the past.

### III. Update on Academic Council

Academic Council continued with routine maintenance of the curriculum. Though not exhaustive, the actions below might be of special interest to the Board.

#### **New degree program with four concentrations (replacing Visual Communication and Interior Design BFA degrees)**

- Bachelor of Design: Experience Design
- Bachelor of Design: Graphic Design
- Bachelor of Design: Illustration
- Bachelor of Design: Interior Design

#### **First-time certifications**

<b>General Education Area</b>	<b>Course</b>	<b>Title</b>
Global	PLSC 336	Russian Politics
	PLSC 345	European Politics
	PLSC 504	American Foreign Policy
Historical Perspectives	ARTH 421	Visual Culture of Medieval Pilgrimage
Technology	PSYC 195	Technology Tools for Research and Personal Productivity
	PSYC 195x	Technology Tools for Research and Personal Productivity
Global Humanities & Arts Historical Perspectives	ARTH 422	The Medieval City

The Faculty Conference also approved a motion from Academic Council to use [a modified grading system](#) akin to the one employed for the [Spring 2020 semester](#). It notes:

Similar to Spring 2020, Winthrop has extended the temporary (Fall 2020 only) change to both the regular grading options and the S/U grading options. As a result, we are providing this additional guidance for all undergraduate students and faculty. In short, any undergraduate student who earns a D grade in Fall 2020 will automatically receive credit (CR) grades on their records, and the D will not be counted in the GPA calculation. Any undergraduate student receiving an F in Fall 2020 will automatically receive an unsatisfactory (UN) grade on their record, and the F will not be counted in the GPA calculation.

This will help those students who elect an S/U on a course as well. Any student who elects an S/U and who earns a D-level grade will earn a CR and keep the credit hours. The CR will not be counted in the GPA calculation.

#### **IV. Faculty Concerns**

##### **A. Covid-19**

**Rising Cases, Continued Trepidation.** According to [the Centers for Disease Control](#), coronavirus cases are surging in seventy-five percent of the country and at least 1,170 new deaths and 62,485 new cases were reported on October 21. [The New York Times](#) adds, “Over the past week, there have been an average of 60,534 cases per day, an increase of 32 percent from the average two weeks earlier.” In [South Carolina](#), at least 12 new coronavirus deaths and 864 new cases were reported on October 21. “Over the past week, there have been an average of 935 cases per day, an increase of 14 percent from the average two weeks earlier.”

With peak flu season approaching and [evidence that some college students across the state](#) are gathering in large numbers and ignoring physical distancing guidelines, faculty members continue to demonstrate great concern about what these trends mean for Winthrop. Some question the decision to maintain Spring Break then have students return to campus afterwards, while others acknowledge that holding the break allows university personnel to take furlough days. What is clear is that the fundamental concern is the safety of the campus community.

##### **B. Winthrop’s Financial Status, the Furlough Program, and Academic Master Planning**

Many American universities were struggling with budget woes before the pandemic. Such troubles have intensified since the spring, compounded by declining enrollments. In response, several colleges—public and private, large and small—have cut academic programs, services, and personnel. Just recently, [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#) reported that institutions employed 337,000 fewer people in August than in February, with adjunct faculty and housing and dining staff suffering the greatest layoffs. Some analysts fear that [permanent budget cuts](#) are on the horizon.

When the coronavirus rocked the nation and our state, most understood that furloughs were in Winthrop's immediate future. While faculty members appreciated the tiered structure of [the furlough program](#), and though many were grateful that the program was more progressive than that of [other institutions](#), people were still disappointed that it was not more progressive and that the upper tier started at \$50,000.

Now, people are wondering what these pressures might mean for Winthrop beyond the current academic year. They want to know more about the university's financial wellbeing and if furloughs are on the table for 2021-2022. Additionally, they are concerned that Winthrop might make deep cuts to academic programs, services, and personnel similar to those they have witnessed at other institutions, including [the University of Alaska System](#), [the University of Akron](#), [Bridgewater College](#), [Elmira College](#), [the University of Iowa](#), [Ohio University](#), [Rutgers University](#), and [the University of South Florida](#). Will Winthrop continue to search for [alternatives](#), or will there be austerity?

### **C. Faculty-Board Relations**

The Winthrop faculty continues to express a strong desire for remote participation options for Board of Trustees meetings. Now more than ever faculty members want to listen in on important conversations at the Board level that will shape Winthrop's present and future as the university navigates historic challenges. They also want to help Winthrop meet those challenges. We are now nearly nine months into the pandemic and four months into being a Zoom campus. Providing remote participation via Zoom or Blackboard could go a long way toward building a stronger relationship between the faculty and the Board—a necessary component to shared governance.

### **D. Public Comment at the August 25 and September 25 Board Meetings**

Many faculty members were troubled by the allegations raised during public comment at the August 25 meeting. Those comments are summarized below. They were also alarmed about the treatment of both Ms. Julia Busha, Winthrop Class of 2000, and Dr. Scott H. Huffmon, Professor of Political Science, at the September 25 meeting. The closing remarks to this report present my response to the broad charges against the institution.

#### **August 25**

- Speeches were delivered by U.S. Representative [Ralph Norman](#) (R-SC 5), S.C. State Senator [Wes Climer](#) (R-York 15), former York County Councilmember and Winthrop graduate [Rick Lee](#), [Larry Byrd](#) of [the Oak Initiative](#), [Harris Terry Gaffin](#), Communications Director for the York County Republican Party, and **Dr. Mark Herring**, former Dean of Dacus Library and Professor Emeritus. Each was given about 10 minutes to address the Board.
- Collectively, the speakers criticized Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs **Adrienne McCormick** and offered a forceful defense

of Dr. Herring, whose May column in [Against the Grain](#) (a library science journal) was at the center of the discussion. In "[The Wuhan Wilding](#)," Herring used the phrase "Wuhan Virus" and alluded to the phrase "Kung Flu" in describing COVID-19. The piece was [retracted](#) by the journal's editors after readers, [library professionals](#), and others expressed their strong disapproval of the column, arguing that it was racist and xenophobic.

- In defending Dr. Herring, **Rep. Norman** [said](#), "For (McCormick) to take down the writings of the professor because she disagreed with it, that violates the First Amendment and the board needed to know that." He also remarked that Winthrop needed to be run like a business by those with actual business experience. Norman summed up by arguing that colleges needed to be held accountable for violating the Constitution and, in articulating his position, expressed his support for eliminating tenure. In a subsequent [blog post](#), Norman lamented that "cancel culture" had come to the 5<sup>th</sup> district, writing that the movement "MUST be defeated everywhere it rears its ugly head. In this country, we don't eliminate people or voices we disapprove of; we either engage with our own thoughts and ideas... or simply ignore it."
- Next, **State Senator Climer** said that Dr. McCormick censored and censured Dr. Herring. "This is how you treat children, not scholars." In an interview with [The Herald](#) he further commented, "This institution matters to me and it matters to this community. And when I see it falling into disrepair, as is clearly the case with the mistreatment of Dr. Herring, I feel an obligation to speak up, not to condemn, but to encourage you, as the governing body of this institution, to hold the highest values of the institution." These sentiments were echoed by **Rick Lee**, who stressed that the provost needed to serve the university and not "her own agenda."
- For his part, **Larry Byrd** demanded Winthrop do more to uphold the Constitution, in general, and the Bill of Rights, most especially. He also speculated if Dr. Herring's work with the [College Republicans](#) made him a target as a conservative. "Conservatives and liberals need to be treated equally here at Winthrop." In like fashion, **Harris Terry Gaffin** stated that a "vindictive," "progressive provost" wanted to go after a conservative and did just that.
- Making the group's closing statement, **Dr. Herring** said that the attack against him was "wrongheaded" from the onset. "Ideas have consequences. Bad ideas have victims," he remarked. Dr. Herring wants to see Winthrop establish a Chair of Conservative Studies with a conservative professor in the post. He also wants the position to be financially supported by the university, at least in part. Lastly, Dr. Herring sharply criticized Winthrop's alleged leftward drift and purported embrace of "group grievance," denouncing a June forum for using the terms such as "intersectionality" and "cis-gender."

## September 25

- The first presenter was [Julie Busha](#), [Alpha Delta Pi](#), [Order of Omega](#), Track & Field (Cross Country) Academic All-American, and member of the Winthrop Class of 2000. In the 3 minutes provided to address the Board, Busha asked trustees to reconsider the decision to disband the men's and women's tennis programs. She commented, "A 26-page presentation, one that has been purposefully not shared with you by leadership, outlines a very thorough and detailed restructuring plan that proves financially, by reinstating the tennis programs, along with nearly \$800,000 raised in two months, the sport will be **net positive** for the University for years to come. Aren't you curious to see that plan?" [Emphasis in the original.] Busha spoke on behalf of former student athletes who could not attend because they reside in other states or countries.
- The second speaker was [Dr. Scott Huffmon](#), Professor of Political Science, Director of [the Center for Public Opinion & Policy Research](#), 2004 Outstanding Junior Professor, and 2016 Distinguished Professor. He was also given 3 minutes to address the trustees but was asked to conclude his remarks after going on for roughly 5 minutes. He spoke about the August 25 meeting and the speeches delivered by Rep. Norman, State Sen. Climer, Dr. Herring, and others on academic freedom and freedom of speech at Winthrop. He stated, "...by a plain reading, Herring was not censured and I believe Provost McCormick deserves an apology for the excoriation she received. Second, although I feel an opinion piece shouldn't have been in a scholarly archive in the first place, the piece was erased from existence by the publisher; therefore, removing it from an archive of published material should not be seen as censorship. Additionally, it was not removed because it was 'conservative.' There was nothing inherently conservative about the piece. It was removed because the original publisher deemed it racist, a conclusion backed up by the statements of the Asian / Pacific American Librarians Association and the Chinese American Librarians Association. Third, blanket statements about the entirety of Winthrop being unwelcoming to conservatives are not supported by fact."

## V. Closing Remarks: "That which is right"

I conclude with remarks I delivered to the Faculty Conference on October 2 that spoke to what transpired at both the August 25 and September 25 Board meetings.

Winthrop's critics had their say during public comment at the August 25 Board meeting. In approving a resolution affirming its commitment to academic freedom and freedom of speech, the Board had its say. However, there was no opportunity for rebuttal regarding the broad charges brought against the institution and the faculty representative was not invited to comment during the discussion. Therefore, I will comment here.

Speaking in Selma, Alabama on March 8, 1965, one day after the “Bloody Sunday” assault on civil rights demonstrators, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. argued, “A man dies when he refuses to stand up for that which is **right**. A man dies when he refuses to stand up for **justice**. A man dies when he refuses to take a stand for that which is **true**.” [Emphasis added.] So, what is **right**, **just**, and **true** at Winthrop University? What **matters** here? Although this list is far from comprehensive, here are some things that are right, just, and true at Winthrop:

- **Veritas cum libertate** (“Truth with liberty,” Winthrop’s motto since 1899).
- **Academic freedom**—even before it was affirmed by the Board.
- **Freedom of speech** and other freedoms guaranteed to the people under the Constitution of the United States. Those rights do not expire as students, staff, faculty, or others enter through the north gate.
- A **deep commitment** to student intellectual development, good scholarship in all its forms, and service to the institution, city, state, nation, and world.
- A campus-wide commitment to **diversity and inclusive excellence**.
- The **reputation** of the university in our community and across higher education, as measured by numerous accolades collected over a number of years and now across at least five full-time, acting, or interim presidents.

These things are at the very center of university life. Moreover, people who know Winthrop, who spend time with its students, alumni, staff, and faculty understand these truths to be self-evident. However, more folk need to express them to those who doubt or question our core commitments—no matter who they are or what position they hold.

It was suggested that Winthrop, like other institutions across the nation, is liberally adrift, maybe even hopelessly so. This debate exhibits the widening partisan views on American higher education. An analysis from the [Pew Research Center](#) reveals that 59 percent of Republicans and those who lean Republican believe that “colleges have a negative effect on the country,” up from 37 percent in 2015. During this same period, the attitudes of Democrats and Democratic leaning independents “remained largely stable and overwhelmingly positive.” Relatedly, only 48 percent of Republicans and Republican leaners expressed confidence in college professors, compared to 84 percent of their Democratic counterparts.

Nowadays it is common to hear people claim that professors bully or indoctrinate students—even if we cannot get them to consistently do the reading or attend class. However, data from [a comprehensive study](#) of political attitudes among faculty revealed that the professorate is more centrist than many suppose. Moderates (i.e., “slightly liberal,” “middle of the road,” and “slightly conservative”) accounted for 46 percent of those surveyed, while “extremely liberal” or liberal professors were 44 percent of all respondents. Both moderates and liberals,

though, were much better represented among faculty than conservatives at just 9 percent. However, that might say more about the educational and career choices that people are free to make as individuals than it says about higher education, as [certain professions](#) are more likely to attract conservatives rather than liberals. Examples include the armed services, banking, financial services, and certain medical occupations.

What is more, revealing people's ideological leanings or partisan affiliations is not sufficient proof to demonstrate that they teach or act solely in terms of those leanings. In a review of the scholarly research on this matter, Charlie Tyson and Naomi Oreskes ([2020](#)) found, "Available data do not support claims that university professors are extremely leftist, that a majority of students are being educated by left-wing professors, or that academe is biased against conservatives." They note that actors outside of higher education, many operating in bad faith, have helped create that impression.

[Researchers](#) have also found that exposure to college faculty tends to moderate student views. Instruction in critical thinking and analytical reasoning demands that students weigh evidence and consider multiple perspectives on issues before arriving at conclusions—whatever they might be. Intriguingly, exposure to other students through clubs or organizations does more to move them along the ideological spectrum than their interactions with professors in the classroom. Lastly, [a recent study](#) has shown that higher education even appears to mitigate against authoritarianism. Ergo, professors, while politically liberal, are "on the whole democratically tolerant and are focused more on the business of research and teaching than on trying to change the world."

In sum, the research tells us that American universities are not liberally adrift, even if others want us to believe that is so. I strongly suspect the same is true of Winthrop, though, as a professional social scientist I cannot declare that to be the case without the supporting evidence. However, a lack of rigorous research or sufficient evidence did not stop our critics from making their claims about us.

Just recently, Winthrop earned a great distinction—its [highest ever ranking](#) in [U.S. News & World Report](#). This is an acknowledgment of the hard work that has gone into making Winthrop a fine academic institution "[that blends liberal arts, professional programs, global awareness and civic engagement](#)." Reputations matter. Winthrop's reputation is hard earned and is worth defending. And if you don't know, now you know.

Sincerely,

Adolphus G. Belk, Jr., Ph.D  
Chair, Faculty Conference  
Professor of Political Science and African American Studies  
Winthrop University



## Appendix 2

Winthrop University Faculty Conference  
20 November 2020  
2:00 p.m., Blackboard Collaborate Ultra

### REPORT FROM THE PROVOST

1. **Academic Master Planning**: several interconnected processes are under development:
  - **Program health metrics: model will launch starting next academic year:**
    - Beginning in AY 2021-2022, we will launch annual process to monitor enrollment, economic, and performance metrics for each program;
    - Will result in recommendations to sustain, grow, transform, or eliminate programs, and remain at dean level unless a change plan is warranted;
    - Cannot be implemented for immediate recommendations since we do not track expense or student credit hour (SCH) production at program level, but by department.
  - **College-level budget allocation model: will commence immediately:**
    - Immediate budget allocation decisions will be based on credit hour production as a measure of productivity that takes into account both major SCH production and non-major instructional SCH.
    - Deans will use data from AAAS and Budget vs. Actual expenditure reports to monitor enrollment, economic, and performance metrics for each department and overall college profile.
    - Initial recommendations for areas where we might put growth or transformation plans in place will be based on this initial data analysis at the department and college profile level, with Deans identifying particular program drivers and how they impact college profile health.
2. **Integrating academic planning with budget planning**:
  - Identifying budget reductions that sustain cuts from FY20 and FY21
  - FY22 model forecasts an additional decline of 2% in enrollment and a 10% cut in state allocation. If this forecast overestimate reductions, we will reallocate to support strategic initiatives.
  - Academic Affairs analyzing how to sustain the \$2.9M in reductions made in FY20 and FY21 and identify an additional \$1,272,000 in ongoing cuts for FY 22 and after
  - We must look at everything to identify potential efficiencies and free up capital that will allow us to innovate and come out of the pandemic in a stronger financial position, while preserving both quality and our core values

Fiscal Year	Budget reductions	Area
2019-2020	\$700,000	Vacancy savings (retirements, resignations) + fringe
2020-2021	\$1,239,000	Vacancy savings (retirements, resignations) + fringe
2020-2021	\$989,000	Operating budget reductions
2021-2022	\$1,272,000	Any
Total:	\$4,200,000	Reductions needed to return division to achieve 10.9% cut back to 2017 funding levels

3. **Summer Session revenue share and compensation restructuring proposal:**

- Fall 2019: Extended Education charged with reviewing Summer Session to propose revenue share opportunities to incentivize more course offerings
- Spring 2020: COVID-19 shift to online combined with tuition discount led to increased Summer Session enrollments and revenues; proposal on hiatus
- Fall 2020: Deans asked to resurrect revenue share proposal *and revise and simplify compensation structure*, noting inequity and lack of consistency in application of the current complex salary structure
- Exploring new two-tier compensation structure (to take effect for FY21, if approved):
  - full-time faculty: flat rate with minimum enrollment; slightly higher compensation for sections with 30+ students
  - adjunct faculty: increase in compensation in all colleges as incentive to offer more sections in Summer Session; slightly higher compensation for sections with 30+ students would apply for adjuncts as well
- Exploring limits on number of sections per faculty member in each term
- Exploring net profit revenue share (to take effect FY22, if approved): 70% to institution; 30% to department

4. **Fall 2021 Schedule planning:**

- ALC members and course scheduling staff have begun conversations on how to start building the fall 2021 schedule. With a nod to how expert you have all become at re-building the plane while in flight, I would also like to acknowledge the significant challenge of finding efficiencies while a pandemic continues to rage around us.
- We will roll fall 2021 with pre-COVID assumptions. We hope (fingers crossed) that this is the last time you will have to build a semester with our current process, as the state is soon opening bids on our *new scheduling, calendaring, and room assignment solution*, but in the meantime, I have asked Tim Drueke to work with AAAS staff to get DegreeWorks data to Chairs to inform scheduling decisions
- We also hope (fingers crossed) that COVID social distancing measures will be in our rear-view mirror by August 2021 and a robust vaccination program will be in place. But without assurances, we will have to continue to have contingency plans in place. Deans will share guidance on how to build a robust fall 2021 schedule that meets the needs of our students, while also remaining responsive to whatever national health conditions may dictate at that time.

5. **Winter Term exploratory effort:**

- In response to inquiries about a potential winter term at Winthrop and with the President's support, I have requested Dean Jack DeRochi build a committee of cross-divisional representatives to develop a proposal for Senior Leadership for January 2022.
- A short term in January provides an opportunity to support students in meeting annual degree progression goals, as well as an additional opportunity for faculty compensation and new revenue generation for the institution.

6. **QEP Topic Selection:**

- ***Career Readiness – with emphasis on advising and experiential learning.***
- Next step: compose and charge QEP development team to identify action areas.
- Many thanks to Meg Webber and the QEP topic selection committee for their work in getting us to this point.
- Exciting opportunity to advance collaborations across Academic Affairs and Student Affairs in doing what the QEP is designed to do: enhance quality in a targeted area.
- Alumni in particular strongly supported this topic as an area where Winthrop can improve in preparing students for changes in the current workforce.

7. **Extension on pre-tenure, tenure, and post-tenure review timelines:**

- All faculty subject to pre-tenure, tenure, and post-tenure review will be given a one-year extension on their current pending deadline.
- Details will be shared by the deans via department chairs with deadlines for faculty to choose to opt into post-tenure review (due in January 2021), pre-tenure review (due in February 2021), or tenure review (for cases due in fall 2021).

8. **Pre-tenure review committee membership:**

- Peter Judge (convener): Bettie Parsons Barger (COE), Adolphus Belk (FC Chair), Alice Burmeister (CVPA), Melissa Carsten (CBA), Dwight Dimaculangan (CAS), Jackie McFadden (Dacus), Scott Werts (ex-Faculty Personnel Committee Chair), Ginger Williams (CAS), Adrienne McCormick (ex officio).
- Proposal is to morph the group from its current charge to serve as Ad-hoc Personnel Policies Task Force (coming later in the agenda), keeping any of the current willing members and seeking volunteers to tackle remaining charges from Task Force on Tenure and Promotion, starting with the use of student course evaluations in faculty evaluations, with intent of starting research on and bringing recommendations back to Faculty Conference in April 2021.
- Jo Koster (CAS) and April Mustian (COE) have volunteered. Looking for additional nominations and volunteers.

9. **Advising/Retention Initiatives:**

- The special meeting of Faculty Conference last Friday resulted in a vote to lift all advising flags on Monday, November 16. Communications were sent to all students reinforcing the need for ongoing advising and consultation on course selection.
- Questions came in asking why we lifted the advising flag and not all others. The simple answer is that this is the flag we control in Academic Affairs. Other holds had already been modified in spring 2020, when Student Financial Services reduce student balance amount owed to the university that would trigger a hold barring registration, for example.
- The **Retention Work Group** that Dean Jamie Cooper has formed will continue its holistic efforts to look at all holds that impede student progress. Some are limited by regulations external to the institution. We will continue to study others that we can or should revise based on advice from EAB and data on what will advance student success. We will also look at the impact of this decision on retention to spring 2021.
- **Dean Cooper has also successfully procured a license for the EdSights Chatbot**, a texting tool that will help us increase communication with students, provide evidence-based strategic nudges, and generate analytics on student responsiveness and risk indicators. We hope to roll this tool out in time for use in spring 2021. Maybe even December!

10. **Ombuds Update:**

- **Ombuds website is live!** <https://www.winthrop.edu/ombuds/>
- Winthrop University's faculty/staff Ombuds Jackie Concodora stands ready to support you with any inquiries via remote services.
- Process to find a permanent location for the Ombuds Office is underway.

11. **Capital Projects update:**

- **Chris Johnson has launched a current capital projects website:** <https://www.winthrop.edu/facilitymgmt/projects.aspx>
- Roof replacements in Johnson and Dinkins are on schedule to be complete in December, with interior repairs underway already in Johnson. The last torrential rains produced no leaks in Dinkins, so that is much cause for celebration!
- Oakland/Cherry Road monument signage project and work on McLaurin roof and windows are set to begin in December.

In closing, thank you for all that you do. I know you're exhausted. I know you're going the extra mile for our students every day. Please note the safety guidelines shared by Vice President for Human Resources, Employee Diversity, and Wellness Lisa Cowart. Go the extra mile for yourselves as well. Find time to rejuvenate in the coming week and stay safe as you make decisions about how to give thanks for wherever you are on the personal wellness spectrum in this most eventful of years.

I am thankful to be working with such a talented, resourceful, resilient group of educators and student support staff, and to be serving such a diverse, committed, and inspiring group of students. Their accomplishments in making it through the semester are a testament to your good work and your commitment to their success.

Best of luck as you stay strong and finish this semester in Winthrop style!

Ever Stand,

Adrienne

## Appendix 3

### FCUP Report to Faculty Conference

FCUP has had several meetings with University Executives. Prior to the beginning of the semester the President met with FCUP to inform us on furloughs and discuss how they will be implemented. FCUP did address several issues including the 50K salary for max furlough days. FCUP also championed the effort to allow faculty and staff to take furlough days in accordance with state laws and regulations to be able to recoup some lost salary in unemployment benefits for those who chose to take it.

Since then FCUP has met with the VP of Finance and Business Affairs do have detailed breakdown of Winthrop's budget, the VP of Access and Enrollment Management to discuss student recruiting efforts and the Dean of Graduate School to discuss graduate enrollment and growth.

FCUP also met with President Hynd on October 7<sup>th</sup> and November 11<sup>th</sup> of 2020. Some of the highlights of issues discussed follow.

1. Furlough days and implementation.
2. Communication with the Board of Trustees and the imperative for faculty to be allowed access to both Board of Trustees meetings and subcommittee meetings. FCUP is pushing for more transparency and communication with the Board.
3. FCUP is championing a "red shirt" year for probationary faculty as an option for those who choose it given the stress and extra burden of COVID 19 as well as the extra burden placed on faculty who also have children learning remotely and have family members at higher risk due to COVID.
4. We have had discussion with the President regarding Fall and Spring schedules and have relayed faculty concern over having students leave for Spring Break and then return to campus during a Pandemic.
5. FCUP brought forth evident displaying a much higher increase over time in administrative salaries compared to faculty salaries.
6. FCUP is championing additional revenue opportunities for the university as well as faculty. In particular we are championing a plan to offer a Winter Term, much like a Summer Term, where faculty have the option to teach. This has multiple benefits including additional revenue as well as potential student retention.
7. FCUP is championing an ease of administrative work on faculty including extra time for annual reports, assessment and other administrative actions due to the extra stress and burden of COVID 19. We are also asking in the future we have a wider window that just October to complete mandated training.
8. FCUP is championing retaining summer pay schedule and asking to have a say in any potential changes in future summer pay issues. We have also asked administration to help faculty understand when to expect summer pay and a consistent schedule of summer pay for both traditional summer offerings and Wiley courses offered by Winthrop.
9. FCUP continues to push for consistent policy on Dean and Chair evaluations.
10. FCUP continues for better communication from the Board, Executive Leadership and faculty. We also consistently communicate that faculty morale is low and have discussion on how to improve faculty and campus morale.