

Faculty Conference Minutes
Plowden Auditorium – Richard W. Riley College of Education
March 16, 2001

- I. **Approval of Minutes From the February 16, 2001 Faculty Conference**
A motion to conduct business in the absence of a quorum was made, seconded, and approved. The February 16, 2001 Faculty Conference Minutes were approved as presented.
- II. **Welcome and Introductory Remarks - Dr. Jim Johnston, Faculty Conference Chair**
As the Interim Faculty Conference Chair elected at the February 16, 2001 meeting, Dr. Johnston welcomed the faculty.
- III. **Report from the February 23-25, 2001 Board of Trustees Meetings - Dr. Jim Johnston**
Dr. Johnston reported that the faculty concerns about Winthrop Farm were communicated to the Board. The Board also received the letter from Dr. Bill Rogers, which was incorporated into the Board's minutes. The Board responded favorably to the faculty's concerns. The concerns were also presented to the Rock Hill School District 3 Board when they presented their proposal on using the Farm for a third high school. The Board of Trustees voted not to pursue using the Farm as a high school site. The Board also discussed the 2001-2002 Budget and possible options to cover the \$3.5 million shortfall. Options included raising tuition, increasing enrollment, reconsidering Future Steps, cutting or curtailing travel and equipment purchases, and vacancy savings. Dr. Johnston was pleased with the Board's interests in the faculty's views of the various options. Long-term plans for campus growth and development were also discussed. Discussions included the new Lois Rhame West Health and Physical Education Complex, converting Breazeale to an academic facility, an auditorium for Thurmond, tennis courts, track and field facilities, an amphitheater, and \$12 million in housing renovations. Building related funds are not available to help cover any budget shortages in the Education and General Fund. At the meeting, President DiGiorgio presented his conceptual framework for the future. The framework includes sustaining excellence and innovation. Workshops on the framework will begin in April and faculty are encouraged to participate.
- IV. **Report from the President - Dr. Anthony J. DiGiorgio**
Dr. DiGiorgio presented the budget update. Faculty are referred to the House Ways & Means Committee's web page for more information. Budget cuts for higher education are now at 10.7%. In addition to the budget cuts, Winthrop must also cover any unbudgeted commitments such as insurance premium increases (\$350,000 for health insurance alone) and the University's share of any budgeted salary increases. President DiGiorgio also shared how the University cannot use restricted funds (such as the Housing and Student Activity Funds) to cover shortfalls in the Education and General (E & G) Fund, the University's primary operating fund. E & G funding is provided from state appropriations and student tuition. South Carolina's state budget process is approximately halfway complete. In a week and a half, Mr. J.P. McKee, Vice President for Finance and Business, and Ms. Amanda Maghsoud, Controller, will present a primer on the budgetary process for any interested faculty in Plowden Auditorium. This is the same presentation given to the Board Trustees and the Budget Priorities Committee.
The state lottery has been approved by the House and is now in the Senate. At the present, the lottery improves access to higher education by providing scholarships but does not provide funds directly to the universities and colleges. The Governor is now proposing some technology funds be provided to the technical and four-year institutions.
Options for covering the expected budget shortfall include increasing enrollment. Although enrollment increases revenues, additional costs are also incurred. Because of the additional costs associated with enrollment increases and the ability of Winthrop's infrastructure to absorb the students, the impact of any enrollment increases will be closely monitored. President DiGiorgio still expects the budget shortages to be short-term.
The state budget process includes the bond bill of \$395 million. The bill includes \$7 million for the Peabody replacement, the Lois Rhame West Center. The three-year-old cost estimates for the West Center is \$16.4 million. Actual costs will probably be closer to \$18 million. The Senate has not

yet approved the bond bill. Winthrop is working to add another \$5 million to the bond bill. The additional funds will be used towards a new auditorium for Thurmond, \$750,000 in science equipment, and the West Center.

The Capital Campaign is doing well. Over \$22 million of the \$26 million goal has been raised. The campaign is expected to close on November 9, 2002. A new major gift, \$350,000 will be announced in a few weeks.

Administration is working with the City of Rock Hill to close off two roads. Plans include closing and greening over Myrtle Drive, between Oakland Avenue and Charlotte Street and greening it over. The City is also being asked to close Water Street. Water Street would then be incorporated into the campus loop road system and beautified to help showcase the West Center and the back of campus. The University is also trying to get its zoning changed from single family residence.

Administration received news of additional third party validation of the University's successes. The S.C. Human Affairs Commission gave Winthrop the highest rating among SC's higher education institutions in meeting equal opportunity and affirmative action goals for the fifth straight year.

President DiGiorgio thanked all of the individuals who helped with the SACS reaffirmation visit, especially Dr. Nick Ross, Dr. Sarah Stallings, and Ms. Christie Goodner. The goal is for the visiting team to make zero recommendations, a first in SACS.

- V. Report from the V.P. for Academic Affairs - Dr. Melford Wilson
Dr. Wilson was unavailable.

VI. Committee Reports

A. Faculty Personnel Committee - Dr. Jean Silagyi-Rebovich, Chair

Dr. Silagyi-Rebovich referred the Conference to the sample ballots distributed with the meeting agenda. Faculty have until noon on Monday to vote. A call for nominations from the floor was made for each committee with openings. The Nominating Committee substituted Professor Gale Teaster for Professor Gloria Kelley as the third candidate for Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee. Both individuals are from the Library. As a department chair, Professor Kelley is ineligible for the committee. Official ballots were distributed; votes recorded, collected, and turned over to the Faculty Conference Secretary.

B. Academic Council - Dr. Will Thacker, Chair

The experimental course, The Human Experience II will be developed this summer. Professor Bud Katter is asking for volunteers to help develop the course. Academic Council minutes will soon be available on the web.

C. Faculty Concerns Committee - Dr. Janice Chism, Chair

Dr. Chism updated the Conference on the Committee's February meeting with President DiGiorgio. Another meeting with the President will be held in April. Issues discussed include faculty salaries, increasing enrollment, faculty input on the Farm, the Bookworm, SIS, and family and medical leave for faculty. The average faculty salaries by rank for Winthrop and our SC peer institutions are attached to the meeting's agenda. Assistant professor salaries are the most competitive primarily because of the need to offer competitive salaries in order to attract new hires. The differences in the associate professors' salaries were much higher, reflecting salary compression. President DiGiorgio was encouraged to focus on salary compression. The impact of enrollment increases on physical resources and class sizes during periods of budget cuts was also addressed. Faculty are concerned with how student needs will be met with the same or fewer number of faculty. Class sizes will be limited due to the lack of large classrooms on campus. Administration will continue to monitor the impact of increasing enrollment. President DiGiorgio was asked to establish a committee to keep the administration informed of faculty concerns over the Farm's day-to-day users and activities. Communication facilitation is being worked on. Faculty have been concerned with problems encountered at the Bookworm. A meeting to discuss text related problems will be scheduled with Mr. Frank Ardaiolo, Vice President for Student Life, and Ms. LeeAnn Johnson, the Bookworm's manager. Faculty with Bookworm related problems are asked to share their concerns with Mr. Ardaiolo who oversees the bookstore. The first campus-wide on-line registration went well

except for some problems with the system checking course prerequisites. The Registrar is investigating the problems. The last issue addresses the fact that faculty do accrue medical leave time but not annual leave. Early in their careers, new faculty do not typically accrue a sufficient amount of medical leave time to meet their needs, especially in the case of an emergency. Faculty can donate medical leave time only to a leave pool. However, eligible individuals include only those who have used all of their medical leave and have not started receiving their disability benefits. The donated leave program does not cover maternity leave. Ms. Cheryl Southworth has talked with other SC institutions that have the same problem. Because the SC law prohibits faculty from accruing annual leave, other alternatives are being investigated.

D. Budget Priorities - Professor Gloria Kelley, Chair

The Committee met three times during the academic year. At the last meeting, Mr. J.P. McKee and Ms. Amanda Maghsoud gave their presentation on Winthrop's budget process. The committee discussed budget related issues, including possible actions for coping with the expected budget cuts. In response to the discussion, the Committee has asked the Administration to answer several budget related questions. The Committee is also asking the faculty to communicate their views on the various cost cutting activities. To help faculty understand the process and the issues, two more presentations on the budget process will be offered in Plowden Auditorium on March 28 at 3 pm and on March 29 at 2pm. Faculty are encouraged to attend. If faculty cannot attend either session, Professor Kelley will email the handouts to interested faculty.

E. Other Committees

There were no other committee reports.

VII. Old Business

There was no old business.

VIII. New Business

There was no new business.

IX. Announcements

The chairs of the standing committees are asked to submit their annual reports to the Faculty Conference Chair by April 2. The next Faculty Conference is April 13.

Dr. Jean Silagyi-Rebovich announced that the Office of Assessment has completed the oral communication assessment. Over 250 students (230 are seniors) were videotaped. The next step is to train faculty in assessment and to have the videotapes evaluated. The preliminary report is on the Office of Assessment's web page under Academic Affairs.

Dr. Joe Prus announced that the SC Association of Institutional Research rated the Office of Assessment's web page as the best institutional assessment web page in the state.

Ms. Margaret Williamson announced appreciation for the faculty participation in Winthrop Day on Saturday.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michele C. Henderson
Faculty Conference Secretary