

Faculty Conference Minutes
Recital Hall
February 16, 2001

I. Approval of Minutes From the October 20, 2000 Faculty Conference

A motion to conduct business in the absence of a quorum was made, seconded, and approved. A correction was made to Section V, Academic Council's report in the October 20, 2000 Faculty Conference Minutes. The wording indicating that Math 101 is a Math 140 prerequisite will be removed. The October 20, 2000 Faculty Conference Minutes were approved as amended.

II. Welcome and Introductory Remarks - Dr. Will Thacker, Academic Council Chair

Because of his recent appointment as interim dean for the College of Arts and Sciences, Dr. Tom Moore resigned as Faculty Conference Chair. Dr. Thacker, leading the meeting, welcomed the faculty.

III. Report from the November 3, 2000, Board of Trustees Meetings - Dr. Tom Moore

Dr. Moore reported that the Board approved this year's Future Steps program and made minor changes to the strategic plan. The state institution bonds for the Sims renovation and athletic facilities bonds were issued. The Board also authorized the debt to purchase additional computers. The BS in Environmental Science and the BA in Environmental Studies were approved. The programs are now two steps away from being ready for fall implementation. The Board approved tuition fee increases for the Executive MBA program. In-state and out-of-state tuition increased 8.57% and 9.27%, respectively. The final 2000 - 2001 budget is approximately \$53 million.

Dr. Moore thanked the faculty for allowing him to serve as the faculty's representative to the Board for the past four years. Drs. Jo Tarvers and Michele Henderson were thanked for serving as the Conference's parliamentarian and secretary, respectively.

IV. Report from the President - Dr. Anthony J. DiGiorgio

Dr. DiGiorgio thanked Dr. Moore for his service as Faculty Conference Chair and then discussed budget related issues. Although South Carolina's economy is slowing and has problems caused by annualization, there are not any mid-year budget cuts at this time. Next year's budget is expected to be reduced by an unknown percentage. The E & G budget (Education and General), covering academic and administrative activities, includes state appropriations, tuition revenue, and expenses of which over 90% are salary related. State funding reductions will be through the E & G budget. By law, the E & G budget may not include any federal funds or the auxiliary and fee for service funds (housing, food service, bookstore, athletics, student activities, etc.). Excess G & E funds from earlier years (\$1.2 million) have been used in completing the Sims renovation. In addition to expected state funding decreases in the E & G budget, a \$350,000 increase in the University's health insurance costs, Future Steps, and \$500,000 for the three-year technology plan need to be funded.

Plans for covering anticipated G & E state funding cuts include using non-mission critical vacancy savings, tuition increases, and budget reductions. The House Ways and Means Committee has been asked to help with the proviso which limits tuition increases to the Higher Education Price Index of about 4%. At this time, the relief recommendation is in the form of a tuition increase limitation of \$125 above the index-based increase. If the maximum increase were assessed, Winthrop tuition would increase about 8 to 9 percent. Additional net revenues will be generated with expected enrollment increases. Budget constraints are expected to last one to two years, easing after the state's annualization problems have been resolved. Due to both houses in the General Assembly having Republican majorities, next year's state funding levels should be available to the Board earlier than in the past.

Project funding requested for next year's state bond bill includes Peabody renovations, an auditorium for Thurmond, a down payment for the library renovations or replacement, and \$750,000 for new science equipment. Uncertainty exists over next year's bond bill because some individuals believe that another bond bill may push South Carolina's debt limit.

The Rock Hill community has been discussing possible sites for a new high school, including Winthrop Farm. Dr. DiGiorgio indicated that in order for the University to seriously consider selling part of the Farm, the high school must be in the best long-term interests of Winthrop University in its education role

and no roads may transect the Farm. The Rock Hill School District 3 School Board voted to formally present the concept to the Board of Trustees at their Charleston retreat the following weekend. Questions from the faculty included the portion of the farm being considered and sharing athletic facilities. Several of the plans being circulated in the community require using the land behind the golf course. Sharing athletic facilities has been suggested but no detailed plans have been presented.

VI. Committee Reports (early)

SACS Update - Dr. Sarah Stallings

Dr. Stallings provided an update on SACS. The Self-Study Committee and the Administration thanked all individuals who helped prepare the self-study report. The final copy of the study's first volume is available on the Web, in each academic dean's office, division leaders' offices, department chairs' offices, and the Reserve Desk at Dacus Library. The second volume, addressing each principal committee's concerns and issues, is being revised and completion is expected next week. When completed, copies of the second volume will be placed with the existing copies of the first volume.

The SACS site visit is March 19 through March 22. The faculty need to be available on campus during the visit. To facilitate the conveyance of accurate information, staff will be available in Joynes during the visit. If faculty do not feel that they can answer questions posed by the SACS team, faculty may call the office to determine to whom the team's questions should be referred. Last week, Dr. Frederick Obear, the SACS site visit leader, provided positive feedback when he came to campus to review the accommodations, schedules, and information available to the team. Efforts are being made to find a sufficiently large location for the exit interview to permit faculty attendance. The exit interview will be audio or video taped for the faculty who cannot attend because of space constraints or other commitments.

The remainder of the committee reports will be given after Dr. Wilson's report.

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

Dr. Wilson reported that Dr. Obear was impressed with both the amount and quality of information collected and organized by Dr. Sarah Stallings and Dr. Nick Ross. Both were thanked for doing an excellent job on the self-study.

Because of previous experiences in times of constrained budgets, the University's location in a growth area, and the increasing number of students who want to attend Winthrop, Dr. Wilson expects the budget shortfalls to be short-term. A temporary tuition surcharge will also help alleviate budget shortages. A revenue clarification, South Carolina is the only state without an automatic source of revenue. Higher education does not share in the penny sales tax and is not a proposed recipient of any lottery proceeds. The lottery proceeds will go to parents and students.

In a parting comment, Dr. Wilson reminded the faculty that student evaluations of the faculty are required by the state, CHE, and most accrediting agencies. The anonymous evaluations must be given in every course every semester. The University is audited by the state for compliance with the evaluation requirements.

VI. Committee Reports

Rules Committee - Dr. Paula Mitchell, Chair

The Rules Committee presented two items to the Conference. The Library Faculty Assembly approved several procedural changes to its by-laws. The changes include the number of members and the composition of the tenure and promotion committee and how amendments are approved. One of the changes eliminated Faculty Conference approval of any by-law changes. The Rules Committee checked and approved the changes. The Faculty Conference approved the changes presented by the Rules Committee.

The second issue addresses the rules associated with suspending programs, an issue the Committee was asked to investigate last spring by Academic Counsel. The administrative procedures for suspending a program were not in the Faculty Manual. Academic Counsel's concern was that some individuals associated with suspended programs were not being notified because no mandatory notification procedure existed.

Dr. John Bird, as the then the Rules Committee Chair was responsible for the written and diagrammed representations of a program suspension policy that could be added to the termination section of the Faculty

Manual. The proposal's purpose is to define suspension and was created to be parallel to the existing program terminations policy. The recommendations, submitted to Academic Counsel are included in the three pages distributed with the February 16, 2001 Faculty Conference agenda. The recommended policy and procedures are presented on the first page of the handout. Figure 2 on the second page indicates the existing program termination procedure as documented in the Faculty Manual. The third page modifies Figure 2 so that it includes the program suspension procedures. If approved, the policy and procedures will be added to the 2001-2002 Faculty Manual. The proposal does not require a second.

During the Conference's discussion of the proposal, Dr. Wilson indicated that CHE's program changes override any University policy and procedures. A faculty member asked what type of situation would exist that would result in a program faculty requesting a review. Dr. Mitchell indicated that usually a dean makes review requests, but the option for faculty requests exists. Dr. Bird indicated that according to Figure 2 on the second page of the attached handouts, the basis for the suspension procedures, a review might be initiated from anywhere. An example of a faculty initiated review involved a masters program offered by the Political Science Department when they realized that they could not sustain the program. An observation was made that it is easier to suspend a program than to revive a terminated program. The proposal passed.

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

The Committee is offering two candidates for the Interim Chair of the Faculty Conference. The two candidates are Dr. Marilyn Smith and Dr. Jim Johnson. No nominations were offered from the floor. Both candidates introduced themselves. Ballots were distributed to the faculty and completed ballots collected. Dr. Michele Henderson agreed to take the unused ballots to the Library's Reference Desk, where faculty could cast their ballots until noon on Monday.

General Education Task Force - Professor Marilyn Sarow, Chair

Professor Sarow indicated that Professor Bud Katter is doing an excellent job coordinating the experimental general education courses. Dr. Janice Chism's committee has completed the science competencies to be submitted to Academic Council. The international understanding objectives are presently being developed. The visitors from UNC- Asheville offered numerous comments and suggestions on general education. This summer, "Human Experience II" will be developed.

Academic Council - Dr. Will Thacker, Chair

At the request of the Honors Committee, Professor Katter was asked to add an honors section to the fall offerings of GENED 101X. No second of the motion supported by Academic Counsel is required. The Faculty Conference approved the honors section without any discussion.

Faculty Concerns Committee - Dr. Janice Chism, Chair

Dr. Chism updated the Conference on the Committee's October meeting with President DiGiorgio. The issues include faculty/advisor access to student records, family leave policy for faculty, graduate assistantship stipends, interim chair and dean appointment process, and plans for future growth in student enrollment. Faculty salaries were postponed until the February meeting with Dr. DiGiorgio. Faculty access to non-major students on SIS has been modified. Mrs. Margaret Williamson created faculty access to all student records in the faculty member's major. Department chairs have SIS access to all student records. Consistent with the state not having an annual leave provision for family or medical purposes, Winthrop does not have a related policy. Sheryl Southworth will investigate further the possibility of developing a short-term leave policy for faculty. The administration will look into graduate assistantship stipends. Interim chair and dean appointments now include faculty input. The Committee received an update for student growth. The Committee still has other issues to be addressed in the future. There were no other committee reports.

VII. Old Business

There was not any old business.

VIII. New Business

Winthrop Farm Use - Dr. Bill Rogers

Dr. Bill Rogers from Biology thanked Dr. DiGiorgio for his update on the Farm's status. A letter to the Winthrop Community was distributed to the Conference members. The letter, attached to the minutes, discusses the instructional related uses of the Farm and its importance to the various science programs. Dr. Rogers asks that faculty have an ongoing voice in the Farm's uses and be involved in developing and protecting the Farm. A motion was made instructing the incoming Faculty Conference Chair to communicate the faculty's ongoing interest in the Farm to the Board of Trustees and request faculty representation in matters affecting the Farm. The motion was seconded. Discussion focused on the importance of preserving the Farm. The motion was approved.

There was not any additional new business.

IX. Announcements

Mr. Tim Druke, Registrar, announced that his office would notify students with final exam conflicts. Faculty will also be notified of conflicts associated with students in their classes. Faculty is asked to work with students in resolving exam conflicts. Dr. Jo Tarvers announced that graduate faculty would meet after the Faculty Conference. Dr. Tom Moore announced that he would be attending the Board of Trustee's Charleston retreat to help provided historical perspective. Dr. Mark Herring announced that the next week was the final week for faculty book order, database, and journal subscription requests. Dr. Bill Rogers announced that he would email a copy of the Biology Department's letter to anyone requesting a copy.

X. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Michele C. Henderson
Faculty Conference Secretary