

Winthrop University Faculty Conference
April 2, 2004
2:00 pm
Barnes Recital Hall

At 2:00 p.m., Dr. Marilyn Smith, Chair of Faculty Conference, called the meeting to order. A motion was taken to do business and was approved.

I. Approval of Minutes from March 5, 2004 Faculty Conference

The minutes of the March 5, 2004 Faculty Conference were approved.

II. Welcome

Dr. Smith welcomed the faculty and announced that the Board of Trustees had not met since the February planning retreat and would meet in two weeks; she would bring a report to the next Faculty Conference. She also thanked Dr. Dave Pretty for serving as a substitute for Parliamentarian Dr. Edward Lee for today's meeting.

III. Report from the President

Dr. DiGiorgio did not attend today's Faculty Conference; however, Dr. Smith reminded faculty of the budget updates that he has sent, and stated that he does plan to be at the April 23 meeting.

IV. Report from the Vice President for Academic Affairs

Vice President Tom Moore began by thanking the faculty for the work that they have done on the new Gen Ed program. He stressed that it has been a monumental effort, and he described the fact that we were in a position to take a vote on the new program today as a significant accomplishment. Dr. Moore next noted what will be a change for the next Faculty Conference: he asked that chairs of standing committees be elected prior to the last Faculty Conference meeting. Typically, they have been elected at a meeting immediately following the last Faculty Conference.

Dr. Moore next spoke about an important issue that has been a concern for some time: Summer Compensation for Faculty. He shared that this issue was brought up at the first Academic Leadership Council of the year and has been an issue of Faculty Concerns for some time. He stated that it is clear that institutions depend on summer school to balance budgets. The question then became how do we structure a system to increase compensation but also balance the budget. Through the combined and persistent efforts of the deans, the President, and the Executive officers, a plan has been developed, but Dr. Moore stressed that it shifts how deans and department chairs will have to approve summer school course offerings. Historically, they have not been driven by courses having to provide a particular amount of money for the budget. Now, each course will have to provide a minimum amount toward the total needed to balance the budget. Dr. Moore stressed that this is a fundamentally different way of thinking about things. However, such a shift has made it possible to reach the target compensation rate: as of Summer 2004, compensation will be 7.5 percent of the nine-month salary. Dr. Moore next distributed a handout (which was later emailed to Faculty Conference) detailing the specifics of the plan. He then fielded questions from the audience about potential

implementation issues; the common thread that emerged from the answers was that a spirit of flexibility and cooperation will need to exist as this new program is launched.

V. Committee Reports

Dr. Jo Koster, Chair of Academic Council, reported that it had met on March 26th, and she thanked the library staff for letting the group meet in their facility. Today, she brought forth two items for Faculty Conference approval. The first was a series of changes proposed to the Honors program, changes in part motivated by the fact that over 40% of Winthrop students are eligible to take Honors courses based on the current criteria. The new changes included the following three items: 1) an increase in the GPA requirement from 3.0 to 3.3 to participate in Honors courses, 2) an increase in total number of hours to 23 hours to accommodate changes in service learning, and 3) a change in the way credit hours are distributed in coursework: 15 hours of Honors courses with a minimum of 6 hours in the major and a minimum of 3 hours outside of the major. When Dr. Koster opened this motion up for discussion, one faculty member noted that perhaps we should talk about grade inflation. Another asked about the number of students who participate in the Honors program. Kathy Lyon noted that there is an average of about 20 students per ceremony, but many students will drop in and out of the program. The motion was approved.

Dr. Koster next brought forth the second item for Faculty Conference approval: the revised CVPA programs. She summarized the revision process, noting the discussion at Academic Council about whether these programs went far enough in their revisions. By a 13 to 1 vote with 2 abstentions, Academic Council approved these programs. No discussion followed at Faculty Conference. The motion was approved, with one no vote. Dr. Koster ended her remarks by reminding Faculty Conference that the request for Gen Ed reform had begun in 1997; it was finally completed today.

Dr. Lou Pantuosco, Chair of Faculty Concerns, shared information from the committee's meeting with the President about five key concerns. First, in terms of how we compare to other relative SC institutions in faculty salary, the President noted that we are about third overall, and second in salaries for Assistant and Associate professors, and about 4th for Full professors. The Committee inquired about possible salary increases for this year. The President stated that a 2% proposal from the legislature exists; however, there are no guarantees. The second item dealt with the weather policy and specifically if faculty members are obligated to make up missed hours. The answer is no; there is no state policy that we need to make up those hours. Third, some concerns were raised about how extensively the Athletic Department would be allowed to use the new Lois Rhame West physical fitness center, when it was designed for student use and classroom space. The President stated that the facility would be used for students and classes. Fourth, in terms of the privatization of higher education that has been recently promoted by the Governor's office, the President responded that this no longer seems to be an issue. Also, Winthrop does not really have the endowment to become private. Fifth, some concerns had been raised about the noise pollution on campus. The President agreed that during finals, outside maintenance would not be done. Finally, Dr. Pantuosco reported that four

parking spots outside of Joynes will be designated as Faculty / Staff. He concluded by thanking Dr. Moore for his work on summer school pay.

There were no other committee reports.

VI. Old Business

There was no old business.

VII. New Business

There was no new business.

VIII. Announcements

A faculty member announced that a property would be available for rent, while Annie Laurie-Wheat invited faculty to the school production of Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba*.

X. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Kelly L. Richardson
Faculty Conference Secretary