

**Winthrop University Faculty Conference**  
**November 22, 2002**  
**2:00 pm**  
**Plowden Auditorium**

**I. Approval of minutes from October 4, 2002 Faculty Conference**

Dr. Marilyn Smith, Chair of Faculty Conference, called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m. A quorum was not present at the time, so a vote was taken to proceed with business. The minutes of the October 4 Faculty Conference were approved.

**II. Welcome and report of the Board of Trustees meeting**

Dr. Smith welcomed the faculty and shared her report of the Board of Trustees meeting. She stated that first and foremost, the Board wanted to know about Gen Ed. This was discussed when Mr. Gahagan visited her earlier this semester, informally between meetings on the 8<sup>th</sup>, in the Academic Affairs Committee, and in the Board meeting. The members are very anxious to receive the full program proposal. Dr. DiGiorgio, Dr. Wilson, and Dr. Smith explained the work that has been done so far, especially this summer and fall, the current status, and the progressive implementation that will begin in Fall 2003.

She also reports that four state legislators attended a special session and a working lunch to discuss the state budgets and the needs of higher education.

Dr. Smith next stated that other business included the following:

- Approval of a Masters of Arts in Arts Administration, Bachelor of Arts in Economics, and Bachelor of Science in Middle Level Education
- Ratification of bonds for residence hall improvements
- Approval of the constitution for the Council of Student Leaders
- Amendments to the By-laws to allow a representative from the Council of Student Leaders to be a part of the Board, and not to allow the designees of the Governor and the State Superintendent of Education to hold office.

In her report, Dr. Smith addressed the issues of Gen Ed progress, reasons why Gen Ed has taken a number of years, her impression that faculty were pleased with the merit increases and will be looking at the new statistics and comparative data in the spring, Academic Council's forthcoming suggestions on a revised intellectual property policy, and the status of the VPAA search.

Dr. Smith closed her remarks by sharing some of her general impressions of the Board. Overall, she finds several positive features. She notes the diversity of backgrounds and experiences, which will allow for looking at problems from different perspectives. While some members are new to the Board and knew very little about higher education when they were appointed, they are bright and willing to learn. While some have no higher education experience, they have been on the Board for a while and have learned a lot about higher education, and especially Winthrop. She also noted the experience of

several of the members and closed with the statement that she really “believe[s] they all want to do a good job for the Winthrop University community.” The next meeting will be in February. The Board will expect a report on Gen Ed progress.

### **III. Report from the President**

President DiGiorgio was unable to attend the meeting; however, he had sent his remarks in an email to the faculty.

### **IV. Report from the Vice President for Academic Affairs**

Dr. Wilson next reported on several items. He opened by noting Mass Comm’s success with accreditation. He also shared a few remarks about his visit to the United Arab Emirates before discussing some problems this year with parents who see some of our suggested plans of study as contractual obligations. He has asked the deans to oversee building in options for plans of study.

He next discussed some assumptions that are being made about the state lottery scholarships. He stressed that students need to understand how summer school can help them. A letter will be sent out to parents. A brochure will also be available. He also clarified some things about transfer credit. The requirements for state lottery scholarships say that students need to have 30 hours with a 3.0 average. If they have the 3.0 but not the 30 hours, they can go anywhere. If they have the 30 hours and not the 3.0, they need to enroll in classes at Winthrop. If they lose funding, it is possible for them to get it back. He requested that we notify our advisees and students of this information.

Dr. Wilson next discussed Gen Ed and how the Board assumes this process should be easy; he also discussed suggestions about progressive implementation. Overall, Dr. Wilson thought that we are doing well.

### **V. Committee Reports**

Dr. Ginger Williams, Chair of Academic Council, next reported. She began by noting some Curriculum of Undergraduate Instruction actions that did not require Academic Council action. In regard to Gen Ed, she reported that the Council had approved the recommendations for the Humanities and Arts component, the Social Sciences perspective, and Historical Perspective. Please see the Academic Council minutes posted online at the following address for more information:  
[http://www.winthrop.edu/acad\\_aff/Minutes/ac/AC%20minutes%2011-1-02.pdf](http://www.winthrop.edu/acad_aff/Minutes/ac/AC%20minutes%2011-1-02.pdf).

Dr. Williams also stated that the Council was still reviewing a policy of intellectual property. Jeannie Woods also reminded the faculty that CISM is still a requirement; however, it is not a part of the General Education revision. Dr. Smith stated that Faculty Conference may need a special meeting in February to vote only on Gen Ed.

Dr. Williams next moved attention to three proposals that Faculty Conference needed to vote on. First, the Course Overload Policy was passed with no discussion. Second, the Definition of a Cultural Event was discussed. Many faculty wanted clarification about the definition of “universal appeal.” Dr. Williams stated that the idea behind such

wording was to broaden what could be approved as Cultural Events. After much discussion, the phrase “ of universal appeal” was removed, and the item passed.

The final proposal to be voted on was the proposed Class Attendance Policy. Faculty members had several questions and suggestions. It was ultimately passed in a revised form. After Dr. Smith read the proposal, Kent Foster offered a revision of the second paragraph. His revision would require faculty members to “provide make-up opportunities only for students who are absent with adequate cause. The instructor will be responsible for judging the adequacy or cause for absence and decide if a makeup will be provided. If the instructor denies the adequacy of the cause and opportunity for a makeup, then the student can appeal the denial to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will judge the adequacy of cause, and if found to be adequate, will require the instructor to provide a makeup opportunity.”

In the following discussion of Dr. Foster’s revision suggestion, Dr. Gloria Jones and Dr. Wilson both discussed problems that had developed because such a policy had not been in place. However, one faculty member stated that she felt like the policy is too broad and that it doesn’t provide for things that can be scheduled in advance vs. the last minute. Another faculty member liked Dr. Foster’s policy as it included both student responsibility and faculty autonomy. She suggested adding that “adequate cause” be followed with “such as representing the University.” Another faculty member expressed concern that some coaches wanted students to miss class for extra practices; Dr. Wilson noted that President DiGiorgio had informed a coach who had tried to do this that it was wrong. Another faculty member suggested an appeals process involve a committee instead of a single individual such as the Vice President for Academic Affairs because of some issues he had had. After further discussion of the appeals process and some editing matters, Dr. Foster’s amendment passed in the following form:

“Instructors are obligated to provide make-up opportunities only for students who are absent with adequate cause such as incapacitating illness, death of an immediate family member, or authorized representation of the university. The instructor will be responsible for judging the adequacy of cause for absence. If the instructor denies the adequacy of cause, then the student can appeal the denial to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will judge the adequacy of cause, and if found to be adequate, will require the instructor to provide a makeup opportunity.”

This new version was then discussed further, with Dr. Jones suggesting adding a note about documenting these absences. Dr. Foster suggested that the wording of Academic Council be borrowed about the “students providing documentation.” With this final change, the proposal passed. In its final form, the policy reads:

*Students are expected to attend classes and should understand that they are responsible for the academic consequences of absence. The student is responsible for all requirements of the course regardless of absences.*

*Instructors are obligated to provide makeup opportunities only for students who are absent with adequate cause such as incapacitating illness, death of an immediate family member, or authorized*

*representation of the university. The instructor will be responsible for judging the adequacy of cause for absence. The student is responsible for providing documentation certifying the legitimacy of the absence to his/her instructor in advance of such absences. In health-related or family emergency cases where advance notice is not possible, documentation should be provided to the instructor no later than the date the student returns to class. If the instructor denies the adequacy of cause, then the student can appeal the denial to the Vice President for Academic Affairs, who will judge the adequacy of cause, and if found to be adequate, will require the instructor to provide a make-up opportunity.*

*The instructor may establish the attendance requirements for the course. The following policy will be in effect unless the instructor specifies otherwise: If a student's absences in a course total 25% or more of the class meetings for the course, the student will receive a grade of N, F, or U, whichever is appropriate; if the student's enrollment in the course continues after the date for dropping with an automatic N, and if the student's level of achievement is equivalent to D or better (or S for a course taken on a satisfactory-unsatisfactory basis), the grade of N will be assigned; otherwise the student will receive the grade of F (or U).*

Dr. Alice Burmeister, chair of Faculty Concerns, next reported on several items. The first two concerns are developing into initiatives, and she invited faculty participation in these projects. One was an issue stemming from concerns about Career Services, specifically about the limited number of job recruiters that come to campus. The President proposed that an advisory committee be established with faculty that would meet to discuss strategies to attract more job recruiters. A second concern concerned the increased number of cheating and plagiarism cases. Suggestions about how to deal with this problem include having more campus discussion, adding it as a topic to the CISM sessions, and creating a discussion forum on these issues.

Dr. Burmeister next asked that faculty report any mold or leaking problems in buildings to department heads, so that the problem can be addressed. Recycling at Winthrop also seems to be slowing down; it was recommended that the Recycling Committee be reactivated. Another issue deals with improving campus signage to help visitors locate buildings. The President has established a committee to look at renaming streets on campus. The President also mentioned that they are talking about changing the traffic patterns around campus to make them a one-way pattern.

Also, there are some ongoing concerns that were not brought up at the meeting but that the committee is continuing to work on. These include concerns about part time and summer salaries, graduate student salaries, and nonsalaried compensation perks. She invited feedback on these issues. Finally, she ended on a positive note. There were some concerns about having more "smart classrooms" on campus. An initiative to establish smart classrooms across campus has been started. Technology fees could also be raised.

Dr. Jim Johnston, chair of the VPAA Search Committee, reported that the search had resulted in eighty good applications. References for thirteen are being reviewed currently. The top candidates will be on campus for interviews mid to late January. He asked for faculty members' help in this process by meeting the candidates.

There were no other committee reports.

**VI. Old Business**

There was no old business.

**VII. New Business**

There was no new business.

**VIII. Announcements**

There was an announcement that there would be a Graduate Faculty Assembly immediately following the Faculty Conference meeting.

**IX. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Kelly L. Richardson  
Faculty Conference Secretary