The Faculty Senate met on Tuesday, October 11, 2005, at 5:00 p.m. in Education Center 116.

One change was made to the minutes from the September, 2005 meeting of the Faculty Senate. In the previous minutes, under the Provost’s Report, it was stated that 23,000 CofC students currently hold Life Scholarships. That number should actually be 2300.

Reports

Senior Vice President for Student Affairs—Victor Wilson

Speaker of the Faculty Bob Mignone recognized Senior Vice President for Student Affairs, Victor Wilson, who had asked to speak with the Senate concerning drug and alcohol use on campus. Noting that drug issues have permeated into classrooms, Mr. Wilson reported that he has put together a drug and alcohol task force to deal with some of the problems. He has obtained the support of President Higdon as well as senior staff to put more meat into the College’s drug policies. One of the newly instituted policies is an automatic one-semester suspension for any student caught with illegal drugs. Mr. Wilson asked that faculty members work with the task force by calling appropriate offices when drug or alcohol use by students is suspected. Mr. Mignone then opened the floor to questions.

Janice Wright (at-large, Hispanic Studies) asked Mr. Wilson about problems departments have been having recently scheduling events at the Stern Center. She also wondered why departments were being charged for room use. Mr. Wilson responded that the person previously in charge of reserving rooms in the Stern Center had just left, so the change in personnel might be contributing to some of the problems. He also pointed out that there are indeed some charges associated with departments reserving Stern Center rooms if no student group is co-sponsoring a particular event. He asked faculty to get in touch with him personally if they encounter problems. He also urged faculty members to visit the Student Life web site to find out more about Stern Center policies.

The Speaker then recognized Susan Kattwinkel (Theatre Department), who asked what happens to students who have drug problems and go into rehabilitation. She wondered if we scare students away from the College when they try to return. Mr. Wilson responded that, if students are working toward resolving their drug issues, the College will work with them. Nevertheless, the act of using illegal drugs at the College will not be permitted. Ms. Kattwinkel replied that she had students in the past who went to rehab for a couple of weeks before returning to the College. She doesn’t want such students, who are working toward resolving their drug use, to be sent to their “academic deaths.” Dean of Students Jeri Cabot replied that students who ask for late withdrawals from courses due to drug use/drug rehabilitation are not allowed to return to the College until they’ve documented treatment.
Julie Davis (Communication Department) than asked if faculty members could be involved in the drug and alcohol task force. Mr. Wilson replied that the task force already does have a faculty member, which has been very useful.

**The Speaker**

Speaker of the Faculty Bob Mignone began his report by thanking Susan Morrison, who was standing in as Senate projectionist for George Pothering. He then asked Julia Eichelberger, of the ad-hoc General Education Committee, to give a “pep talk” for the general education forums to be held October 24th and 25th. Ms. Eichelberger reported that the same workshop will be held both days in the hopes that as many faculty as possible will be able to attend one of them. The committee would like faculty input on the issue of general education reform; they hope to achieve consensus so that the committee can move forward with a plan that is acceptable to faculty. Faculty members planning to attend the forum can RSVP to Clara Hodges, letting her know the day they plan to be there. Faculty members are also invited to come to the forums even if they haven’t RSVP’d. Provost Elise Jorgens will moderate the forums, and the committee hopes that all departments will be represented. There will be a reception afterward.

Mr. Mignone then recognized Claire Curtis, of the Faculty Welfare Committee, who reported briefly on the status of the Labor Day Policy, which the Senate had asked the Welfare Committee to consider last semester. Ms. Curtis informed the Senate that the Welfare Committee has not yet finalized a plan because of two main problems—1) lab sciences don’t want to lose another Monday out of the course schedule, and 2) the state mandates only a certain number of holidays. The only possible trade-off for a Labor Day Holiday is Memorial Day, but the committee is concerned about the implications of making such an exchange since it will affect staff more than faculty. Ms. Curtis noted that the Faculty Welfare Committee would bring a proposal to the next Senate meeting after they’ve considered these problems in more detail.

Mr. Mignone then discussed the issue of a catalog designation for service learning courses at the College. The administration had planned to implement such a designation in Spring of 2006, but Mr. Mignone has asked Kay Smith, Associate Vice President for the Academic Experience, not to implement the policy so soon. Mr. Mignone pointed out that this issue came before the Faculty Senate in December of 2003. At that time, the Senate charged the Academic Planning Committee to: 1) look at the issue of a catalog designation for service learning courses, 2) develop standards for determining what courses would qualify as service learning, and 3) determine who the gate keeper for such courses would be. That year, though, the Academic Planning Committee was too involved with the freshman seminar project to address the issue. They passed it to the next year’s committee, and the issue was never dealt with. The administration has agreed to hold off on the designation until the Academic Planning Committee can address the issue. Mr. Mignone expects a report from the committee later in the semester.
New Business

Nominations Committee

The Senate approved adding both John Peters of the Biology Department and Bill Olejniczak of the History Department to the ad-hoc General Education Committee, to replace Allan Strand of the Biology Department, who is taking sabbatical leave. Mr. Mignone reported that the Provost had approved the two-for-one replacement.

Curriculum Committee

The following proposal put forth by the curriculum committee passed without discussion:

1. CRLS 400—Proposal to Change a Course (Change in Credits)

Committee on Graduate Education

The following proposal brought by the Committee on Graduate Education passed without discussion;

1. Master of Education in Languages—Change in admission requirements (a proposal to require letters of recommendation for admission to the program)

Betsy Martin, Chair of the Graduate Education Committee, also pointed out—for information purposes only—that the committee has made new recommendations for acceptable Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores.

Smoking Policy

The Speaker then recognized Claire Curtis, of the Faculty Welfare Committee, who introduced a new smoking policy approved by the committee at the end of last year. The policy implements a Smoking Policy Review Committee and makes recommendations for items the new committee should pursue.

Mark Lazzaro (Biology) asked a question about the item prohibiting the College from accepting funding either “directly or indirectly, from tobacco companies or advertisers, including grant monies.” Mr. Lazzaro argued that the “directly or indirectly” wording is too general. He pointed out, that, with this phrase in place, sister companies of Phillip Morris, for instance, might be prohibited from providing grant money. Ms. Curtis agreed to remove the word “indirectly” from the proposal as a friendly amendment.

Glen Lesses (Philosophy Department) then asked whether this same item about funding had been vetted by the College Attorney. He argued that state legislators might have problems with it. Laura Lindroth, of Counseling and Substance Abuse Services, replied that College Attorney Andy Abrams had looked over the policy.
The Speaker then recognized Hugh Wilder (Philosophy Department) who asked if this smoking proposal was the same one that the Student Government Association (SGA) had approved. Ms. Curtis replied that it was, but that the Welfare Committee had removed the fines the SGA wanted instituted. Hallie Ritzu, the Academic Affairs Committee Chair of the SGA, added that the SGA is aware of the changes made by the Welfare Committee.

Susan Kattwinkel (Theatre) then asked if Greek Life had approved the policy, if they were okay with it. Ms. Curtis replied that the SGA had passed the policy after a contentious meeting which members of Greek Life attended.

Julie Davis (Communication) asked what the new date on the policy would be, since the policy currently states that it will go into effect in the spring semester of 2005. Jeri Cabot replied that the policy would be instituted in fall of 2006.

Calvin Blackwell (Economics and Finance) asked for clarification about how Parts I and II of the proposal related to each other. Ms. Curtis responded that Part I sets up the Smoking Policy Review Committee and its charge. Part II sets out the issues the Welfare Committee recommends that the new Smoking Policy Review Committee address. Mr. Blackwell then asked whether the items in Part II were considered new rules, or merely recommendations. Ms. Curtis replied that, if the Senate passes the proposal, we would only be recommending that the Smoking Policy Review Committee take up the issues outlined in Part II; we would not actually be approving these items.

Hugh Wilder (Philosophy) asked about other indoor spaces that many at the College would like to see become smoke-free as well. Ms. Curtis replied that the Smoking Policy Review Committee could take up other issues as well as the ones recommended in the Smoking Policy.

Betsy Martin (at-large, Chemistry Department) then proposed removing the section on grant money entirely, arguing that someone’s research, even if funded by a tobacco company, might work against smoking. Ms. Curtis replied that she couldn’t speak for the entire committee. She argued that she thought the committee’s intent in the grant money section was to show that the College takes the “smoke free” policy seriously.

At the close of discussion, the Senate endorsed the new Smoking Policy on a voice vote.

**Constituent Concerns**

Hugh Wilder (Philosophy) asked for an update on the status of the new plus/minus grading policy that was discussed at the last Senate meeting. Provost Elise Jorgens reported that Kay Smith is working with the Academic Standards Committee on researching the policy. They have a lot of information to go through, she pointed out. Mr. Mignone added that the committee had been assigned a large task and were actively involved in carrying it out. He hadn’t expected the committee to finish this soon. Terry
Bowers (English Department) then asked when we could expect a proposal. Mr. Mignone replied that a proposal would probably come next semester. Joe Kelly (English) then asked what the date was after which it will be too late to implement the policy next year. Mr. Mignone replied that he doesn’t know. The College will need to inform students about the policy, and the Registrar will need a heads-up. Mr. Mignone said that he would contact the Registrar about required lead-time for implementing the proposal and report back at the next Senate meeting.

The Speaker then recognized Bob Dukes (Physics and Astronomy), who pointed out that the Athletic Banquet at the College has been held on a week night the past several years. Athletes who have evening classes on the night of the banquet must miss them because the banquet is mandatory. Mr. Dukes suggested holding the Athletic Banquet on a Friday or Saturday night instead so that the College will not appear to celebrate athletic success over academic success. Mr. Mignone pledged to pass this concern along to the director of athletics.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:45.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Farrell
Faculty Secretary