MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 29 2005 FACULTY SENATE MEETING

The Faculty Senate met on Tuesday, November 29, 2005, at 5:00 p.m. in Education Center 116.

The minutes from the November 1 Senate meeting were approved.

Reports

Speaker

Speaker of the Faculty Bob Mignone reminded faculty that the new plus/minus grading system will go into effect in fall of 2006. In the faculty newsletter for fall of 2005, Mr. Mignone will discuss how he plans to use the new grading system, and he hopes that all faculty members will begin to consider how they will calibrate grades in the new system as well.

Next, Mr. Mignone announced that he had been thinking a great deal about difficulties in distributing information between the faculty and the administration. To better facilitate such communication, he would like to put together an informal executive council consisting of the Speaker of the Faculty, the Speaker Pro-Tem, the Faculty Secretary, and the Senate Parliamentarian. While not an attempt to institute anything formal, such a group would have regular meetings with the President, the Provost, and Department Chairs. Mr. Mignone asked Senators to convey their thoughts about such a council to him.

Mr. Mignone also asked faculty members to look for a forthcoming e-mail from him about the January MLK Challenge, and he reminded faculty of the meeting to be held with the President and the Provost Friday, December 2 at 9:30 am in Addlestone Library 227 to discuss college identity.

Susan Kattwinkel—Ad-Hoc Committee on the First Year Experience

Susan Kattwinkel, reporting on behalf of the Ad-Hoc Committee on First Year Education (in place of Melanie Kyer who very recently gave birth), announced that the committee has been working with Provost Elise Jorgens and Associate Vice President of the Academic Experience Kay Smith on the logistics of the first-year seminar proposal approved in spirit by the Senate last year. In the spring, the committee will work with the Ad-hoc Committee on General Education to answer remaining questions about the course.

Phil Paradise—Student Government Association

Because Phil Paradise was detained at an SGA Senate meeting, his report was moved later in the meeting.
Old Business

Faculty Welfare Committee—Motion Concerning the Labor Day Holiday

The speaker then introduced Bill Danaher of the Faculty Welfare Committee who submitted the following motion concerning the Labor Day Holiday:

The Faculty Welfare Committee acknowledges that instituting a Labor Day Holiday could be accomplished within the Academic Calendar; however, the staff, for which Labor Day should be recognized, would be adversely affected. Therefore, we recommend that no change be made in the Academic Calendar and that instead, the College of Charleston recognize Labor Day by providing for special academic presentations and events celebrating the contribution of the Labor Movement and working people.

In the discussion that followed, George Hopkins (History), who made the original motion for a Labor Day Holiday, informed the Senate that he had met with the Faculty Welfare Committee and understood that the issue was a complicated one in terms of scheduling. He supports the motion of the committee, but added a friendly amendment (in bold):

The Faculty Welfare Committee acknowledges that instituting a Labor Day Holiday could be accomplished within the Academic Calendar; however, the staff, for which Labor Day should be recognized, would be adversely affected. Therefore, we recommend that no change be made in the Academic Calendar and that instead, the College of Charleston recognize Labor Day by providing for special academic presentations and events celebrating the contribution of the Labor Movement and working people, as is done for MLK Day.

The speaker then recognized Susan Kattwinkel (Theatre) who asked what individual or group would be responsible for making the presentations and events happen. Mr. Danaher replied that the Faculty Welfare Committee hadn’t discussed that specific issue, but had talked about encouraging faculty to discuss Labor Day in their classes.

Julia Eichelberger (At-Large, English) then raised the possibility that Convocation could serve as a Labor Day commemoration, if we had classes on the first Monday of the semester and moved Convocation to Labor Day and didn’t hold classes. Mr. Danaher replied that there would still be a problem in that staff members wouldn’t get the day off.

Glen Lesses (Philosophy) said that he would like to see a fuller explanation of the adverse effect a Labor Day holiday would have on staff, especially since other universities in the state take the holiday and it doesn’t seem to adversely affect their staff. Mr. Danaher replied that other colleges and universities have different schedules; they start sooner, end later, and/or conduct labs differently. Claire Curtis (Political Science) added that a Labor Day holiday would affect staff members adversely because they currently take Labor Day off during the December-January break. Also, Ms. Curtis
pointed out that the University of South Carolina doesn’t take Memorial Day as a holiday. In order to retain the Dec.-Jan. break, staff members would have to give up another holiday. Mr. Hopkins then added that he believed it would make a mockery of the holiday to have it just for faculty and students and not for staff members.

The motion, as amended by Mr. Hopkins, passed on a voice vote.

**Phil Paradise—Student Government Association**

The Speaker then recognized Phil Paradise and Hallie Ritzu, of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Student Government Association, who brought a resolution just passed by the SGA Senate that afternoon. The resolution concerns the new plus/minus grade policy, to be instituted at the College in fall of 2006. Mr. Paradise pointed out that he and his fellow students realize the time to debate the policy itself is over, but the students would like to discuss implementation of the policy with the faculty. The SGA resolution reads as follows:

**A Resolution**

**TO STATE THE OPINION OF THE STUDENT BODY AT-LARGE CONCERNING THE ADDITION OF MINUSES TO THE COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON GRADING POLICY, GIVE VOICE TO THEIR COLLECTIVE CONCERNS, AND SUPPORT THE ADOPTION OF POLICIES AIMED AT HELPING TO EASE THE EFFECT OF THE POLICY’S IMPLEMENTATION ON THE STUDENT BODY.**

**WHEREAS,** the College of Charleston Student Body, through their Student Government Association passed a resolution in 2001 stating their opposition to this policy, circulated several petitions against the policy, and spoke against it in the Faculty Senate; and

**WHEREAS,** while the Student Government Association acknowledges the Faculty Senate’s approval of this policy and its subsequent implementation in Fall 2006; the students of the College of Charleston continue to stand behind their previously held opposition to the changes in the grading policy; and

**WHEREAS,** the implementation of this policy has not been widely addressed and discussed until recently, and students are in large part uninformed and unprepared for the changes associated with it; and

**WHEREAS,** the implementation of this policy will have a profound, and largely negative, impact on the grade point averages of many of the students of this institution; and

**WHEREAS,** student success is a fundamental goal of this institution, faculty and staff, in accordance with President Higdon’s Fourth Century Initiative,
NOW THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED by the College of Charleston Student Senate in regular session assembled the following:

THAT this policy having been approved by the Faculty Senate, the focus should be shifted to educating the students of this policy and the implementation of it; and

THAT the Faculty Senate create a suggested grading scale that professors could use to base their scales off. This would encourage a greater standardization of the grading policy, while respecting the rights of individual faculty members to determine their own grading policy.

THAT during the spring semester of 2006 The College of Charleston should keep dual grades. The Faculty should assign the actual grade and what the grade would be under the new policy and give the student both of these grades during the time set for midterms and at the conclusion of the semester. This will allow both students and faculty to begin adjusting to the new grading scale before it is actually implemented; and

THAT a key should be included on the transcripts of students for not less than the next 5 years stating the date of the scale change and both scales. This measure will allow other academic institutions and potential employers to see this change so that they may take the changes into consideration as they review that student’s transcript; and

THAT the administration should ensure that there are a sufficient amount of ‘bridge’ scholarships to help students who may lose their state supported scholarships because of the change in the grading scale. This would help to offset the negative effect on these students, which, from the beginning, has been one of the major concerns of the administration; and

THAT the Student Government Association and the Faculty Senate should research and consider the implementation of an extension of the period allowed for a withdrawal with the grade of ‘W’ to coincide with the implementation of the changes in grading policy during the fall of 2006; and

THAT the Faculty Senate and Student Government Association research the extension of the withdrawal period from six weeks to nine weeks or from one-third to two-thirds into the semester if the student has a passing grade in the class at the time of withdrawal; and

THAT the Student Government Association and the Faculty Senate research and consider the implementation of academic redemption at this institution; and
THAT this resolution not be seen as endorsement of the policy, but that the Student Senate will work with the faculty and administration to educate the students of the College of Charleston about the changes in the grading scale to help ease the transition for the students.

In the discussion that followed, Reid Wiseman (At-Large, Biology) asked what the SGA planned to do to apprise students of changes in the grading policy. Mr. Paradise replied that the SGA may hold forums to discuss implementation. He added that the students want to work with the faculty to ease the transition to the new grading system.

Susan Kattwinkel (Theatre) then asked Mr. Paradise to clarify exactly what the Senate is being asked to do in response to this resolution. Speaker Bob Mignone replied that the SGA resolution entailed a series of recommendations. Any one of the recommendations could have faculty sponsorship through an appropriate committee. In any case, the resolution will appear in the Faculty Senate minutes, and forums with faculty and students may be held in the spring.

Joe Kelly (At-Large, English) then pointed out that, if a specific committee isn’t charged to do something, then nothing will happen. The proposal that faculty keep dual grades in the spring is a case in point. Mr. Mignone responded that the administration had already planned a pilot program of keeping dual grades in the spring, and that long-term studies on the effects of the new grading system are in the works as well. Provost Jorgens then pointed out that the pilot program in the spring is voluntary, but that the SGA is asking that every faculty member keep dual grades next semester. Mr. Paradise added that it would be good for students to see side-by-side grades next semester, and that keeping dual grades would help professors think about how to assign grades under the new system. Mr. Kelly then asked if we could send the resolution to the Academic Standards Committee right now. Mr. Mignone replied that he would communicate with the Academic Standards Committee about the SGA resolution.

The Speaker next recognized Hugh Wilder (At-Large, Philosophy), who stated that he would like the Senate to take up the students’ invitation to work with them. He argued that we should either take action on the resolution today, or else get a promise that the appropriate committee will take up the issue. Mr. Mignone pointed out that the Speaker doesn’t charge committees, but that he would organize forums between faculty members and the SGA next semester. Mr. Wilder asked if a motion was in order today to remand the resolution to a committee. Parliamentarian George Pothering replied that a one week requirement for notification of a motion coming before the Senate is in the standing rules. The standing rules can be suspended, however, with a 2/3 majority. Julia Eichelberger (At-Large, English) moved to suspend standing rules, and the motion passed.

Hugh Wilder then made the following motion:

The Senate refers the entire SGA resolution to the Academic Standards Committee for its consideration and recommendations for action where appropriate. The Committee will report back to the Senate at its February 28 meeting.
Julia Eichelberger seconded the motion, and the floor was opened to discussion. After some discussion about the workload of the Academic Standards Committee, Reid Wiseman asked Mr. Paradise if the SGA had approached the administration about the issue of bridge scholarships. Provost Jorgens then explained that the Bridge Scholarship Program is designed to track and offer financial assistance to students whose GPA’s fall minimally below the requirement to retain scholarships. The program was in place this year and will be continued next year. Mr. Wiseman asked how many students applied for these scholarships. Provost Jorgens and Associate Dean Cherry responded, pointing out that 117 students were initially identified as being at-risk. These 117 were contacted and invited to apply. Around 10 of these students didn’t return to the college, about half raised their GPA and maintained their original scholarships, and 44 students actually applied for and received the bridge scholarship.

At this point, discussion ended, and Mr. Wilder’s motion passed on a voice vote.

**New Business**

**Curriculum Committee**

The Speaker then recognized David Gleeson, of the Curriculum Committee, who moved the following proposals:

1a) *Proposal to change degree requirements for minor*: Minor in Asian Studies (Addition of two core courses and addition of courses available for electives)

1b) *New course proposal*: ASST105: Value and Tradition in Asian Civilizations (core course)

2a) *Proposal for a new interdisciplinary minor*: Neuroscience from Departments of Biology and Psychology. (Includes addition of 5 new courses and change in existing courses’ requirements)

2b) *New course proposals*:
- BIOL351/PSYC351: Neuroscience I
- BIOL352/PSYC352: Neuroscience II
- BIOL446/PSYC446: Special Topics in Neuroscience
- BIOL447/PSYC447: Seminar in Neuroscience
- BIOL448/PSYC448 F&S Research in Neuroscience

2c) *Proposals to change a course*:
- PSYC386: Psychopharmacology: change in course requisite
3) Proposals to change a course:
- POLS220: Criminal Justice: removal of prerequisite
- COMM380: Studies in communication: variable credit

4) New course proposals:
- LACS106: Introduction to Contemporary Argentina
- ECON340: Public Finance
- MUSC360: Reading Band
- ARTM362/HTMT362: Events Management

Mick Norton (Mathematics) asked about staffing considerations for the new neuroscience courses (proposal 2b). Mr. Gleeson replied that the Curriculum Committee had discussed staffing concerns as well, but that the representatives from the Biology and Psychology Departments had convinced committee members that staff would be available. Grant money for the next five years will help fund the new interdisciplinary minor.

Next, the Speaker recognized Glen Lesses (Philosophy), who raised a question about the new course proposal for LACS 106. The posted material in the course proposal implies that students taking the course will receive both Humanities and Social Sciences credit, which is quite unusual, he pointed out. Jack Parson (Political Science) said that the intention of the course is that students will receive either Humanities or Social Sciences credit, but not both. Mr. Gleeson concurred.

All of the motions brought by the Curriculum Committee passed.

**Committee on Graduate Education, Continuing Education, and Special Programs**

The Speaker recognized Betsy Martin, Chair of the Graduate Education Committee, who introduced the following proposals:

1. Two proposals to change the titles of PUBA 637 and EVSS 637 from Wetlands Protection to WETLANDS POLICY. (Cross-Listed Courses)

2. Two proposals to change catalog descriptions of PUBA 706 and EVSS 601. (Cross-Listed Courses)


All of the proposals passed without discussion.

**Faculty Welfare Committee—Faculty Leave Policy**
The Speaker then recognized Bill Danaher of the Faculty Welfare Committee, who submitted a motion concerning the College’s faculty leave policy. During discussion, Bishop Hunt (At-Large, English) asked whether the motion should be referred to the By-Laws Committee. Mr. Mignone replied that the motion is not about by-laws, but that, if it is approved, it could be referred to the By-Laws Committee for wording.

Deanna Caveny (At-Large, Mathematics) then asked whether the family leave being suggested in the policy was something a faculty member could decide on his or her own, or if the decision is up to the Provost. The wording of the proposal, she argued, is unclear. Scott Peeples (English) pointed out that if the leave consists of 120 days or more, the faculty member may elect to extend the tenure/probationary period. For fewer than 120 days, the faculty member may petition the Provost for such an extension.

Calvin Blackwell (Economics and Finance) then pointed out that the current wording of the proposal is a bit awkward, because it could be taken to imply that a tenure decision could be made more than once. Lisa Thomson Ross (Psychology) responded that what’s at issue in the policy is not the number of times a tenure decision is made, but when the decision is made. Mr. Blackwell then offered a friendly amendment to revise the language for clarity. Deanna Caveny, Bishop Hunt, and Jack Parson also made friendly amendments for the sake of clarity, all of which were accepted by Mr. Danaher on behalf of the committee.

The motion, with four friendly amendments, was approved. The amended motion reads as follows:

**Faculty Welfare Committee—Family Leave Policy**

The Faculty Welfare Committee moves the following as an omnibus motion that the Faculty Senate recommends the following changes to the Faculty & Administration Manual.

1. In the current edition of the Faculty/Administration Manual, delete the following sentence in section IV. J., 4th paragraph concerning Third Year Review, Tenure, and Promotion of Instructional Faculty”

“A tenure decision is made only once.”

and insert in its place

“A tenure decision is made only once. Under normal circumstances, this decision is made no later than the sixth year unless exceptions have been granted in accordance with the College’s FMLA and ADA policies or section. (See section IV.U.7 for a discussion of the effect of leaves of absences on the tenure/promotion schedule.)”
2. In the current edition of the Faculty/Administration Manual, delete the following sentence in section IV. K., 3rd paragraph concerning the promotion of instructors:

“A promotion decision is made only once.”

and insert in its place

A promotion decision is made only once. Under normal circumstances, this decision is made no later than the sixth year unless exceptions have been granted in accordance with the College’s FMLA and ADA policies. (See section IV.U.7 for a discussion of the effect of leaves of absences on the tenure/promotion schedule.)”

3. In the current edition of the Faculty/Administration Manual, delete the following sentence in section IV. L., 5th paragraph concerning Third Year Review, Tenure, and Promotion of Library Faculty:

“A promotion decision is made only once.”

and insert in its place

A promotion decision is made only once. Under normal circumstances, this decision is made no later than the sixth year unless exceptions have been granted in accordance with the College’s FMLA and ADA policies. (See section IV.U.7 for a discussion of the effect of leaves of absences on the tenure/promotion schedule.)”

4. Insert the following as section IV.U.7:

A faculty member who uses 120 days or more of paid and/or unpaid disability, family, or other college sanctioned leave during any consecutive two-year period may elect to extend the tenure/probationary period by one year. Examples of such leave would include extended absence or disability due to illness, injury, acute family responsibilities, or military service. Unforeseen circumstances in the completion of a terminal degree, such as the death of a doctoral advisor, would also qualify.

A faculty member who adds a child to his or her family by either birth or adoption may elect to extend the tenure/probationary period by one year. This option must be exercised by notifying his or her chair in writing within 90 days of the birth or adoption of the child, but no later than the Monday following the spring commencement prior to the academic year in which the tenure decision is to be made. If this option is exercised in the first two years of the appointment, the third year review shall be postponed one year.
A faculty member who has used less than 120 days of paid and/or unpaid disability, family, or other college sanctioned leave during any consecutive two-year period but who has, nonetheless taken a significant amount of such leave prior to consideration for an award of tenure or promotion, or who has experienced circumstances which, at the faculty member’s election, could have resulted in a significant period of such leave, may petition the Provost for an extension of the probationary period. Such petition must be made no later than the Monday following the spring commencement prior to the academic year in which the tenure decision is to be made. The decision to grant such an extension of the probationary period shall be made by the Provost, after consulting with the faculty member’s dean and department chair.

If at all possible, the decision to delay tenure or promotion should be arranged with the Provost prior to the commencement of leave.

If such elections as described above are made or if the Provost grants the petition, the faculty member thereby waives the provisions of the Faculty/Administration Manual requiring that a decision regarding the award of tenure be made within six years. Any such extensions shall not supercede the termination for cause at any point in the probationary period as outlined in the Faculty and Administration Manual.

No faculty member may elect to exercise this option more than twice.

**Claire Curtis—Motion Concerning College Identity**

The Speaker next recognized Claire Curtis (Political Science), who made the following motion:

The faculty senate shall convene a campus-wide conversation on the identity of the College of Charleston as a liberal arts and sciences institution. This event shall be open to all members of the College community, and it shall be organized and led by a committee of faculty chosen by the Speaker of the Faculty after a call for volunteers from the entire faculty. We shall extend an invitation to the Provost and the President to come and share in this deliberative process. This conversation shall take place no later than the week of January 16.

**Rationale:**

Discussions within departments, among colleagues and on Open Discussion clearly reveal both a great deal of concern about the "identity" issue and a lack of transparency about what the faculty and the administration think. Our sponsoring such an event will give faculty a chance to share their thoughts with one another and with the administration about this important issue.
After Julia Eichelberger (At-Large, English) seconded the motion, the floor was opened to discussion. Betsy Martin (Chemistry) spoke in support of the motion, arguing that she had served on many, many committees in which the College as a liberal arts and sciences institution has been a theme. Thus, the motion seems appropriate.

Reid Wiseman (At-Large, Biology) then asked if the Provost had yet written a white paper about the College’s identity. Provost Jorgens replied that she has not, but that she wants to put the issue in front of the faculty and will do so at the meeting on Friday, December 2. She apologized for the awkward time, and expressed her willingness to repeat the meeting at another time. Ms. Jorgens added that she wants to make sure any faculty decision about College identity is well-informed.

Lisa Thomson Ross (Psychology) then asked whether the advertisement for a new Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences had gone out. The Provost said it had, in somewhat changed form. Ms. Curtis, who had the text of the advertisement with her, read portions of it to the assembled Senators.

Ms. Curtis then requested that Provost Jorgens publicly post her comments on the web after the December 2 meeting. Ms. Jorgens agreed to do so, cautioning that her remarks would be in the form of notes.

Finally, Reed Wiseman closed the discussion by informing Senators that he’d written to newspaper language columnist James Kilpatrick about the use of the word “eminent” versus “pre-eminent” in the descriptions of itself used by the College. Mr. Wiseman promised to report back with any updates.

Ms. Curtis’s motion passed on a voice vote.

**Constituent Concerns**

The Speaker recognized George Hopkins (History), who expressed concern that members of the College custodial staff "had been called to a meeting in which they were informed that the College was looking into contracting out their work and that some of them might be fired." Mr. Hopkins wondered whether a plan to privatize our custodial employees, many of whom are African American and have worked here for many years, exists, and if it does, whether this violates our core value of community. There was no response to the question.

**Good of the Order**

Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Lynn Cherry, requested all faculty members to consider participating in fall commencement exercises.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:20.

Respectfully submitted,