Minutes of the September 12, 2006 Faculty Senate Meeting

The Faculty Senate met on Tuesday, September 12, 2006, at 5:00 p.m. in Beatty Center 115.

The minutes from the April 11 and April 25, 2006 Senate meetings were approved.

George Pothering (At-Large, Computer Science) nominated Susan Kattwinkel to be Speaker of the Faculty Pro-Tem. Ms. Kattwinkel was elected in a voice vote.

Reports

Provost

Provost Elise Jorgens welcomed faculty members back to the College and said that the semester was off to a great start. She announced that the College hired 61 new faculty members this year, and that we are currently recruiting 43 new faculty members for next year. This number might increase a bit as the year goes on. Ms. Jorgens encouraged all faculty to be involved in recruiting and said that she was very pleased with the excellent faculty members the College has been able to hire recently.

Next, Provost Jorgens noted that enrollments have been strong at the College this year. Though incoming students are a bit below the projected number, this is not a problem; the College is staying where it wants to be with enrollment figures. The big unknown this semester was the new drop-for-non-payment policy. But Ms. Jorgens said that this process has gone extremely smoothly. We only have about 60 students currently who have still not paid, and most of these have indicated they are transferring. These numbers are quite normal for this time of year. Ms. Jorgens thanked faculty members for helping this new policy run so smoothly.

Ms. Jorgens briefly mentioned the revisions to the Faculty/Administration Manual that have been taking place. She complimented Brian McGee, Chair of the Faculty By-Laws Committee, for his hard work. The first round of changes to the manual mostly involved adding updates that had already been approved but never made their way into the manual. She noted that the process of revision is ongoing, and the eventual goal of this process is to make the manual more accurate and more accessible.

Finally, Ms. Jorgens reiterated the announcement she made at the Fall Faculty Meeting—that she plans to meet with each academic department this semester. She asked departments to call the Academic Affairs office to schedule these meetings if they haven’t done so already. In addition, Ms. Jorgens will hold twice-monthly coffee drop-ins at the Faculty House, beginning in October. These will be sessions that allow faculty members to bring their concerns to the Provost; the agenda for the meetings will be entirely determined by faculty. We should soon receive a schedule listing when these coffee drop-ins will take place.
Speaker

Speaker of the Faculty Bob Mignone began his report by thanking Senate Parliamentarian George Pothering, Faculty Secretary Susan Farrell, and Faculty Speaker Pro-Tem Susan Kattwinkel for their service. He noted that the presidential search is going well. He expects candidates to be on campus in mid-October, and he encouraged faculty members to be involved in the interview process.

Mr. Mignone also noted that, at a recent Senior Staff meeting, he was given a new pet policy that the administration plans to institute at the College. Mr. Mignone read the following announcement about pets to the faculty:

The College of Charleston recognizes the important role pets play in the lives of our employees and students. However, the College is committed to protect the safety and ensure the comfort of its employees, students, and visitors on campus. While many pets are well-behaved, many people suffer animal-related fears, which could interfere with an employee’s work experience or a student’s academic experience should pets be permitted inside campus facilities. Additionally, pets could pose a threat to the health and safety of employees, students, and visitors, as well as to a healthful environment (through allergies, excessive noise, animal bites, and disease transmission via fleas, ticks, parasites, viruses, bacteria, etc.).

The College would like to remind its employees and students that pets/animals of any kind are not and have never been permitted inside any of its campus facilities. With that being said, the College has established a formal policy to provide for the health and safety of its employees, students, and visitors; for the protection, efficient use, and enjoyment of the College's property; and for the responsible management and operation of the College.

Service animals (i.e., guide dogs) are exempt from this policy.

Mr. Mignone added that he has passed the new pet policy onto the Faculty Welfare Committee, who will decide how to act upon it. Any faculty member may send their comments about the policy to the Welfare Committee.

Mr. Mignone concluded his report by announcing that he has asked the Academic Planning Committee to explore the issue of on-line delivery of academic courses. A course can currently be approved by the Curriculum Committee (or the Graduate Education Committee) and the Senate without its delivery method ever being discussed. Mr. Mignone believes this is an issue we have not yet looked at closely, but that faculty members should have a say in.

Ropert Cape
Mr. Mignone then introduced Robert Cape, the College’s new Vice President for Technology and Chief Information Officer. Mr. Cape noted that his position is a brand-new one at the College and that he serves as a member of the President’s Senior Staff. He believes this position signals the emerging importance of Information Technology at the College. His own work experience has taken place in university settings and he is pleased to create a new Information Technology division at the College, which will be made up of the former Academic Computing and ACTS (Administrative Computing and Telecommunications Services) units. This new IT division will involve a complete restructuring and will be made up of five major groups:

1) teaching and learning technology group (former academic liaisons)
2) systems and servers group
3) administrative computing group
4) networking group
5) service group (former helpdesk and labs and classroom support)

One of the early efforts of this new division will be to create an inventory of services—who does what, how to obtain services, etc. Another early effort will be to look at software the College supports. Mr. Cape wants to create a small governance group to recommend what software to support and what not to support. This group will solicit faculty input.

Next, Mr. Cape discussed the BATTERY (best administrative technology that ever rocked you) project. Formerly known as the Swampfox Project, this is a multi-year, multi-million dollar project to replace all administrative application systems currently in place at the College, including SIS, HR, finances, payroll, etc. The new IT division will look at all the ways the College conducts its business and will be choosing an application suite from one vendor that will replace our old systems. The benefits of such an overhaul will be a highly integrated data base system that contains more up-to-date and better quality information. One of the compelling reasons we must conduct this overhaul is because some of our current administrative applications are so dated that a vendor is discontinuing support of them in 2011. The BATTERY team includes members from all across campus. Faculty can send their input on the BATTERY project to Academic Affairs, which has four of its staff members on the team. In addition, the IT division will be conducting multiple forums to answer questions and accept input concerning the project.

Finally, Mr. Cape reported that he hopes, within a matter of weeks, to tell us about a major overhaul of the college web pages. The revised site will provide tools and content management capability that will be useful to faculty members.

**Brian McGee**

The Speaker then introduced Brian McGee, Chair of the Faculty By-Laws Committee, who reported briefly on the work his committee is doing to update the Faculty/Administration Manual (FAM). The full text of Mr. McGee’s report can be
found in Appendix I of these minutes.

When Mr. McGee finished his report, Mick Norton (Mathematics) asked where the procedures for post-tenure review can be found. Mr. McGee replied that these are not currently in the FAM, but are located on the Academic Affairs website, under “Policies and Procedures.” Both Mr. McGee and the Provost assured Mr. Norton that the procedures for post-tenure review will go into the FAM during the revision process.

New Business

Committee on Academic Standards—Proposal to Increase Language Requirements for Entering Students

Larry Krasnoff, Chair of this year’s Academic Standards Committee, introduced a proposal to increase the language requirements for entering students at the College. This proposal was actually approved by last year’s committee, but not in time for Senate consideration. The proposal reads as follows:

The Office of Admissions recommends a change to our freshmen admissions standards requiring entering students to have completed 3 years of foreign language in high school. College of Charleston currently conforms to the SC Commission on Higher Education requirement that all South Carolina students entering a 4-year, public college or University must complete a minimum of 2 years. However, CHE provides institutions with the flexibility for setting higher standards. Clemson and USC require 3 years and our Office of Admissions and Honors College believe it to be in our best interest to also require 3 years since the College of Charleston has the higher language requirement for graduation. No only does this send the appropriate message back to the high schools, it also might lessen the current pressures on our language sections as well as improve retention. This change has received overwhelming endorsement from the Academic Deans Council. FCAS supports this proposal and recommends implementation starting in Fall 2008.

In the discussion that followed, Paul Young (Mathematics) asked what percentage of our prospective applicants have 2 years of a foreign language, but not 3. Don Burkard of Academic Affairs replied that 85.7% of our current entering freshmen have at least 3 years of a foreign language.

Discussion ended, and the proposal passed on a voice vote.

Ad-Hoc General Education Committee—New Name for General Education

Julia Eichelberger, Chair of the Ad-Hoc Committee on General Education, next introduced two motions on behalf of her committee. The first asked that the Senate endorse a new name for our future general education requirements. The motion and its accompanying rationale read as follows:
Motion: We move that the term “General Education” be replaced. The new name for the requirements for earning a Bachelor’s degree at the College of Charleston shall become “The College of Charleston Commons.” This new name will not be used for the existing General Education requirements, but will designate a revised version of these requirements, if such changes are approved by the faculty.

Rationale: “General Education” is an unsatisfactory designation for our required curriculum, since it does not suggest the rigor of college-level work. In addition, the Committee believes the curriculum’s name should suggest something about the purpose of these requirements and the distinctiveness of the College of Charleston. We thought the historic and contemporary connotations of “Commons” expressed our goals for the new General Education curriculum. This name, which suggests a shared space or endeavor, also sounds a bit archaic, which seems to suit an institution that boasts of being centuries old. We believe “Commons” suggests the shared experience that students at the College undergo and the kinds of learning that we provide to every student, regardless of major. A commons is also an open area where people may move about freely, which is another feature we would like students to associate with their education here. Despite the fact that there are a good many requirements for our degree, we want students to exercise as much choice as possible in fulfilling them. In addition to these reasons for the name, we like the way it seems to invoke one of our institutional icons, Randolph Hall, which has a semi-pastoral green space that all students enter when they arrive (at Convocation) and depart from at May Commencement.

Mr. Mignone then opened the floor for discussion. Reid Wiseman (At-Large, Biology) said that he thought “The Commons” was a beautiful metaphor for what we’re all about at the College. Richard Nunan (Philosophy), however, said he wasn’t “crazy about” the name, pointing out that, because of its other connotations, the term “The Commons” might be confusing to students. Mr. Nunan argued that the proposed name does not make the rationale of the general education curriculum clear. Ms. Eichelberger responded that she expects other things the Ad-Hoc Committee will propose will help make the rationale for the curriculum clear to students. The name alone isn’t designed to do that.

David Kowal (Art History) said that he appreciates the name, but that the first thing that comes to mind when he hears “The Commons” is “lowest common denominator.” Mike Skinner (Foundations, Secondary, and Special Education) spoke up next, agreeing with Mr. Nunan and Mr. Kowal in criticizing the proposed name. Mr. Skinner said that “The Commons” sounds awkward to him. While he understands the rationale, he believes we could come up with a better name. Jack Parson (Political Science) said he understood the point that was being made by the last few speakers, but he wondered if anyone had thought of anything better than “The Commons.” He argued that nothing is worse than the name “Gen Ed,” and added that “The Commons” was the best alternative he’d heard so far. Mr. Skinner replied that he didn’t have a better name in mind, but argued that that was still no reason to vote for this one. Mr. Nunan then suggested we consider a more
“prosaic” name, such as “curriculum distribution requirements.” Ms. Eichelberger replied that she didn’t think such a name would resonate any better with students than “The Commons.”

Meg Cormack (Religious Studies) also argued against “The Commons,” pointing out that students will be researching schools on the internet before they make decisions about where to go. Ms. Cormack believes that we shouldn’t use a term that is so different from terms used at other colleges or we might confuse students. Liz Jurisich (Mathematics) agreed, arguing that “The Commons” implies a set of common courses, which we don’t actually have at the College. We have a distribution requirement, not a common curriculum, she said. Ms. Eichelberger replied that the reason the Ad-Hoc Committee settled on “The Commons” is that this term dramatizes the notion of students entering the College, lingering here, standing on a commons, beings in proximity to other people, but not doing exactly the same thing. This metaphor may be too subtle for students, but she likes to think they’re capable of understanding it.

Jack Parson then asked what other names the Committee had considered and rejected. Ms. Eichelberger mentioned several possibilities: “Charleston Curriculum,” “Charleston Core,” and “College of Charleston Curriculum of Courses” (which could be shortened to the CofC CofC). Mr. Skinner said that he has a daughter currently applying to the College, among other places. The names they’ve encountered so far have been functional and explanatory. He suggested that maybe the Gen Ed Curriculum should be revised first, and a new name decided later.

Next, Idee Winfield (Sociology/Anthropology) asked if the name “Foundations” had been considered. Ms. Eichelberger replied that it had, but that the Ad-Hoc Committee did not like the implication that general education comes first, and doesn’t last all the way through a student’s college career.

Hugh Wilder (Philosophy) said that if the name “The Commons” is voted down, he hopes the Ad-Hoc Committee will return to the task of choosing a different name than “Gen Ed.” He likes the idea of a name that distinguishes the CofC curriculum, and he pointed out that such names are increasingly common across the country. Mr. Wilder added that he likes the effort of the Ad-Hoc Committee to find such a name, he likes the name “The Commons,” and he hopes the Ad-Hoc Committee will not simply accept a generic name if “The Commons” is voted down.

Finally, Reid Wiseman said he thought that the University of South Carolina has a general education track, a four-year program that students can choose to take. He argued that CofC students might find the term “Gen Ed” pejorative if it reminds them of something at USC.

Discussion then came to an end. The proposal to replace the name “General Education” with “The Commons” was defeated upon a show of hands.

**Ad-Hoc General Education Committee—Statement of Purpose for General**
Ms. Eichelberger then introduced a second motion on behalf of the Ad-Hoc General Education Committee. She asked that the Senate endorse a slightly modified Statement of Purpose for General Education from the version passed by the Senate in January, 2006. (The January 2006 version, along with the committee’s proposed revision, both appear in Appendix II of these minutes).

Jack Parson (Political Science) opened the discussion by proposing two friendly amendments to slightly change the language of the two items appearing under Goal #4 of the Statement. He wished to change the first item (“International and global perspectives”), which he thought awkwardly repeated the language of the goal itself, to “Knowledge of international and global contexts.” He also suggested adding the word “using” to the second item under Goal #4, so that the item would read “Experiencing, understanding, and using multiple cultural perspectives.” After a brief discussion led by Scott Peeples and Doryjane Birrer, both of the English Department, as to whether one could use a perspective, both amendments were accepted as friendly.

Next, Jack Parson suggested changing the word “communal” in the third item under Goal #5 (“Moral and ethical responsibility; communal and global citizenship”) to “community.” After some discussion by Mr. Parson, Annette Godow (PEHD) and George Hopkins (History) about the connotations of the terms “communal” versus “community,” the amendment was accepted by Ms. Eichelberger as a friendly one.

The motion, as amended, passed on a voice vote. The new Statement of Purpose for General Education, as passed by the Senate, reads as follows:

**Statement of Purpose for the Common Requirements of the College of Charleston’s Undergraduate Curriculum**

Graduates of the College of Charleston complete a challenging course of study that will prepare them to function intelligently, responsibly, creatively, and compassionately in a multifaceted, interconnected world. While their work in the major of their choice will give students specialized knowledge and skills in that discipline or profession, the College’s core curriculum will equip each student, regardless of major, with crucial intellectual skills in analysis, research, and communication. Their coursework in the liberal arts and sciences will offer students a broad perspective on the natural world and the human condition, and will encourage them to examine their own lives and make useful contributions to their own time and place. Over the course of their undergraduate careers, all College of Charleston students will develop the following intellectual skills, areas of knowledge, and dispositions:

1. **Research and Communication in Multiple Media and Languages**, including proficiency in
   - Gathering and using information
   - Effective writing and critical reading;
   - Oral and visual communication
   - Foreign language
II. Analytical and Critical Reasoning, including
   Mathematical and scientific reasoning and analysis
   Social and cultural analysis
   Interdisciplinary analysis and creative problem-solving

III. Historical, Cultural, and Intellectual Perspectives, including knowledge of
   Human history and the natural world
   Artistic, cultural, and intellectual achievements
   Human behavior and social interaction
   Perspectives and contributions of academic disciplines

IV. International and Intercultural Perspectives, gained by
   Knowledge of international and global contexts
   Experiencing, understanding, and using multiple cultural perspectives

V. Personal and Ethical Perspectives, including experiences that promote
   Self-understanding, curiosity and creativity
   Personal, academic, and professional integrity
   Moral and ethical responsibility; community and global citizenship

VI. Advanced Knowledge and Skills in Major Area of Study, consisting of
   Skills and knowledge of the discipline
   Sequence of coursework that fosters intellectual growth
   Coursework that extends and builds upon knowledge and skills gained from the core curriculum
   The ability to transfer the skills and knowledge of the major into another setting

Constituent Concerns

The Speaker recognized Darryl Phillips (Classics) who read a statement expressing his concern about faculty workload and the system of using target numbers to assign workload. He fears that departments will raise enrollments in classes while reducing actual faculty/student contact hours, thus changing the nature of the College. Such a practice, he argued, has already begun to occur. (The complete text of Mr. Phillips’ statement appears in Appendix III of these minutes.) While the Provost said she was not prepared to give a full report on workload at the present time, since she didn’t know this issue was going to come up, she did say that workload policies would be addressed in the revision of the Faculty/Administration Manual. She is concerned about addressing this issue in a way that might bring adverse publicity to the College. Joy Vandervort-Cobb (Theatre) then asked whether a workload policy change would come before the Senate. The Provost replied that it would, and that any policy change would have to become before the Board of Trustees as well. Mr Phillips then noted that he believed the time for talking about a policy had already passed us by. We should have had a policy in place before we started making changes in practice. David Kowal (Art History) ended the discussion by noting that his department has been teaching 6 contact hours with large enrollments this semester not as a matter of policy, but as a matter of practicality, because of limited space.
Next, Reid Wiseman (Biology) asked that the college ombudsman be invited to address the Senate at its next meeting so that faculty members can gain a better understanding of what she does. Mr. Mignone replied that he would ask the ombudsman to speak to the Senate at our October meeting.

Jack Parson (Political Science) voiced concern about the overly large furniture and subsequent crowded condition of Maybank Hall classrooms. The Provost replied to Mr. Parson, assuring him that 6-8 desks would be removed from each classroom.

Finally, George Hopkins (History) asked that the Speaker invite someone from the administration to speak to the Senate about whether or not the College has a corporate responsibility policy. The Speaker agreed to do so.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:25.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Farrell
Faculty Secretary
Appendix I.

Report to the Faculty Senate
Committee on the By-Laws and the Faculty/Administration Manual
College of Charleston
September 12, 2006

Faculty Members: Brian McGee (Committee Chair), William Barfield (Senator), Doryjane Birrer (Senator)

Committee Duties: “To review on a continuing basis the Faculty By-Laws and the Faculty/Administration Manual; to propose changes for the improvement of the documents and to forward the recommended changes to the administration and/or the Faculty Senate as appropriate; to incorporate any revisions to or interpretations of either document in new editions of the documents” (Faculty By-Laws, Art. V, Sect. 2.B.3(b)).

In consultation with Provost Jorgens, Speaker Mignone, and Faculty Senate Secretary Farrell, the committee’s ex-officio members, the committee has addressed or will be addressing the following issues during the current academic year:

Editorial Review and Correction of the By-Laws and the Faculty/Administration Manual. With the support of Provost Jorgens, a professional editor was engaged to address problems with the electronic file containing the By-Laws and the Faculty/Administration Manual and to correct obvious editorial mistakes in the administrative portions of the Faculty/Administration Manual (e.g., repeated words and prepositional phrases). This editorial work included the insertion of the reaffirmed mission statement for the College of Charleston, recognition that the institution now has six schools, the inclusion of the appendices whenever possible, and an updated version of the institution’s harassment policy. This updated version of the Faculty/Administration Manual is now posted on the Web site of the Office of Academic Affairs. While we are aware of three minor errors in the text of this version of the Faculty/Administration Manual, this version of the Manual will be used for our upcoming SACS review.

Continuing Editorial Review. The professional editor has made 108 suggestions for editorial changes in the Faculty/Administration Manual, which would require administrative approval or amendment of the Faculty By-Laws. None of these changes would adjust the content of these documents in a meaningful way. Our committee will consider these suggestions and make recommendations as appropriate.

Past Amendments to the By-Laws. In consultation with Speaker Mignone, Secretary Farrell, the Committee on Nominations and Elections, and the Office of Academic Affairs, our committee is attempting to determine if and when amendments to the By-Laws have been approved and ratified but have not yet been incorporated in the By-Laws.
Future Amendment Possibilities. Several faculty colleagues and administrators have suggested possibilities for amending the By-Laws. Our committee will study and make reports to the Faculty Senate concerning such recommendations (or motions to amend the By-Laws, if applicable).

Recommendations for Future Administrative Changes to the Manual. Several faculty colleagues and administrators have suggested possibilities for changing the administrative portions of the Manual. Our committee will study and make reports to the administration and to the Faculty Senate concerning such recommendations.

Changes in By-Laws and Manual Format. Several institutions have moved to a searchable, Web-based version of their policy documents like the Faculty/Administration Manual. Our committee will discuss such possibilities with the Office of Academic Affairs for future versions of the Manual and will report on this issue to the Faculty Senate.

Note: Provost Jorgens has asked that the committee work with Vice President Powers as the Provost’s representative to the committee. We thank Vice President Powers for her diligence and support in the work of the committee to date.
Appendix II. Ad-Hoc Committee on General Education—Statement of Purpose

STATEMENT AS APPROVED IN JANUARY 2006 (with proposed changes marked)

Statement of Purpose for the Common Requirements of the College of Charleston’s Undergraduate Curriculum

All graduates of the College of Charleston complete a challenging sequence of coursework and experiences that will prepare them to function intelligently, responsibly, creatively, and compassionately in a multifaceted, interconnected world. While their work in the major of their choice will give students specialized knowledge and skills in that discipline or profession, the College’s core curriculum will ensure that each student, regardless of major, develops crucial intellectual skills in analysis, research, and communication. Their coursework in the liberal arts and sciences will offer students a broad perspective on the natural world and the human condition, and will encourage them to examine their own lives and make useful contributions to their own time and place. Over the course of their undergraduate careers, all College of Charleston students will develop the following intellectual skills, areas of knowledge, and dispositions:

I. Research and Communication in Multiple Media and Languages, including proficiency in
   - Gathering and using information
   - Effective writing and critical reading
   - Oral and visual communication
   - Foreign language

II. Analytical and Critical Reasoning, including the ability to perform
   - Mathematical and scientific reasoning and analysis
   - Social and cultural analysis

III. Historical, Cultural, and Intellectual Perspectives, including knowledge of
   - Human history and the natural world
   - Artistic, cultural, and intellectual achievements
   - The mind and the way humans interact in groups and societies—Rephrased for clarification
   - International perspectives—Becomes part of Goal III
   - Perspectives and contributions of academic disciplines

IV. Interdisciplinary and Intercultural Perspectives, gained by
   - This becomes International and Intercultural Perspectives
   - Using multiple approaches to interpret complex phenomena
   - Interdisciplinary analysis becomes part of Goal II
   - Experiencing and understanding multiple cultural perspectives

V. Personal and Ethical Perspectives, including experiences that promote
   - Self-understanding
   - Curiosity and creativity First two sub-goals are combined into one
   - Personal, academic, and professional integrity
   - Moral and ethical responsibility
   - Communal and global responsibility Fourth and fifth sub-goals combined into one

VI. Advanced Knowledge and Skills in Major Area of Study, consisting of
   - Skills and knowledge of the discipline
   - Sequence of coursework that fosters intellectual growth
   - Coursework that extends and builds upon knowledge and skills gained from the core curriculum
   - The ability to transfer the skills and knowledge of the major into another setting
**The College of Charleston Commons**  
**(Bachelor’s Degree Requirements)**

*Statement of Purpose:* Graduates of the College of Charleston complete a challenging course of study that will prepare them to function intelligently, responsibly, creatively, and compassionately in a multifaceted, interconnected world. While their work in the major of their choice will give students specialized knowledge and skills in that discipline or profession, the common graduation requirements will equip each student, regardless of major, with crucial intellectual skills in analysis, research, and communication. The Commons will offer students a broad perspective on the natural world and the human condition, and will encourage them to examine their own lives and make useful contributions to their own time and place. Over the course of their undergraduate careers, all College of Charleston students will develop the following intellectual skills, areas of knowledge, and dispositions:

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Appendix III. Statement read by Darryl Phillips during Constituents’ Concerns

I’m here this evening to share with the Senate my concerns about Faculty Workload

As many of you know, following the mandate of the strategic plan, in Spring 2003 I was appointed by President Higdon to chair an Ad Hoc Committee on Faculty Workload.

8 faculty members, drawn from all schools, and the director of Institutional Research served.

We worked for a year and a half arriving at consensus on:

- A recommended new statement of faculty workload
- A recommended detailed policy and philosophy, including a full discussion of the issues and a detailed rationale for the changes
- And a new procedure for calculating the workload for every faculty member on campus

We submitted the report in Fall 2004 to the President and Provost.

Faculty were naturally interested in what happened to this report.

Joe Kelly asked the Provost about the Report at a Senate meeting last February

Provost Jorgens replied that the report would not be made public, adding, off the record, that the report called for changing the stated workload for faculty from 12 contact hours per week to 9 contact hours per week, and that this change was, for various reasons, unacceptable.

During the past year, the Provost’s office has introduced a new calculation of student credit hours, reducing the issue of faculty workload to a number for each department—their workload target.

Indeed, the “target” appears to be inspired in part by the committee’s recommendation. What concerns me is not the “target”, but rather the lack of a new workload policy, the lack of a revised statement and written philosophy, and the lack of discussion and rationale to accompany the number.

A target number is not, I think, a good substitute for a comprehensive policy.

Working with the “target”, one clever department has already realized that there is no longer a need for faculty to teach 12 contact hours a week, or even 9 contact hours a week. This department realized that by raising the enrollment limits in courses, most faculty members, including one instructor, could spend just 6 hours each week in the classroom. Their schedules for this year reflect this new practice.
This concerns me greatly.

Other departments are certain to quickly follow, limited only by the physical capacity of the classrooms themselves.

By not wishing to change our stated workload policy from 12 contact hours to 9 contact hours, we are quickly heading towards an actual practice of 6 contact hours.

This will have a profound effect on the educational experiences of our students.

The reputation of the College of Charleston has been shaped by the close relationship between professors and students. This will change quickly if we continue the move towards professors spending less time in the classroom each week while the classes themselves double in size.

Our identity and mission are being changed.

My intention in bringing this issue forward is not to find fault with a particular department, but rather to point out what I consider to be a serious problem with the system that led to this result.

How did we end up with this situation—with faculty members in a department teaching just 6 hours each week?

I see two possible explanations.

The first explanation is that this was the intended, or at least an acceptable, outcome of the Provost’s new workload target number. If this is the case, I am gravely concerned, for as a faculty member and as a senator for the past 4 years, I was not given the opportunity to discuss this important change to our identity and mission. If this outcome was the Provost’s intention, the faculty must take action now and weigh in on this important matter.

The second explanation is that this drastic reduction in contact hours is an unintended and unacceptable outcome of the new workload target number. Indeed, perhaps this outcome was not foreseen by the Provost’s Office.

If this is the case, I am again distressed, for it means that the workload committee’s report on which we labored for 18 months, was not give due consideration. For that report contains recommendations for minimum workloads that are consistent with our stated mission and identity as an institution. Indeed, the committee foresaw this very issue, and addressed it in our proposed policy.

If the current situation was not the intent of the workload target and is unacceptable, I urge the Senate to ask that the Provost release and perhaps even act upon the Workload
committee’s report so that we can have a well thought-out policy, a philosophy of workload, a detailed discussion and rationale to accompany the “target number” that academic affairs has produced. We deserve, and we clearly need, a comprehensive faculty workload policy.