Minutes of the Faculty Senate Meeting on 10 February 2015

The Faculty Senate met Tuesday 10 February 2015 at 5 P.M. in Wells Fargo Auditorium (Beatty Center 115) for a regular meeting.

Agenda

1. **Call to Order: 5:06PM**
2. The [20 January 2015 Regular Meeting Minutes](#) were approved as posted.
3. **Announcements and information**: None.
4. **Reports**
   
   **A. Speaker of the Faculty**

   The Speaker commended Faculty Secretariat Pearson Hoak for her work in updating the Faculty Senate web pages, and he asked Senators to forward any suggestions they have for the web pages to him. He also called attention to the conference room booking link on the Faculty Standing Committees page, and encouraged Senators to make use of the conference room for their committee meetings.

   He also thanked the President and Interim Provost for the open budget process, and he recognized and thanked by name all the members of the Faculty Budget Committee for their significant time and effort in the budget process: Julia Eichelberger (Chair), Tom Carroll, Rohn England, Steve Johnson, Rhonda Mack, Courtney Murren, and Tom Ross. Applause followed. He noted that the Chair of the committee will be bringing a report to the Senate, possibly in March.

   The Speaker reported on the January Board of Trustees (BOT) meeting. The BOT approved the MFA in Creative Writing. In budget matters, it made a slightly downward adjustment to the budget, due to a decrease in out-of-state students. The Speaker noted that the College keeps a rollover fund for such enrollment variations, which helped cover the decrease. The BOT also approved a 3% increase in the room fees for students beginning next year (with a 0% increase in board).

   Updates on building projects included
   
   - a delay in the completion of field stations at Dixie Plantation, with expected availability in March or early April.
   - expected fall 2016 completion date for the Hollings Science Center work.
   - expected start of work on the Simons Center after the Hollings Science Center work is finished, with a completion date on Simons still to be determined.
• effective completion of renovations in the Addlestone Library, though, as of the January BOT meeting, the books still were not closed due to some remaining costs still coming in. It appears to be coming in under budget.

• expected fall 2016 completion dates for renovations of the Rutledge and Rivers residence halls.

• the Jewish Studies addition getting back on track after the discovery of Civil War ordnance at the site, with an expected completion of spring 2017.

The Government Affairs Committee of the BOT also announced upcoming CofC recognition events in Columbia. The legislature will recognize the baseball team on February 12 for their recent achievement in advancing to super regional competition. Also, February 25 will be College of Charleston Day at the State House.

The Speaker noted that a planned meeting of CofC faculty, local business representatives, and the Chamber of Commerce on January 26, 2015 was postponed and should be rescheduled in the next week or two.

He also reported that a “Collaborative Council” has been created by President McConnell and MUSC President Cole in order to have specifically targeted conversations about collaborations between CofC and MUSC. At this point, the College’s membership on the committee includes Interim Provost McGee; Deans Auerbach, Gibbison, and McCandless; SGA President Spraker; Alumnus and Adjunct Professor Dr. Robert G. Ball, Vice President for Administration & Planning Paul Patrick; and the Speaker of the Faculty. The first organizational meetings will occur in early March.

The Speaker noted that he presented to the BOT resolutions approved by the Faculty Senate since the October BOT meeting. These were the Senate’s resolution in support of student representation on the BOT and in support of freedom of expression (Charlie Hebdo). He also gave them an update on the fall faculty/BOT shadowing program, the spring version of which will begin soon. The Speaker said that the faculty who participated in the program found the program to be quite informative and valuable for them in getting to know members of the BOT and in giving the BOT a glimpse of our work.

The Speaker also said that he encouraged the BOT to invite faculty to attend the BOT’s public meetings. He also encouraged Senators to attend these meetings. He said that after attending three of these meetings himself, he can attest to how much he has learned about how this institution operates and about the depth of some of the issues we face. It is important, he stressed, because we want to have a voice, that we attend BOT meetings. There is no reason preventing us from doing so, and, he added, should there ever be a rea-
son “that we are not allowed to do so, I should hope we would make some noise about it.”

B. Interim Provost (Topics – PDF | Powerpoint Slides - PDF)

Emergency Procedures

The Interim Provost said of the bomb threat earlier in the day that, on the whole, emergency plans worked very well. Police and emergency personnel effectively moved people away from the threatened area, searched buildings with “exquisite care,” and declared “all clear” on the timeline they gave. He said that there will be a full after-action review of the events and response. The erroneous message that a bomb had been found, he said, was the fault of old software that had not been maintained. The after-action review will attend to what went wrong, why the software was not updated, and how to ensure it does not happen again.

He asked for the faculty's patience, sympathy, and support for their students who may not have been able to attend class or were delayed due to the situation.

At this point, he paused to take questions about the bomb threat and the College’s response.

Asked by Hollis France, Senator - Political Science, what exactly happened, the Interim Provost replied that the College received a credible threat, deemed so for its specificity, in addition to other attributes, and as a result, the College took immediate action. He said that, as to how much he could say about it at this point, after having conferred with the President and Public Safety, the conclusion was that he needed to “be vague” at present, as there is an investigation underway to determine who made the call. He added that “we are going to move heaven and earth to catch” the responsible party. He hopes, he said, that in a couple months, he will be able to say much more.

Scooter Barnett, Health and Human Performance, noted that a parent raised a concern with her that students were locked in a residence hall, and she asked why this action was taken.

The Interim Provost said that there was a period as the events unfolded in which the College wanted people to stay where they were and to “shelter in place,” unless they were being moved out of a threatened building or area. This was not for a very long time. Some students not in the shut down buildings were, he agreed, inconvenienced. He also added that over social media repetitive and sometimes inaccurate details were passed from student to parent and vice versa. Many parents also got the Cougar Alert messages as well.

Bob Mignone, Chair - Mathematics, observed that there was about a two-hour delay between the first alert messages and the President’s email about how to proceed in relation to meeting classes in the buildings not being cleared. This caused some confusion for instructors, he said, who contacted
him for how they should proceed. A little more guidance in that two-hour pe-
period would have helped, he said.

The Interim Provost replied that he was “desperate” to give guidance to
deans, chairs, and faculty at the time and that they discussed this at great
length in the President’s office, but they lacked the information needed to
provide clarity and the focus was wholly on safety concerns, rather than
managing class times and schedules.

After 1:15, he said, he concluded that people had already made decisions
based on the insufficient information they already had and that it was worth
waiting a bit longer to get accurate information. Additionally, email mes-
sages are not written in the middle of events: we rely on Cougar Alert for
that. Cougar Alert, however, takes some time to get out. Care is taken, there-
fore, not to send out too many messages on the heels of one another so as to
avoid stacking up the messages. Also, the speed of the system, which is not a
significant issue with a situation like hurricane preparations, needs to be ad-
dressed, as the President acknowledged in an email. These factors affected
how quickly information and instructions got to faculty and students about
whether or not classes were to meet. This was a regrettable situation, he not-
ed, acknowledging the bind it may have put faculty and administrators in,
but also noting that, on the other hand, the leadership was doing precisely
what their prioritization scheme demanded.

**Andrew Shedlock**, Senator - Biology, asked how much of the system that
didn’t really work would we be relying on in the case of an active shooter on
campus.

The Interim Provost replied that the speed issue showed up in both the
bomb threat and a recent system test. In the situation of an active shooter or
a bomb threat, we need the system to work more rapidly. The system we
currently used was purchased in the post-Virigina Tech shooting era and we
pay a good bit of money for it. While there are some technical explanations
for the problems it had in the present situation, it is not working rapidly
enough. We have recognized the shortcoming, he said, and are trying to ad-
dress it quickly. “We’re not where we should be. We are trying to get better,”
he added.

**Larry Krasnoff**, Senator - Philosophy, pointed out that the message that
went out identifying which buildings were closed and suggesting that all oth-
er buildings were open for business was, in fact, inaccurate because when
people tried to enter buildings that were not announced as closed, such as
his building on Glebe Street, police officers shut off access to those ostensibly
open buildings and indicated that the message was wrong. Krasnoff asked,
“was it wrong?

The Interim Provost said that the message sent was the product of confer-
ring with the incident commander and, thus, they considered it accurate. He
noted that there were not only communication problems from the adminis-
tration to the campus, but also from the incident command structure to the administration. The administration, he emphasized, is committed to addressing these issues, beginning tomorrow, having cancelled a number of important meetings in order to fix these problems as soon as possible.

**Hollis France**, Senator - Political Science, observed that it was confusing and unsettling in a class she was teaching in Maybank Hall to have the notification that some buildings were closed while others remained open in the face of a bomb threat and the erroneous message that a bomb had been found, which sparked terror, she said.

The Interim Provost replied that a very conservative perimeter was established by the security professionals. This situation raises an “eternal question”: when there is no inkling of a threat to other buildings on campus and we also have an armed security presence on the scene undreamed of on an ordinary day, is it a disservice to students and faculty to discontinue classes in unthreatened buildings? We know that canceling classes for the day adds many complications down the road, such as possibly triggering a make-up day and adding other challenges (such as rescheduling science labs). We’re trying to balance our interests as a teaching and learning organization with safety, which always comes first, he emphasized. He acknowledged the emotional effect of the situation, but also noted that there was not a safety threat to Maybank.

France responded that, the Interim Provost’s remark about the security presence notwithstanding, there seemed to be an absence of authority figures on the scene near her classroom who could instruct students what to do.

In the late morning and early afternoon, the Interim Provost said, there were security officers in the near vicinity of Maybank Hall. He called attention to the effort of security personnel and the administration to create a safe environment, but the very idea of a bomb is a challenge simply in terms of the emotional response it elicits. He reiterated that there is no single, good answer to a situation like we had, other than our ongoing attempt to balance safety first and the ongoing challenges that result from such events.

The Interim Provost closed this Q&A session by asking Senators and guests, if they feel so inclined, to thank the public safety officers they may see over the next few days. These officers went into threatened buildings, putting themselves in harm’s way, in order to get us out of them, he said.

At this point, the Interim Provost returned to his report.

**Performance Evaluation for Deans**

The Interim Provost reported that roster faculty surveys for evaluating lineschool Deans (excluding the Dean of the School of Cultures, Languages, and World Affairs, who is in his first year) have been completed. The survey was designed by the Faculty Welfare Committee. There was a 48% response rate, which the Interim Provost called “a little disappointing.” With the exception
of one school, which had a lower response rate, all the schools were over 50%, and two were over 60%. He thanked faculty for providing survey feedback to be used in the Dean’s performance evaluations.

He reported that he will meet soon with the Faculty Welfare Committee to discuss their proposed FAM language changes on Dean evaluations, which are aimed at clarifying and specifying evaluation guidelines.

**Academic Affairs Draft Budget Proposal**

Before providing budget figures (see page 4 of [Powerpoint slides](#)) and discussing them, the Interim Provost thanked the Faculty Budget Committee for what he called their “enormous service.” He noted that the budget for Academic Affairs comprises a very significant portion of the total $253 million-dollar institutional budget. The 2.7% increase the Interim Provost proposed for Academic Affairs amounts to slightly over $2 million in recurring funding. This is a small percentage increase relative to past years’ requests, but, he added, in past years, large increases have not been secured and the goal, he said, of this year’s proposal is to recognize that next year is likely to be a “very modest budget-increase year” and, accordingly, to bring a “scaled-down and modest ask to the table.” The proposed increase would pay for:

- faculty and staff salary increases (a 1.5% salary pool to be used toward merit increases, 2.2% for increases in adjunct pay).
- inflationary operational costs, plus funds to fix budgets of continually underfunded units.
- eight new faculty lines and five new staff lines (in the form of temporary-to-permanent conversions, for positions that have long been filled by full-time, but temporary employees, and these employees, the Interim Provost asserted, should not only have healthcare benefits mandated by the Affordable Care Act, but also the dignity of a retirement program).
- faculty development.
- graduate student support, making a financial commitment to support these students, just as we have made financial commitments to the development of undergraduate student research.

Academic Affairs, he said, will be offering their budget to the President soon, and a process will begin shortly thereafter of matching up the budget proposals from the various divisions across the College, followed by entering into conversations about the same with the Board of Trustees.

**Business Before Faculty and Senate Committees**

Our Dean’s List criteria are on the table, the Interim Provost remarked, since they appear to be out of line with those of most other institutions.
He also pointed out that several faculty and Senate committees have been reviewing graduate faculty membership, titles for adjunct faculty, and are beginning to have conversations about the possible return of the honorary rank of Distinguished Professor, which was discontinued in 2002.

The Interim Provost noted that a modest number of students (under 200) with disabilities that preclude their ability to take foreign language courses, instead take foreign language alternative courses to satisfy that requirement. The alternative course model dates back at least as far as 1989. The list of alternative courses is faculty-approved. However, while additions to and deletions from this list have been reported to the Academic Standards Committee, the list itself has not been closely managed and expressly reviewed by faculty.

The General Education Committee and Associate Vice President for the Academic Experience Lynne Ford, he said, have cleaned up the current list, removing many courses no longer offered, and a final version of the list may be brought to the Senate for consideration and approval in March. Since, as SACSCOC dictates, the faculty have primary control of the curriculum, it is important that we document the endorsement of the faculty for the current approach. He stressed, however, that this would be an interim measure only, for a couple of reasons. Thus far, for one, we have not figured out a way to assess this academic program, and assessability is a SACSCOC requirement. Also, we need to be able to advise students for registration for next fall.

While a more permanent solution is pondered, the General Education Committee will bring an updated list to the Senate for consideration, with one significant change from the current document. The current requirement in one area that courses be drawn from two different disciplines will be stricken, due to its impracticality: due to course availability, the requirement is sometimes very difficult to meet. Also, the Interim Provost asserted, the intellectual rationale for this requirement is not clear.

**Today's Faculty Senate Agenda**

The Interim Provost complimented the efforts of those involved in both the newly proposed changes in the Math/Logic requirement for general education and the sweeping revision of the Hispanic Studies Program, both of which were on the Senate agenda for the evening.

**Discussion/Questions/Comments**

**Bob Mignone**, Chair - Department of Mathematics, speaking in relation to the foreign language alternatives, urged consideration, as well, of the Math and Logic alternatives. He said that the current Math alternatives make little to no sense. Different proposals have been made over the years, he said, but they have not been adopted. Currently, he said, the Math alternatives are, to his estimation, often more difficult than the MATH requirements they are meant to replace. Thus, he said, in line with the conversations underway on
foreign language alternatives, we should also review Math and Logic alternatives.

The Interim Provost asked if the Speaker and he should confer with the General Education Committee to have them consider this for their agenda. Mignone replied that the committee is already aware of the issue, but that he simply wanted to bring the matter to the attention of the Senate more broadly.

5. Old Business

None

6. New Business

A. General Education Committee (webpage)

a. Removal of AAST 300 Special Topics in African American Studies from the list of approved humanities courses (PDF)

Karen Smail, Chair - General Education Committee, explained that the General Education Curriculum is frozen for this year and next year due to assessment for SACSCOC, so any approvals of proposals by the Senate will not go into effect until the 2016-17 academic year.

There was no discussion.

The Senate approved the proposal on a voice vote.

b. Change the Math/logic General Education requirement (PDF)

Small explained that the assessment process made clear that our current requirement of six hours from an approved list of courses is not consistent with best practice for general education Math/logic requirements. She added that proposal was vetted and is supported by the Department of Mathematics, Department of Philosophy, and the Honors College.

Discussion/Questions/Comments

Jason Overby, Senator - School of Science and Mathematics (SSM), expressed strong support for the proposal since, as the requirement currently stands, it penalizes the student who is actually good in Math because it forces them to take a higher level of Math, whereas a lesser-skilled student wouldn't have to do so. However, regarding the provision in the proposal that stipulates the “removal of MATH 220 Calculus II/HONS 215 Honors Calculus II from the list of approved courses,” he asked why MATH 229, a higher-level, calculus-derived course approved for General Education (GE) credit, was not also to be removed in the proposal, as is MATH 220.

Bob Mignone replied that MATH 229, to his recollection, has never been approved for GE. Overby countered that in Chemistry their understanding is that 229 is approved for GE but there was an error in the course proposal form (a box left unchecked). Mignone replied that, either way,
it doesn’t matter: if MATH 229 is, in fact, approved for GE, we should remove it from the list. Smail concurred that if 229 is on the list, it should be removed.

**The proposal was approved by voice vote.**

**B. Faculty Curriculum Committee** [webpage]

Bonnie Springer, Chair - Faculty Curriculum Committee, thanked Faculty Secretariat Pearson Hoak for her work in getting the curriculum proposals in order for presentation to the Senate.

The Speaker suggested that the Senate discuss and vote according to the arabic-numbered groups on the agenda. Individual proposals, he said, could be discussed separately if requested.

1. **Course Prerequisite Changes**
   a. HIST 104 [PDF]
   b. PHIL 399 [PDF]
   c. ARTM 340 [PDF]
   d. HEAL 225, 230. 403 [PDF]
   e. REAL 376 and change of program [PDF]
   f. HPCP 290 [PDF]

   There was no discussion.

   **All proposals were approved by voice vote.**

2. **Existing Course changes with program changes**
   a. PSYC 321 name change [PDF]
   b. WGST Change of Major and Minor – adding existing courses [PDF]
   c. EDCL Change of Major [PDF]
   d. HTMT 444 course change and change an existing minor [PDF]
   e. BIOL 343/343L and changes to majors [PDF]

   There was no discussion.

   **All proposals were approved by voice vote.**

3. **New Course Proposals with Program changes**
   a. BIOL 423 and associated changes of major and minor [PDF]
   b. BIOL 359 and changes in associated majors and minors [PDF]
   c. AAST 280 and 350 with change of major and minor [PDF]
   d. MGMT 342 with change of major forms [PDF]
e. Hispanic Studies change of program proposal which includes new courses and major revisions (PDF 1 | PDF 2)
f. JWST220 and change of program forms (PDF)
g. MATH 460 and 461 and change of majors and minors (PDF)

There was no discussion.

All proposals were approved by voice vote.

6. Constituents’ Concerns:

Jason Overby, Senator – SSM, strongly encouraged Senators to try out the beta version of Yammer. Having tried Yammer himself, he reported that it “puts email to shame” and should be a viable alternative to the current, abused listserv system.

7. Adjournment: 6:03 PM