MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE

The first regular meeting of the Faculty Senate of The College of Charleston for the academic year 1993-94 convened at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 6 in Room 118 of The Education Center, Speaker of the Faculty David Mann presiding. Forty two Senators attended. The Minutes of the previous meeting (April 5, 1994) were approved as circulated.

President's Report

President Alexander M. Sanders, Jr. was recognized and spoke to the Senate briefly about the state of the College. The opening of the school year had been invigorating and pleasingly uneventful; so far, he had talked to a mere forty-three students with problems, the smallest number yet (for the time of year) during his tenure at the College. Happily, the College is in good shape, generally speaking, especially in comparison with some other institutions in South Carolina--not to mention other states. As everyone knows, hundreds of employees have been laid off at the Medical University; thirty-one tenured faculty have been let go at Clemson, Winthrop and even the central Columbia campus of USC have experienced declining enrollments for the first time in recent memory. Meanwhile, and in a relatively short period of time, we have been able to engineer a 25% increase in the number of tenured faculty, a figure that has risen twice as fast as the rising enrollment in our student body.

There are two major reasons for this financial success, Mr. Sanders said. First, we are far better off than other institutions in our ratio of faculty to staff: in fact, we have more faculty than all other kinds of employees put together. Second, at other comparable institutions in South Carolina, there are about six full-time students for every full-time employee; at the College, there are twelve students, a much more efficient ratio. This explains, in part, why we are able to hire more faculty even in a time of economic distress. (The price we pay is that some of our physical facilities are woefully inadequate, and our hard pressed maintenance staff face exceptional difficulties.)

President Sanders concluded by saying that he had recently been reading in Easterby's History of The College of Charleston, which he found moving for its vision of the continuity of our historic institution. Some fifty years ago, Professor Easterby had insisted that little of fundamental importance had changed at the College, despite all the momentous events of the nineteenth century, since its foundation in the aftermath of the Revolution. "The old graduate," Easterby wrote, will find the College much changed, but the changes are in the externals. There are still to be found the same democratic spirit that has ever pervaded the true republic of letters, the same respect for intellectual honesty, and the same high regard for the fundamental value of a liberal education. These have been its principal articles of faith since the days of Bishop Smith.
Remarkably, President Sanders said, there is in this statement no mention of any particular theology or religious doctrine, and no appeal to some sort of patriotism, but merely an invocation of "the democratic spirit pervading the republic of letters." This spirit should continue to serve us well, now and into the next century.

The Provost, Conrad Festa, was recognized and said that the past year had seen some remarkable success, thanks, he believed, largely to the efforts of the faculty. The College has maintained a high degree of credibility with the CHE, and now that the various attempts to change or abolish the Commission have proved unsuccessful, a new spirit of cooperation seems to have developed in Columbia, thanks in large part to President Sanders. Dr. Festa said that his office would be concerned with four major projects during the year: the real start of the SACS accreditation process, which would be coordinated by Hugh Haynsworth; a salary study, which should be completed some time this term; the sabbatical leave program, which has now drawn the attention of the Legislature, and with a work-load study, which should also be ready before the end of the fall term. We will need to be very careful about generating new programs and proposals this year, because funds usually held in abeyance have already been substantially used up, with the result that there are fewer resources left over to cover possible emergencies. One practical result of this will be that the Curriculum Committee will be asked to look very hard at the real costs of new programs.

Speaker's Report

David Mann then thanked Susan Morrison for agreeing to serve once again as Parliamentarian, the fifth time she had done so, during his years as Speaker. Thanks should also, he said, be given to Dr. Festa for his help in setting up the Faculty Secretariat, which is now located in an office next to the Faculty Lounge in Maybank Hall. Word-processing equipment was still being installed but should be operational soon. The office will have a WANDO connection on the College's optical data-link system, an "E-mail" address ("MACKA"), and a fax-modem. The telephone number, which is not in the College telephone directory yet, is 953-5425.

New Business

Mr. Mann then called for nominations for Speaker of the Faculty Senate pro tempore. Beverly Diamond suggested Robert Mignone. A motion to close the nominations passed, and Mr. Mignone was declared elected by acclamation. A nomination was also required for the College's second delegate to the South Carolina Conference of University Faculty Chairs (SCCUFC). Hugh Wilder nominated Jack Parson, who had been a founding member of the organization, and he, too, was declared elected.

Von Bakanic was then recognized for the Academic Standards Committee and proposed two changes in the Undergraduate Bulletin. The first motion, which would "preclude students taking lower level foreign language courses on a Pass/Fail basis," failed after some discussion. The second change reads like this:
The committee also suggests that the policy regarding credit for work at another institution by transient students be clarified in the Undergraduate Bulletin. We suggest the following be appended as item 4 on page 120 of the 1994 Undergraduate Bulletin:

"4) Criteria for acceptable transfer credits also apply to transient students (see page 24)."

Hugh Wilder wanted to know when this would take effect. Von Bakanic, speaking for the Committee, replied that the change would be incorporated in the next Bulletin, and would come into effect starting with the Fall Term of 1996. (Dean William Lindstrom confirmed this.) Caroline Hunt wanted to know if this rule was intended to apply only to students who are transient students studying elsewhere; the answer was yes. The second motion passed, on a voice vote.

Constituents' Concerns

James Carew asked why no faculty salary data had been received from last year's Welfare Committee. Chip Condon said that the Committee had not been able to finish the project in time, and had experienced difficulties in getting some of the necessary data. Mr. Carew, on another subject, suggested that the Senate should refer to Mr. Sanders, not as Judge Sanders, but as President Sanders, as this would be more in keeping with his present occupation. The Speaker replied that the title, "Judge," was a merely honorary appellation, a form of courtesy, and not an official designation of his duties. Beverly Diamond questioned the date on which Minutes of Senate meetings were being distributed; the By-Laws say they should appear within two weeks of the meeting (Article 4, Section 4, Letter M). The Secretary said that he tried to comply with this regulation by sending out a detailed summary, or "Highlights," of each meeting the next day after it took place, followed by a fuller account timed to appear shortly before the next meeting, when the Minutes were to be approved or amended; he would continue to do so unless instructed otherwise. Hugh Wilder said he thought the Speaker should arrange not to hold Senate meetings on religious holidays. The Secretary said the Speaker was not at fault; setting the dates for Faculty and Senate meetings had been mostly his doing, and that, given the alternatives, the present schedule had seemed the least objectionable. Hugh Haynsworth pointed out that changes in our health insurance (specifically, involving disability coverage and "pre-existing conditions") had been put in place without consultation with the faculty: this was a bad practice, and it ought to be stopped. David Mann said that he thought the Welfare Committee should definitely investigate; we should have access to the information on which these changes were based, and make any necessary decisions ourselves, rather than having decisions made for us by the Personnel Office. Caroline Hunt suggested that Jack Parson and David Mann, as delegates to the Conference of University Faculty Chairs, should find out how such matters are handled at other institutions, and report back. The Speaker agreed. With no further business, the meeting adjourned at about 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bishop Hunt,
Faculty Secretary