April 6, 1999

MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE (First Session)

The first session of the eighth regular meeting of the Faculty Senate of the College of Charleston convened at 5:03 p.m. on Tuesday, April 6 in ECTR 116, Speaker of the Faculty Trisha Folds-Bennett presiding. Fifty-nine senators attended. Minutes of the March 3 meeting were approved.

New Business

• The Senate approved the request of the Assessment Committee to send to the By-Laws Committee for review the following change in the charge to the Assessment Committee.

To be included as a second sentence on page 54, 14 b.(3) of the Faculty/Administration Manual:

3) To review or initiate policy issues related to assessment of institutional effectiveness. The goal of assessment activities at the College of Charleston is to help the College accomplish its institutional mission and meet its departmental goals and objectives through a process of self-analysis at all levels

• Bob Mignone moved that the CHE-mandated question about student satisfaction with advising be administered on April 14 during the 10:00 class period. The motion passed.

• For the Curriculum Committee, Chris Abate made the following motions, all of which passed:

SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

• Course Change (number and title): ANTH 203 Introduction to Physical Anthropology to Introduction to Biological Anthropology [new description submitted to Registrar.]

• Course Change (credit): ANTH 319 Special Topics in Anthropology from 3 hours to 1-4 hours.
• Course Change (prerequisites): ANTH 334 Human Variation and Adaptation
  Add as alternate prerequisites ANTH 101 or ANTH 203 or BIOL 102 or GEOL 102 or permission of instructor.
• Course Change (prerequisites): ANTH 335 Primate Behavior and Evolution
  Change prerequisites to ANTH 101 or ANTH 203 or BIOL 102 or PSYC 203 or permission instructor.
• Course Change (prerequisites): ANTH 340 Medical Anthropology
  Add as alternate prerequisites ANTH 101 or ANTH 203 or permission of instructor.
• Course Change (prerequisites): ANTH 346 Anthropology of Gender
  Change pre-requisites to ANTH 101 or WMST 200 or permission of instructor
• Course Deletion: ANTH 393 Introduction to Archeological Field Methods
• Course Change (description and prerequisites): ANTH 493 Field School in Archeology
  Drop ANTH 101 as prerequisite [new description sent to Registrar.]

STUDIO ART
• Minor in Studio Art (official approval)

• PROPOSAL FOR GENERAL EDUCATION

The Speaker introduced the discussion by thanking all members of the College who participated in any way in the discussions and debates that led to the proposal now before the Senate. She singled out especially the Ad Hoc Committee to Review General Education and then listed the standing committees most recently involved in reviewing the Ad-Hoc Committee’s proposal for its presentation today: Assessment, Budget, Curriculum, Planning, and Welfare.

Ms. Folds-Bennett then reminded the Senate of the rules that will govern the discussion:

• As approved at the November 10, 1998, meeting of the Senate, the proposal will be discussed by section—Introduction to Liberal Arts and Sciences, Foundations, Intellectual Traditions in the Liberal Arts and Sciences, Integrated Liberal Learning, and Administrative and Supporting Structures—before the Senate votes on the proposal as a whole

• On any of the parts a person may speak only two times for a maximum of five minutes each time, Everyone who wants to speak should do so once before anyone speaks a second time.
• For the Academic Planning Committee, John Newell presented the Revised Proposal for a General Education Curriculum at the College of Charleston.

INTRODUCTION OF THE LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES COURSE and FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

The discussion of the first part of the proposal summarized below centered around five areas: Teaching ILAS, Validity of Credit for ILAS, Assessment of ILAS, Preceptors, and General Comments.

Teaching ILAS: Glenn Lesses argued that the course does not have faculty support: only 39.5% of those responding to the straw poll gave the course a positive rating, and only 42 of over 400 faculty responded to the e-mail call for volunteers to teach the ILAS course. Where, Mr. Lesses asked, would enough faculty to teach the course be found. Reid Wiseman, although opposed to the course, pointed out that 42 volunteers would be enough for the pilot (42 faculty x 22 students per session=920).

Richard Nunan looked beyond the pilot when more than volunteers would be needed and feared “universal conscription” of faculty; he also foresees a “juggernaut” that could be stopped only by massive civil disobedience by the faculty. In response, John Newell pointed out that the pilot would last only five years, after which the proposal requires the ILAS to come before the Senate for approval.

Bob Mignone, one of the 42 volunteers, argued against the expectation that every faculty member would teach the course every three years and moved the following:

Faculty participation in teaching the ILAS course be completely voluntary.

The motion passed.

Validity of Credit for ILAS

Speaking against the course, Mike Marcell pointed out features that he thinks do not provide an introduction to the College of Charleston experience: P/F grading, a three-day course, and unworkable assignments. Phil Jos countered that the ILAS course can send a message to incoming freshmen that they are no longer in high school and introduce them to the idea of a liberally educated person. Julia Eichelberger added that it is important to take advantage of the opportunity when we will have the attention of all freshmen and can focus that attention on the goals of liberal arts.

A number of senators argued that the course should carry 0 credits. Lynne Ford responded that the College signals seriousness of content by awarding credit and that the course meets the requirements approved by the faculty—14 hours of “seat time” for 1
credit. Tom Kunkle contended that three days cannot be the equivalent of an academic course and added that faculty expect 2 to 3 hours outside of class for every hour in class. Mike Marcel and Kem Fronabarger agreed, saying that the ILAS course is not equal in hours or rigor to the 1 credit labs in their departments.

Speaking in favor of credit for the course, Andy Lewis said that we would send a negative message to students if reading lists, class discussions and assignments led to no credit. Paige Wisotzka agreed that the course would not work without the expectation of credit. Rich Bodek labeled the one credit "psychological" and doubted that the 1 credit would be used as a credit needed for graduation.

SGA Representative Angela Kouters said that she could have benefited from an ILAS course to let her know what would be expected of her as a student at a liberal arts institution and that the course would have provided a more appropriate first experience at the College than the one she encountered, sorority rush.

Kem Fronabarger argued that voluntary attendance by students who really want to learn would be preferable to forced attendance by all; however, Sara White and Idee Winfield do not think that most entering freshmen would comprehend beforehand the benefit of the course. Mr. Fronabarger moved the following:

The ILAS course carry 0 credit hours (with no P/F grading). The motion was defeated.

Assessment of the ILAS Course

To Brian Scholtens’ question about what assessment would be used to determine the success of the pilot, Ms. Ford answered that the Assessment Committee has considered this question and that the Goals for ILAS in the proposal are assessable. Rich Heldrich disagreed and argued that the course does not address any of the Goals for General Education. Ms. Ford replied that Goal 9, which would have supported the course specifically, was moved to a preamble, but, she added, ILAS includes all goals, not any one in particular. Mr. Heldrich answered that Goal 9 was removed because it was not assessable, and he thinks that the ILAS course cannot be assessed for the same reasons.

Preceptors

Calling the idea of preceptors “a pious wish,” Glenn Lesses questioned this part of the proposal, especially when our advisees do not appear as much any more with changes in the registration process. Ms. Ford defended the concept of preceptors by pointing to the evidence that establishing a relationship with a faculty member is one of the most powerful indicators of retention. To emphasize the importance of that relationship, Lynn Cherry cited her experience with students in the Advising Center, and Julia Eichelberger pointed to her experience in Freshman English.
General Comments

Both Nan Morrison and Deanna Caveny questioned the wisdom of the proposal when as much as 35% of the Math and English/Communication Departments, which provide the majority of the foundations courses for liberal arts, are staffed by adjunct faculty and office and classroom space is critically lacking. Ms. Morrison asked why we are considering spending $100,000 on a course that lasts three days when we have such needs for courses that last nine months. Also, she does not think that the 16 new lines per year called for in the proposal take into account the 2% projected growth.

Bill Moore argued that if the course is important for students with fewer than 30 credit hours, it should be important as well for those with more than 30 hours. He moved that all College of Charleston students be required to take the ILAS course. The motion failed.

FOUNDATIONS

Mathematics and/or Formal Reasoning

A number of faculty from the Mathematics and Philosophy Departments questioned why the Ad Hoc and Academic Planning Committees ignored the joint memo from the two departments supporting two logic courses being used to fulfill the math requirement. When John Newell suggested that the Planning Committee would accept a friendly amendment changing the phrasing to “two approved courses in math or logic,” the discussion focused on a time on the approval process. Jim Deavor and others thought that the Math Department should approve appropriate math courses, not the GenEd Committee. Brian Scholtens agreed, saying that the GenEd Committee should review cross-disciplinary courses but should not be empowered to determine which department-specific courses, especially those at the foundations level, are acceptable. Andy Lewis and Mary Beth Heston pointed to the need for overview of General Education and likened the role of the GenEd Committee to that of the Curriculum Committee.

Returning to the math/logic issue, Glenn Lesses moved that any two of the following courses be used to fulfill the mathematics requirement: any MATH course (MATH 203 and higher) or PHIL 215 and 216. When Mr. Newell pointed out that no other specific courses are included in the proposal, Mr. Lesses rephrased his motion to change the Mathematics/Formal Reasoning paragraph in the proposal to the following: “Students must complete two approved mathematics or mathematical logic courses.” The motion passed.
FOREIGN LANGUAGES, CLASSICAL OR MODERN

Stephanie Low began the discussion by asserting that the proposal discriminates against students who have worked on languages in high school by requiring them to enroll in a language course to get credit for earlier work. Lynne Ford responded that the under the current policy students can earn 12 credit hours; the proposed change will increase that to 15 hours. Brian Scholtens thinks that languages are getting preferential treatment. He is not opposed to language study but to the lack of flexibility for science majors who must begin languages immediately. Currently, he said, the only flexibility in the science curriculum for many students in pre-professional programs is languages, and the proposed change would remove that flexibility. To Andrew Sobiesuo’s argument that students lose their language skills if they delay taking further language courses, Mr. Scholtens and others replied that the gap in learning is not unique to languages.

Pointing to the General Education and the Majors Worksheet (p. 2 of the Revised proposal) where Humanities, Social Studies, and Natural Sciences are included in the first year, Glenn Lesses reminded the Senate of the Welfare Committee’s recommendation that Foundations and Intellectual Traditions be combined because the distinction between the two areas is not clear. Ms. Ford replied that although the Ad Hoc Committee recommends some Intellectual Traditions courses in the freshman year, most of that year should be spent on basic skills.

Kem Fronabarger commented that small departments recruit majors from entry-level courses, and he faulted the Majors Worksheet for encouraging students to delay taking science courses. He moved the following change to the General Education and the Majors Worksheet: Change H/SS/(Nat Sci) to “H/SS/Nat Sci” and repeat the phrasing in all four listings during Year One and Year Two. The motion passed.

Motion of Adjournment

At 7:25 p.m. Bob Mignone called for a motion of adjournment until 5:00 p.m. on April 13. The motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Haney
Faculty Secretary