FACP Meeting 3/15/17, 1:00pm, President’s Conference Room

- Members present: Drs. Erman, Howell, Keyes, Lanahan, Lesses, Litvin, Ross, Mr. Seay, President McConnell and Mrs. Hammond
- Meeting commenced at 1:05pm, concluded at around 2:20pm
- Questions for President:

1. “Are there any plans for the College to commemorate Women’s History Month (March) this year? If so, it is suggested that any communications regarding this be made early, and possibly include celebrations of the lives of women faculty who have passed away in the last year.”
   * The President remarked that the President’s Office has no process for involvement in commemorative months, this is the first that the President was made aware of it. It may be something that Marketing & Communications should be aware of, and to create a process for.

2. “Last week, there was an address to the Faculty Senate regarding adjuncts at the College, covering topics such as salary, working conditions, and collegiality. In our last meeting, you indicated that adjunct pay needs to be increased. Are there any more definite plans on how to increase adjunct salaries, and where the money will be coming from?”
   * The President remarked that the budget is in its preliminary stages as of right now, but that adjunct pay is going to be an item of importance to be addressed, as well as tenure & promotion raises, and merit pay for staff. The College is waiting on word of what the state allocations will be. Last year the state added $500,000 in additional expenses for the College without any compensation. Also, there will be a bond bill this year that the college can be a part of. If there is, the President plans to ask the SC House for repairs of existing facilities, and then to ask the SC Senate for other additions. Overall, the school has limited bonding capacity on its own, as that is usually based on enrollment numbers.

3. “Do you have any plans to address the significant increases in employer retirement contributions that are currently under consideration in the state legislature? If so, where will the money come from and will it affect other aspects of the College’s operations?”
   * The plan currently under consideration could result in a $900,000 liability that will likely be unfunded by the state. Only theoretical at this point, but the state will possibly cap increases at 1%. However, the school may consider doing 2% for a few years to lessen the length of time this will impact the budget. In the SC House and Senate, the College has pushed for a $1 million increase in the standard state operational allotment. Being a successful participant in any potential bond bill is essential for the college going forward. The College needs funds to address some of our historical properties on George St., Wentworth St., and Coming St., as well as Stern Center. The Learning Technology Center may be modeled after a similar building at the University of Florida Medical School. Funds for the LTC could possibly come from next year’s bill (very unlikely likely this year), and some of the funding could be from private donors.

4. “Could you comment on the potential space strains (dormitory and classroom) that the new Bridge Program will impose on our already constrained campus?”
   * The President remarked that we are space constrained but that the Provost assures him that we can make this happen. We will need to be innovative when it comes to allocating classrooms that are under-utilized in off hours. The College needs to renovate the front end of Sottile, which could be converted into a classroom. The bridge program will be a great way to increase the perception of the college’s quality and selectivity ratings – it is the quickest fix to improve qualitative factors at the College. Clemson has 700 students in their bridge program (ours will be
around 300 to start with). The bridge program will help increase diversity of the student body and will aid in the College’s delivery of its public mission. The President also remarked that our out-of-state application pool has increased this year.

5. “Will you comment on the seemingly selective review by College counsel of contracts that had previously been approved for speakers coming to the College? (Newsome and Coates)”  
   * Prof. Lesses expanded on the question that the contract contains additional language prohibiting the speaker from making disparaging remarks about the College. The President responded that contracts are not selectively reviewed, and all speaker (and other type) contracts need to go through the College’s legal affairs office. The President has no specific knowledge of these particular contracts. A speaker contract made through the Foundation is not protected by the same state law applicable to a state entity. Thus, College counsel needs to review such contracts. The President responded that he needs to see the specific contracts in question to determine if anything violated college protocol.

6. “Could you explain why the complete “Great Colleges to Work For” data for 2015 have not been released? The Administration did release summary data (after a significant delay); however, the full data have not been released as they were for the 2013 results. The faculty would appreciate some transparency from the Administration on the reasons for this.”  
   * The President responded that information that was not released was anonymous remarks about individuals at the college, which was not deemed to be helpful or appropriate to release to the general population.

7. “The sense of the committee is that faculty morale remains an issue across campus. Are there any plans to assess or address morale issues? For example, as recently as 5 years ago, several departments on campus were considering a move towards a 3/2 teaching load for research-productive faculty, while now the sense is that we are moving in the opposite direction, and that 4-4 teaching loads are already happening in some departments. This is considered “institutional regression” and detracts from morale, particularly given the grunt work on accreditation that goes essentially unrewarded in most situations.”  
   * The President responded that College has not experienced any growth lately, and that this is why the College is in the funding/budget predicament that it is in. The College is the only substantial public institution in the state that did not grow over the last 10 years. Progress takes resources, and we have to increase capacity in order to address this. We need the faculty’s help on figuring out how to increase capacity and generate revenue. For example, innovative M.S. programs make money. We need to increase our appeal to out-of-state students with high academic profiles. We need donors to give to academic programs and departments. We could need to name Dixie Plantation and the additional 200 acres as the “sustainability campus” of the College. We need to make Sottile and Dixie into more cash-positive assets.

8. “Several CofC faculty members are members of Phi Beta Kappa, however the College does not have a chapter. Faculty would require support from the administration to apply to start a chapter. Would you be willing to support that?”  
   * The President will be happy to visit this question after the SACS-COC site visit.