Minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Advisory Committee to the President: November 28, 1027

In attendance: Emily Beck, Lisa Pinley Covert, Heather Crosby, Irina Erman, Denis Keyes, Brenton LeMesurier, Robert Pitts, Mark Pyles,

Could we revisit the issue of faculty/staff morale?

1. College of Charleston has been ranked #2 in last year’s U.S. News and World Report in the area of Best Undergraduate Teaching and yet this high achievement is not reflected in faculty salaries and talented faculty members are leaving. As a likely result, our status continues to fluctuate in national ratings. Are we investigating ways to improve salaries, and do you know of any data that might identify why this is so? What, if any, potential areas of morale building have been identified? The Compression issue has not been addressed in over 20 years. Adjunct salaries: we were told have been increased. Are the Board of Trustee members really aware of how serious the morale problem is? Francis Marion University morale – perhaps CofC should seek guidance & ideas from FMU?

Response

President: The college needs to have more income and to be more effective with its money. We need to create something new that will attract students. He wishes we had more money. We added expenses and did not add students. Tuition reserve is being used for building maintenance. They are working to increase the financial base of the college. He used the example of a 3+1 collaborative program with other schools. Faculty Senate has approved a Science graduate degree. Gen Studies major might bring more revenue. Hoping to get legislation money by arguing that we agreed to take more in-state students but consequently, that revenue needs to be replaced.

Working on faculty salaries and comparing to other schools on compression. Abatements for out-of-state students are competitive. 75% of out-of-state students are full tuition. How to convince these students to come here?

Administrative “bloat” is not an issue here.

Unfunded mandates: The state mandated that employees pay a higher % into retirement and the college stepped in and paid for that.

Message to legislation: If we take more in-state students, money must come from somewhere.

Lisa Pinley Covert: On improving student experience. Example: independent study opportunity could perhaps be accompanied by incentive for instructors? Perhaps, course release after teaching so many?

President: Looking to making an incentive account. Pres asked for our thoughts on how this incentive account might function.

He is also looking to enlarge the college.
Brenton LeMesurier: Retention issue. Incentives for independent study would also help with retention.

Irina Erman: How do retention and acceptance rates correlate? Pres is looking at ratings. Colleges are making SAT scores optional in terms of being counted toward acceptance.

2. The cost of living in Charleston has seen significant increases that affect student housing costs, as well as faculty and staff morale. Potential help for childcare costs? Many faculty and staff have asked about the possibility of the College providing some sort of daycare/preschool facility for children up to kindergarten. There is a laboratory school, The N.E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center (ECDC), but that site only accepts 12 new children annually so this does not come close to addressing the challenge faced by most faculty and staff in finding quality, affordable childcare.

President: the Day Care Program is now at capacity and would lose accreditation if more children were added. The problem with day care co-ops is they are not insurable. Real estate is the key to more day care.

Lisa Pinley Covert: Maybe North Charleston could be an option for day care space? For faculty and students?

Heather Crosby: On Tues and Thurs the No. Charleston facility classes are empty.

3. Has the administration looked into the problems in hiring and retaining talented faculty? Business lost faculty recruits because of salary policies (median down) – and Business pays best of all schools on campus. This affects other programs even more, obviously.

- **Best Colleges 2013 Results:**
  - College Not Recognized as High-Achieving.
  - College Results Generally Were Below Most or All Comparison Groups.
  - Faculty Generally Less Satisfied with College than Other Groups (e.g., Administrators, Staff).
  - Department Chairs/Immediate Supervisors Given Higher Marks by Faculty and Staff than Other Administrators.
  - No Results in the Very Good to Excellent Range.

- **2015 Faculty Comments – what would make COFC a better place to work?**
  - Better pay, better benefits.
  - Competitive salaries, fair salaries, child care, medical/dental insurance, free / reduced tuition for family, professional development, maternity leave.
  - A clearer articulation of the central importance of teaching and the C of C mission.
  - Better communication from/with senior leadership. More transparency.
  - Need to reduce administrative bloat – too many bosses, not enough workers.

4. Is there any further information about the 270 students accepted for 2017-18 who did not enroll? President: This analysis is in progress. Bridge program came close to target. Total of bridge students is 230+.
5. How might you increase the levels of administrative transparency, in effort to improve faculty awareness and shared governance? As an example, the Bridge Program: were faculty at all involved with the planning and implementation of that program? If so, who? We know the program was presented to Academic Planning, but in general, faculty do not feel they have had any input into the Bridge Program.

President: Consideration of the Bridge Program went to academic standards and academic planning and was thoroughly vetted with many academic groups.

The President on transparency: Provost is transparent; they’ve opened up the budgetary process and are discussing trends in enrollment, etc. Businesses are asking the college to meet the employment needs of the area, e.g., teaching. We need a new teaching incentive such as teaching fellows program.

Denis Keyes: 90% of our ed students have jobs upon graduation.

President McConnell asked us for ideas about incentives to attract more students to want to be teachers.

6. There is a campus study being conducted on departments and majors in terms of student enrollments, department productivity, etc. Could you share with us what variables are being studied and perhaps how the results might be utilized in the future? Cost effectiveness study – available moneys in certain areas of the College are frequently re-allocated to areas that need more funds. How will you make this process as transparent as possible?

President: The study is going on but right now the variables are being worked on so that the results will not be misleading. The Provost is working on this. It could be used for discontinuation of lines.

There are things we offer that are more expensive but we have to offer them. Example: Accounting courses are very expensive but we must have them.

Robert Pitts: Branding is important and we must protect our core identity. Please make use of faculty for branding and for info for this study. We might help inform on decisions about replacing lines.

7. Racial insensitivities: Could the Honor Code be amended to state that each student is viewed as an ambassador of the College, and as such, can we extend the Honor Code to include off campus? Related problems in Greek life.

President on code of conduct: the issue of off campus violations is a legal issue. Racist/hateful language that is arguable gets into free speech issues.

8. Smoking was prohibited on campus several years ago, yet enforcement of this policy remains lax and there are several areas of campus in which there are still no signs prohibiting smoking. Could you commit to a timeline by which to improve prominent signage on campus and greater enforcement of the policy?

President: We cannot enforce non-smoking on a public street.
Emily Beck: But, the Cougar Mall is notorious for student smoking.

Denis Keyes: as is the area behind the Ed Training Center.

President asked us to send a list of places for enforcement and for signs. He will contact public safety.

Meeting adjourned.