President’s Faculty Advisory Committee  
Wednesday, February 10, 2010, 2-3pm  
MINUTES

Members Present: President Benson, Melissa Hughes (Chair), Morgan Koerner (Secretary), Bob Mignone, David Mann, James Neff, Katina Strauch, Elijah Siegler, John Walsh

Agenda Items

1. Updates from the President
   - The President briefly described the current budget situation and reviewed the most recent state cut to the College of Charleston budget.
   - The President described his discussions with the Board of Trustees about changing the financial model at the College and outlined six major areas where the College would like to invest money over the next three years if new sources of revenue were to become available (in no particular order):
     1. New faculty lines;
     2. Bringing faculty salaries up to market levels;
     3. Facilities for the College;
     4. Student financial aide;
     5. Deferred maintenance;
     6. Information Technology replacement.
   - The President will continue to meet with the Board to discuss the issues at stake and the different scenarios by which the College of Charleston financial model might be changed. In March, the President and other College administrators will meet with the Board on a one-day retreat to discuss these issues. The Board of Trustees is expected to make a decision on this issue at the June meeting.
   - The President described the status of discussions about purchasing the McLeod Plantation. He has met several times with different cultural heritage groups to talk, and as result of these discussions, the plan to put a recreation field on some of the land has been dropped. Discussions about how to use the land and whether it is still feasible for the College to purchase McLeod are ongoing.

2. CARTA Express Bus Service
   - The Committee underscored the positive reception the CARTA bus service has had amongst both faculty and students at the College. It has been a fabulous service and has done a great deal to facilitate “town and gown” interaction for students and faculty. Currently, 30% of College of Charleston students live off of the peninsula in areas serviced by CARTA Express, and CARTA has made it much easier for them to avoid driving and parking in downtown neighborhoods. CARTA has also made it possible for faculty and staff to avoid hefty downtown parking fees and has been extremely well received.

3. Student Related Concerns
   - The Committee described their concerns about a new Student Life policy that makes seniors in their final semester ineligible for student fee support. This policy, the Committee pointed out, is likely to sap student group leadership and
alienate students in the very moment in which they are transitioning to alumni status.

- The Committee also inquired about the possibility for free summer on-campus housing for students who are conducting research on campus. This benefit would likely be low-cost to the College, as these students would be a small proportion of those staying in the dorms; this model has been effective at other Universities and would be an excellent way to support students conducting summer research projects.

4. Removal of the Ombuds Office

- The Committee expressed concerns about the recent shift at the Ombuds office from one Ombudsman to three (one responsible for students, one for staff, and one for faculty). The Committee expressed concern that because the contact person for faculty is a fellow faculty member, certain faculty members might be uncomfortable addressing sensitive issues.
- The President raised the possibility of allowing employees with concerns to go to any one of the three representatives at the Ombuds Office, and the Committee agreed this would likely circumvent these concerns. The President agreed to look into this possible solution.

5. The Role of the Committee

- The Committee mentioned that the Speaker of the Faculty, Joe Kelly, had tasked the Faculty Advisory Committee to the President to think about its future and its role. The Committee then opened the floor for a discussion about its role.
- The Committee and the President discussed how the Committee can function and has functioned pro-actively, but that scheduling and timing often make this ideal difficult to achieve.
- The President noted that the reactive role of the Committee has also been extremely important, and he cited the conversation with representatives from Internet Technology from December as an example of how effective the reactive feedback from the Committee can be.
- The President noted that he would like to talk with the Chair of the FAC a week or two before each meeting so that they can better plan and prepare for the discussion to come. The President also floated the idea of extending the Committee meetings length to 90 minutes when necessary.

6. The Management Change at the College Bookstore

- The President briefly described the changes at the College Bookstore and noted that Barnes and Noble, and not the College, is paying for the renovation.

The next scheduled FAC Meeting is on April 5th from 9:30-10:30am.

Morgan Koerner
Secretary
FAC 2009/2010