Faculty Budget Committee  
Meeting September 2, 2015

Attending:  
Julia Eichelberger, Chair  
Brian McGee, Interim Provost  
Calvin Blackwell  
Doug Friedman  
Courtney Murren  
Martha Stackel  
Tom Ross  

Julia requested a volunteer to serve as secretary; the committee decided to rotate this position among committee members.

Brian McGee shared with the committee the chart listing undergraduate fall enrollments at the College of Charleston from 2012 to 2015, with both official enrollments and enrollment projections. He noted that the College has missed its enrollment targets since 2012; this follows a period of relative stability in enrollment targets in the 1990’s and early 2000’s. Even with a large expenditure devoted to improving recruiting in the past year, enrollment of non-resident (NR) students did not meet projections. Thus there is a 1.3 million dollar shortfall in this year’s budget. The quality of NR students is changing; whereas the College was accepting 60% of NR applicants in 2008, in 2015 the College accepted 80% of NR applicants. Average SAT scores have dropped from last year’s score of 1130 to this year’s score of 1119. McGee also noted that more students are opting to take the ACT rather than the SAT.

McGee stressed that the College must adjust its world view to incorporate the new reality of fewer NR enrollments. The College must bring in more revenue or spend less. The Bachelor of Professional Studies program is not bringing in meaningful revenue, and this matter is being addressed. Changes in admission requirements are being reviewed as one possible answer to attract additional students. Permanent downsizing is a likely scenario for the College, although this is difficult with the thin operational budget currently in place.

McGee spoke at length about tenure stream versus non-tenure stream faculty. There is a good deal of unevenness in how departments have populated their teaching staff, with little apparent thought having gone into the decision making at times. Some departments consist of all tenure stream faculty; other departments have a mix of tenure stream, non-tenure stream and adjuncts. McGee spoke of the need for a frank and candid discussion about these faculty staffing concerns. He also advocated for professional development opportunities for all faculty, not just those in tenure track positions.

McGee emphasized that the College is not in dire straits; we need not proceed in a panic. There should be a multi-year process to tighten up our financial situation and to move to a new financial reality. He also recognized the importance of providing faculty raises in non-recession times.
Some discussion of the School of Professional Studies followed. Space available there is not being used to its full extent; enrollments are disappointing. McGee noted that the mature students the BPS seeks to interest do not want to come downtown to attend classes; they far prefer the ease of parking and attending classes in the North Area. Market indicators project increased demand for programs for mature students. The College has not yet been really serious about attracting these students and has bungled past attempts in the North Area.

The discussion then turned to fees and whether they should be instated for the more expensive School of Business and the School of Sciences and Mathematics. When asked about fees per credit hour, McGee advised that this was very difficult to administer as drop/adds, financial aid, and other complications make accounting for per-credit hour a nightmare. The Faculty Budget Committee may be asked to weigh in on the question of fees for some schools; the Board of Trustees will be asked to consider this issue sometime this fall.

McGee said that the Provost’s Office would be carefully reviewing any faculty openings; some departments may be denied permission to fill faculty lines.

The College is looking at many ways of doing things differently; we have been slow to adjust to changing student preferences and trends.

Respectfully submitted,
Martha Stackel