Platforms of the Speaker Candidates

Following are the campaign platforms of the two candidates that have been nominated for the position of Speaker of the Faculty. The election will be held at the March 17 meeting of the faculty. An open forum where the candidates will present their positions and answer the questions of faculty is scheduled for March 3 in Room 300 of Maybank Hall.

Statement of Prof. Clyde Metz

This past year has been quite a challenge to the College. Of primary importance is the fact that the quality of our academic programs has not been questioned or compromised. The next few years will present even greater challenges as we face such problems as tighter budgets, recruitment and retention, physical plant expansion and maintenance, and possible major academic reorganization. We, as a faculty through our established procedures, must maintain our high standards and continue our efforts to improve our programs in order to better serve our students and our community.

One of the most important duties of the Speaker of the Faculty is to serve in the role of faculty spokesman to the “administration” (hopefully, so that they may better serve the College) and to represent the “administration” to the faculty. To accomplish this task of both groups working together better, I would like to investigate the possibilities of:

1. publishing *Newspeak* more frequently carrying more information of the activities of all committees;

2. distributing copies of minutes of all committees weekly to each committee chair and each academic department so that all faculty can be informed;
Newspeak

3. creating an ombudsman program (possibly through the Faculty Advisory Committee to the President) to help to identify problems and their possible solution;

4. requesting the President to attend and to participate in debate at faculty meetings;

5. increasing the quality and quantity of student input to the standing committees of the faculty; and

6. establishing a means to have secretarial help and to cover duplicating costs for the operation of faculty committees.

Although some might consider me "new" at the College, I feel that my experience on the Curriculum and Academic Planning Committee here at the College and with a representative faculty government at another institution would overcome any weakness in tenure. Even if not elected, I would hope that some of the above suggestions would be considered by the successful candidate and turn out to be beneficial to the College.

Statement of Prof. Michael Finefrock

To all interested faculty members:

It's been said many times that the office of Speaker of the Faculty has very little real power. The incumbent is necessarily quite visible, presiding over faculty meetings and attending a plethora of campus functions and work sessions. However, the Speaker's most important duty is to help the faculty articulate its collective vision of the educational process. This means being a vocal representative of faculty interests before the administration. And he or she must be an energetic advocate of a constructive role for the faculty in the policy making processes of the institution.

Twelve years as a member of this faculty, plus two prior years service at California State University Long Beach, have made me acutely aware of the need for good communications between all parts of the academic community. My work on a number of standing committees that deal with matters of direct value and benefit to the faculty (such as Research, Curriculum and Academic Planning), my service as chair of the principal liaison to the administration (Faculty Advisory), and my membership on several ad hoc committees have given me an informed perspective on the goals of the College. As an officer and board member in a national professional organization (the Middle East Studies Association) and as presiding officer of an active educational group within the local community (the Charleston Computer Club), I have gained useful experience in leadership and parliamentary procedure. Four years of editing and assisting in the production of the latter organization's newsletter, along with some recent work as a freelance journalist for several national publications, have given me technical experience that could prove useful in continuing the production of Newspeak.

As chair of the last Advisory Committee to produce a survey of faculty attitudes and opinions (fall 1984), I helped to tabulate and evaluate the resulting
information. The following are some of the more important issues that many of us believe require close attention:

1. The administration should be encouraged to improve faculty morale by making greater use of standing committees. While there is often good reason for the president to assign specific tasks to ad hoc faculty committees, the faculty-administration "task force" approach to problem solving has at times appeared an intentional end run around faculty governance. A case in point is the Faculty Advisory Committee, which meets with the president at his pleasure--albeit not once in the entire fall semester of 1985! Likewise, not a few faculty members who have spent days, even weeks, of hard work on a project only to find their recommendations superseded or ignored, have elected to pull away from further active participation in campus affairs. That we have a serious problem just in getting and keeping a quorum for our monthly faculty meetings suggests that many of us find greater reward and satisfaction in personal pursuits than in participatory government.

2. The current draft Faculty Manual requires some significant revision. It seems to have grown to more than twice the size of the one in force when I first came to the College, but without being a more effective instrument. The best approach to such a task might be to eliminate any presumption of a basic adversary relationship between faculty and administration.

3. In economic matters the College community is facing a most difficult period, but the matter of salary inequities remains a major concern. The administration should be urged to continue examining the salary structure. In particular, the faculty benefits package should be expanded to include better opportunities for sheltering retirement income.

4. Newspeak can be a vehicle for communication, but its readership must have the motivation to become its contributors as well. On the one hand this means that the newsletter must become, as in the past, a completely free forum of expression with any editorial policy clearly stated. On the other hand, its readers should be encouraged to contribute (and hence participate) even when they do not seek involvement in debate. To this end I would hope the format of Newspeak could be enlarged, in a way previously suggested by Suzanne Moore and others to include a section on Faculty professional activities. Let's not leave it to the News and Courier to be the first to tell our colleagues the extent to which we are indeed a community of teachers and scholars.

5. The problem of declining enrollments has so far been struck only a glancing blow by the faculty. Most of us are aware that the College still has a somewhat well deserved reputation as a party school. Too many of us have heard student reports of "under achiever" peer pressure in the dorms. The advising process can be considerably improved, both structurally and technologically, and this goal can be furthered through the suggestions of experienced faculty members. On the other hand, what have we done on a College-wide basis for those students who achieve academic excellence? The answer is "damned little!" Oh sure, we've got a few scholarships for truly needy students, and the Honors Program is available to anyone interested in a more structured alternative to the
Newspeak

standard undergraduate prerequisites. But other than polite applause and maybe a rebel yell or two for those who manage to stick it out four years in order to graduate on the cistern, we give our students very, very little recognition. Accordingly, I propose that the College institute a formal "Dean's List" honor roll to be published at the beginning of each semester. Let's make some noise about student excellence when it happens. Even if it is only the most simple of ceremonies in the president's garden over a couple cups of lemonade and some finger sandwiches, I'll bet the administration won't have any difficulty finding faculty willing to stay after 4 p.m. to talk with bright, intelligent students.

6. Last, but far from least, is the serious problem of faculty paperwork burnout. Most of us are thoroughly frustrated by all the institutional labor that, in the words of a former Speaker of the Faculty, "seems out of proportion to the results momentarily gained". While all of us recognize that some, perhaps even a lot, of paperwork is inevitable, what we find most objectionable is the repeated demand for the same or similar information, each time in a slightly different format. The bottom line is, if the administration can maintain up-to-date records on all our current and former students, why can't it do the same for a couple hundred faculty members? And if a member of the press requests a copy of your resume from the College, do you know what will be provided? Last month I saw a copy of mine—it was about 12 years old. The administration has the facilities to accomplish the task, i.e., computers. It must be encouraged to give Top Priority to this matter, since faculty paperwork burnout is easily translated into further student retention problems and revenue shrinkage.

In the last analysis, the Speaker of the Faculty must be prepared to prod, encourage or cajole the administration, and any other agency of the state hierarchy, into recognizing that ours must be a partnership in the pursuit of academic excellence, a commitment to a common goal that can be only enhanced by effective communications with faculty as individual members, as departments, and as a community of dedicated professionals.

Flix of CAB Invites Faculty to Movie Special

Flix of the College Activities Board is presenting a Walt Disney Film Festival, and members of the faculty and their families. The following features are scheduled:

Saturday March 22 Alice in Wonderland at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Sunday March 23 Jungle Book at 3 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.
Prices: $1 with C of C ID
$2 for non-students
$.75 for children

Both features will be shown in Physicians Auditorium.