Hugh Wilder

The Speaker of the Faculty has little power or authority not shared by all faculty members. He or she does have a public role, however, and an active Speaker can help get issues of faculty concern on the College agenda. I would be an active Speaker, and will introduce my candidacy by listing some issues that I think need faculty attention. If I am elected, I will try to get these on the appropriate agenda:

1. Faculty Teaching Loads and New Positions. There has been much talk about and some (uneven) movement toward a 3-3 and even lower teaching load. My concerns: (a) The still "official" 4-4 load is too high, and is not universally shared. (b) I'm all in favor of a standard 3-3 load (with reductions for administrative assignments and research projects). (c) I'm against general increases in class size as a means of achieving the 3-3 load, and I'm also against increasing the College student/faculty ratio. (d) I'm very strongly in favor of interdepartmental equity (faculty in different departments should have comparable loads, as measured by sections and students), and less strongly in favor of intra-departmental equity (there should be some latitude on this, but I think a two-tiered professoriate would be divisive and inappropriate at our teaching oriented College; our reliance on adjuncts is troubling enough). Given (a)-(d), it follows I think that we need more faculty lines at the College. As Speaker, I'd help lobby for these and for the 3-3 load.

2. Enrollment. Projections call for slow, minimal growth, which I support. No enrollment increases should be contemplated until new faculty lines are approved and filled. Admissions is doing excellent work now; applications are up, and with little increase in the number of acceptances, we can enhance the quality and diversity of admitted students. We need better scholarships, however, to attract an ethnically diverse and academically excellent student body.

3. Minorities on Campus. It is (still) a scandal that a public college in Charleston has so few black students and faculty members. I haven't seen recent figures (why not?), but my impression is that the number of black faculty members is down and the number of black students is holding even. Better recruitment and retention programs for both groups are needed. Exchange programs (for administrators, faculty and students) and visiting appointments should be established. Women faculty members are a minority (and a small one at upper ranks); equity in compensation and evaluation need continued attention. Offices for minority and women's affairs could be established to maintain support systems.

4. "Outcomes Assessment." I hate the term, but we'll all have to live with the practice. This (continued next page)

david mann

Last year at this time I understood the Speaker to be the faculty's representative: to perceive and express faculty views; to serve as a conduit who transmits and receives substantive decisions, procedures, and priorities; and to advocate faculty positions on relevant issues to the administration, the Board of Trustees, and the legislature. Although it took about five seconds for me to realize that job description essentially to be correct, it took about five months for me to understand how to begin accomplishing those significant tasks.

This has been another "transition" year. There is a caution sign to those who read this--next year will be yet another transition year, albeit of a different form. There are some obvious new issues, and some issues raised last year remain unanswered or unresolved. These issues illustrate the fact that we take our profession seriously, perhaps sometimes too seriously. What follows in this letter must not be considered as a "declaration of war" against "those who oppose our points of view." These issues must be discussed rationally, calmly, thoughtfully, without haste, but immediately:

1. The most obvious new faculty issue is "assessment." The newly established Assessment Planning Committee will have met once by the time you read this. The Committee is supposed to sort through the literature, examine existing plans currently employed elsewhere, and begin the groundwork for a College-wide plan here. It is vital that faculty monitor the progress of this Committee and its work so that assessment does not (a) waste scarce individual, department, or College resources, (b) turn into another tool to be used against individual faculty, or (c) become an academic game of cat-and-mouse--much like accreditation and self-study--we play the game but we know the outcome in advance.

2. "The Cutting Edge" proposal, formally titled "State Commission on Higher Education's Initiatives for Research and Academic Excellence," has been offered for consideration to the state legislature. Whether the legislature adopts it or not, we must remain hopeful that the funding formula would be enhanced by that legislation. We also have to guard against CHE intrusion into policymaking realms that are rightfully ours, such as curriculum, programs, scholarship aid, and admissions.

3. Is it possible to construct a more meaningful yearly evaluation of College Administrative Personnel? Faculty are still being "evaluated to death," though we may be better off now than we were last year. Resolving the issue of effective Administrative evaluations is necessary.

4. Many faculty complain that salary inequities within and between ranks, based on years of service (continued next page)
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will be on the agenda next year, and I'd just like to be sure it's on our faculty agenda. We must be involved in interpreting state and accrediting agency mandates, in evaluating current assessment practices (we do after all grade students and graduate only those satisfying College requirements, and some departments use other assessment mechanisms - standardized certification programs and exams, for example), and in designing, implementing and evaluating any new assessment programs.

5. From Decentralization to Marginalization. The decentralized budget threatens the welfare of programs that don't have departmental homes (Studio Humanities, American Studies, International Studies, Urban Studies, and also the Honors Program, though it at least has a budget). These are expensive (often requiring team-teaching, with relatively low enrollments), but very attractive parts of the College. They require special support. The decentralized budget also threatens visiting speaker series, College-wide and non-departmental special programs, and faculty research and development. These too require special support.

6. Faculty Evaluations. The Manual may not be as clear as it should be about promotion, tenure and third-year evaluations. Do we have the policies we should have? Are current policies consistently followed? Can evaluations be conducted in a less intimidating way, with smaller piles of documentation? Can we simplify annual evaluations of tenured faculty members?

7. Student Dress at Spring Commencement. We may have a beautiful graduation ceremony, but is it the kind of beauty we should be aiming for? The local custom of formal dress speaks of privilege, class and social aspiration. As a faculty member I have a sense of failure and feel alienated from my students, when I see them dressed for a coming out ball at the most significant moment of their academic lives - the moment I should be sharing their pride in their academic achievements. I would rather they wore caps and gowns, to connect with the old and honorable tradition (I appeal to a Charleston sensibility) of academic life, speaking of intellectual values, and equality and humility in the academic community. This may be a tough issue (tougher than the 3:3 load, I predict), but it has not been formally addressed by faculty since my arrival at the College in 1981. The senior class meets to discuss the question and vote its preference each year; the vote this year (Cougar Pause, Feb. 10): "113-14 in favor of the traditional white dinner jackets and white dresses. Ladies will carry six roses."

8. Campus Intellectual Life. Many faculty members feel a lack of intellectual vitality on campus. And we also worry about student life - social and drinking patterns, lack of involvement and identification with the College. We have no College lecture series, few visiting speakers, no regular forum for faculty presentations, little public recognition of faculty scholarship. Publicity is a problem, and student and faculty attendance at events that do occur is often disappointing. Can faculty members take the lead in making this a more lively and interesting campus? (continued next page)

David Mann (continued)
service in rank, have re-emerged. This is largely due to the (small) flat-percentage increments allowed yearly by the state legislature. Aside from the knee-jerk "publish or perish" syndrome solution (we may publish, but we all perish anyway), there must be a remedy. Rather than being better off, financially we never keep up with inflation and therefore we are worse off.

5. Faculty Workload issues are of burgeoning significance. The unanticipated consequence of decentralized budgeting to the departments is the dearth of uniform policy guidelines regarding workload. It is difficult to write an acceptable refereed journal article under the constraint of a twelve-hour or three-preparation teaching load. We have managed to engage in professional growth and development notwithstanding that heavy teaching load. That cannot continue. It seems to me that we have to take a stand: we can do only so much, and no more; no more meaningless committee work, no additional advising responsibilities, no additional students in already overloaded classes--or else require less in the way of professional growth and development "to ourselves and our posterity." The tenured faculty must speak out, for the untenured have much to lose if they speak out, and the adjunct faculty--a few of whom should be roster faculty in the first place (another issue where College-wide policies defy reason)--have everything to lose if they so much as whisper.

6. Can faculty members' rights be more carefully delineated and adhered to in the Manual? This is not a new question. I had hoped that an annotated Manual--to include such information as when changes were made and why--would be helpful. I have urged strongly that a simpler, less redundant, and more clear Manual be presented. Also, the Manual should be a facilitating device, not a roadblock. The Manual is only selectively followed when it seems to suit those who employ it.

7. Recruitment/admissions/retention is a complex issue area of primary concern to teaching faculty. Curriculum quality is at stake. Unfortunately, we are funded based on FTE body count. Some of those bodies, to paraphrase a colleague who will remain anonymous, are d-o-a. This is a complex issue. It must be addressed by and under the control of the teaching faculty. It is a curriculum issue under the auspices of faculty policymaking.

8. The mission of the College, according to Dr. Lightsey, is not changing per se. However, aspects of the mission are being underscored in some areas and de-emphasized in others. The legislative creation of a separate Board of Trustees, pending and likely to pass this year, is part of that underscored. It fits with Dr. Lightsey's plan which established a Board of Visitors, developed the new dorm project, created and funded Presidential scholarships, and changed the athletic affiliation. Remaining to be resolved is the plan for graduate education programs: how are they to be funded, managed, organized, and counted as part of faculty workload? More generally, the College mission affects the faculty, the academic departments, the College budget, undergraduate (and graduate) student recruitment, and the curriculum. These need to be monitored constantly. We have to be certain that (continued next page)
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I am a candidate for Speaker of the Faculty because I feel some responsibility to offer faculty a choice in the election. My candidacy does not reflect dissatisfaction with the job our incumbent, David Mann, has been doing. But I do have my own ideas about faculty leadership, and would be very pleased to be Speaker - if not next year, some year.

David Mann (continued)

projects and missions which affect they faculty's prerogatives require faculty consultation and particular approval—not mere tacit consent.

9. Can we work harder to replace rumors with facts in a meaningful fashion? We are a diverse faculty. We are also unified: we comprise the College, we control the curriculum, and we confer the degrees. We have common problems and we have common objectives. The responsibility to communicate those common problems and objectives ultimately rests with all of us. There remains much room for improvement in the realm of administration-to-faculty communication and vice-versa. I have tried to provide more and better timely information to the faculty and staff. Yet much more work remains to be done in this area.

The Speaker must be a persistent advocate of the faculty. The Speaker must be an ombudsman, must knock on doors, and must solicit advice and opinions actively. Then the Speaker must transmit those opinions efficiently, frequently, and consistently. If chosen as your representative for a second one-year term, I will continue to gather, to understand, and to articulate your views.

election for speaker of the faculty will be Monday, March 14th

5:00 p.m.

Simons Fine Arts Recital Hall