Search Committees and Plans for Deans

The College will be conducting searches for three deans in the spring 2012 semester. Provost George Hynd sent an email to the faculty on November 23rd identifying the chairs and committee members for each search: the search for a new Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences will be led by Dr. Mike Auerbach, Dean of the School of Sciences and Mathematics, the search for a new Dean of the Honors College will be led by Dr. Valerie Morris, Dean of the School of the Arts, and the search for a Dean of the North Campus will be led by Dr. Lynne Ford, Associate Provost for Curriculum and Academic Administration. The job descriptions for all three positions are being finalized and will be published soon and the hope is that the search committees will begin reviewing applications shortly after the spring semester begins.

Once the committees have identified the candidates who will be brought to campus for interviews, information about the candidates will be made available electronically for review. Additionally, the three chairs have told me they plan to identify multiple ways for faculty to provide feedback to the committees after the candidate interviews. I encourage everyone to take advantage of the opportunity to learn about the various candidates and to attend presentations or sessions during the candidate interviews.

You will receive updates regarding all three of these searches as each committee selects finalists for the positions and schedules candidates for campus visits and interviews.
Faculty Involvement in Reviewing the College’s Strategic Plan

In October 2009 the College of Charleston Board of Trustees approved our current Strategic Plan. As a result of budget cutbacks over the past two years, President Benson asked each of the EVPs to review the particular goals and strategies of the Plan that were most relevant to their areas and to make recommendations for prioritizing or re-prioritizing goals and strategies. The EVPs have worked on their recommendations for the past several weeks and have presented them to President Benson.

President Benson and I have talked about ways in which faculty can and will be involved in this review process before he presents the final, revised version of the Strategic Plan to the Board of Trustees in January 2012. President Benson has assured me he is interested in getting faculty input in this process. I have recommended that he contact the chairs of various College committees to seek participation by members of their committees in the review process. In particular I recommended he contact the chairs of Academic Planning, Budget, Graduate Education, Continuing Education and Special Programs, Faculty Welfare, Assessment, Honors, the Faculty Advisory Committee to the President and the Educational Technology committees to identify faculty to review the revisions and to provide feedback. I realize the end of the semester is a hectic time for everyone, but I hope that members of these committees – or members of the campus at large – will participate in this review process. If anyone is particularly interested in participating in the review process and is not a member of one of the committees listed above, please contact me and I will let President Benson know of your interest in and willingness to be involved in the review process.

The revised Strategic Plan will be presented to the Board of Trustees at their January 2012 meeting and will be followed up with an itemized estimate of the costs for the various goals and strategies of the Plan at the April 2012 Board meeting.

Tenure and Promotion Review: Update on the Work by Academic Affairs

In the August Newsletter I reported that Academic Affairs had hosted a two-day retreat for deans, department chairs and faculty leaders from across the campus to discuss the Tenure and Promotion process and procedures and to try to identify ways in which the process needed to be and could be improved. Provost Hynd, Senior Vice Provost Diamond and Associate Provosts Caveny and Ford have been working on this using the recommendations from the August retreat. Bev Diamond presented a preliminary proposal and set of recommendations to the Faculty Welfare Committee for review and feedback before Thanksgiving. The Welfare Committee has begun their discussion and will provide feedback to Academic Affairs within the next week.

On Monday, December 12th, Provost Hynd will reconvene the group of deans, chairs and faculty leaders who participated in the August retreat and will present the work and proposal from Academic Affairs regarding recommended changes to the process and procedures for review of Tenure and Promotion. Based on the discussion and feedback at the December 12th meeting, appropriate committees and/or the Faculty Senate will continue conversations about the recommended changes to the review process for tenure and promotion.
Degree Completion Program Proposal

This past summer a task force, co-chaired by Dr. Mike Auerbach, Dean of the School of Sciences and Mathematics, and Dr. Lynne Ford, Associate Provost for Curriculum and Academic Administration, met and drafted a proposal for a Bachelors of Professional Studies Program to be offered at the North Campus. The purpose of the program is to meet the needs of adults in the Charleston area who have accumulated college credits from institutions, perhaps even the College of Charleston, but have never completed their undergraduate degree. This program will be a new degree and will be offered only to adults who either have already earned an Associate’s degree or who have a minimum of 60 transferable credits from other accredited institutions. The program will be offered at the North Campus and will offer courses by multiple departments across disciplines and don’t have an office manager or “go to” person in the building who can alert faculty to classroom problems or issues.

The Bachelor of Professional Studies will be a fourth degree for the College of Charleston (in addition to the AB, BA, BS) and represents a new form of community outreach consistent with our public mission. Because the core campus of the College of Charleston primarily serves a traditional-age population and the downtown location presents problems for adults working full-time to access courses and programs, we are not currently able to meet the educational needs of many adults in the area. The BPS degree will combine core courses developed for this program which reflect the liberal arts and sciences focus of the College along with academic course clusters created primarily from existing courses at the College of Charleston. These course clusters represent multiple disciplines organized thematically to advance employment and promotion goals rather than in traditional academic majors.

A preliminary draft of the BPS proposal was presented to the Academic Planning Committee early in the fall and was revised based on the feedback from that committee. The proposal is on the agenda for the January meeting of CHE. Assuming the proposal is approved by CHE in January, the full proposal will then be presented to Academic Planning, the Curriculum Committee and the Budget Committee as well as other appropriate committees in the spring. After review by all appropriate committees the proposal will go to the Faculty Senate for consideration.

Pilot Program: Notification of Problems in Classrooms

Anyone who has walked into a classroom to begin teaching and discovered that there are problems with the computer station or projector, problems with an electrical outlet, etc. knows how frustrating it can be and how unexpected – and often unknown – problems can require “on the fly” adjustments to the day’s lesson plans. What can be equally frustrating is not knowing whether the problem has been reported or whether the problem has been fixed prior to the next class, particularly in classroom buildings which are shared in a variety of formats which may include weekend classes, late night or early morning classes, as well as classes that are delivered on-line or as a combination of traditional lecture/discussion and on-line format.

In an attempt to address this, representatives from Physical Plant, the Registrar’s Office and IT have worked to develop a system to notify faculty who teach in a particular room if/when there is a report of a problem in the room. This system of notification will be piloted in the spring 2012 semester and will be assessed at the end of the semester to see how well it worked and what feedback was received from faculty. The process is designed to work as follows: when a problem in a classroom is reported to IT or Physical Plant, those offices will then send an email to all the faculty who teach in that room notifying them of the problem so faculty will be aware and can (hopefully) make any adjustments that might be needed prior to the beginning of class. If the problem will require some time before it can be fixed/resolved (i.e. replacement equipment must be ordered and installed), faculty will be given this information and an estimate of when IT or Physical Plant anticipates having the problem fixed. If there are any delays in fixing the problem, an updated email will be sent to let faculty know that, as well.

(Continued on next page.)
When I met with representatives from Physical Plant, IT and the Registrar’s Office they were excited about developing a way to better communicate with faculty when problems arise in the classrooms. The Registrar’s Office will work with IT to develop a way that you will only receive notices if there is a problem in one of your classrooms; notices will not be sent campus-wide, only to the faculty teaching in the particular room. Notices will also be sent to the academic department so chairs and administrative assistants are aware and can, if needed, notify any faculty who may not check or have easy access to their College of Charleston email.

In order for this program to work, I ask two things of you. First, please report any classroom problems to your administrative assistant or directly to Physical Plant or IT when you discover a problem. No problem can be fixed unless it has been reported. Second, please let me know of any issues or concerns you have about this process. All praise and compliments should be directed to Physical Plant, the RO and IT; any complaints or objections should be directed to me. At the end of the spring semester we will assess the process to see whether it is meeting your needs, and what, if any, changes need to be made to improve the process.