Strategic Planning

President Benson in November announced the steering committee to supervise Strategic Planning in the coming months. The co-chairs are Dr. Benson himself, Jim Deavor (Chemistry), and Amy McCandless (Dean of Graduate Studies). Among the sixteen members of the committee are these seven faculty: Erin Beutel (Geology), Calvin Blackwell (Economics and Finance), Renard Harris (Elementary and Early Childhood Education), Simon Lewis (English), Marian Mazzone (Art History), Darryl Phillips (Classics), and Lisa Ross (Psychology). Also on the committee are David Cohen (Dean of Library and of the School of Languages, Cultures, & World Affairs) and Marvin Dulaney (Director of the Avery Research Center).

Faculty Merit/Market Raises

The Faculty’s Compensation Committee, chaired by Hugh Wilder (Philosophy), has drafted a sixteen-article report meant to help guide the College in its implementation of a “merit/market” based system of annual faculty salary increases. The Committee has focused on the process by which merit might be adjudicated.

As many of you know, in recent weeks, each School has been drafting its own policy regarding evaluation of its faculty for the purpose of determining merit raises, focusing on both the criteria of merit and the process of judging merit.

On January 7, the Academic Forum met to discuss the Compensation Committee draft report and summaries of each School’s draft policies. (The Academic Forum, which is conducted by the Speaker of the Faculty and the Provost, consists of deans, department chairs, and the chairs of some Senate and Faculty committees.)

As a result of this meeting, the Compensation Committee will revise its report; and it will present this report to the Senate at its 22 January meeting.

While it would be pre-mature for me to discuss the draft report in detail, I would like to point out a few things that emerged from the Forum.

Any faculty receiving a raise will have to qualify by meeting certain standards. The final wording on this threshold of merit has not been finalized, but it is likely to be something similar to “demonstrating professional competence in teaching, professional development, and service.” I need not point out the high level of achievement faculties demand of themselves when defining “competence.”

Schools will establish other categories of higher merit. Some schools came to the meeting with two such further gradations; others with one. The Compensation Committee, which is only advisory, may recommend that the College establish

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...compensation continued.

one number of categories across the whole campus. However, each school will probably determine the criteria that must be met to qualify for each category.

The Compensation committee recommends that each school adopt a process of merit evaluation that is not burdensome to faculty: at the least, this would include a CV and a two-page narrative summary of accomplishments. Schools may demand more documentation: for example, of untenured faculty. Each year, faculty would be evaluated on their performance over a three-year sliding window. The Committee recommends that eventually the annual merit evaluation would coordinate with the evaluations for promotion, tenure, and post-tenure review, to avoid duplication of efforts.

All faculty, including tenured professors, will be evaluated every year.

Academic Affairs has been working in close concert with the Compensation Committee, and I applaud Associate Provost Diamond and Provost Jorgens for the open and deliberative process by which this change in the College's culture is being conducted. I recommend that all interested faculty read the Compensation Committee's report: when it is submitted to the Senate it will be posted on our website. All faculty are welcome to come and comment at the 22 January meeting; you also should be discussing the issue in your departments and influencing your School's policy through your department chair.

Board of Trustees’ January Meeting

The Board of Trustees met last Thursday and Friday, and I attended the Academic Affairs Committee meeting as well as the general Board meeting; Norris Preyer, chair of Budget, attended the Finance Committee meetings. Below are items of interest:

- The Board passed an ethics policy regarding “Conflicts of Interest” between employees and the College
- The BATTERY project is on schedule for a 1 March start of implementation; we are close to choosing a vendor for these new computer systems
- The Board approved a 5% increase in housing fees and 8% increase in meal plan fees for next year
- The new arena is slated for occupancy in Fall 2008; Athletics expects to generate between $1.25 and 2 million annually through seating commitments at the new arena

- The College received over $6.5 million in external grants last year (an increase of over 15% over 2006)
- The Foundation raised just under $15 million last year (an 8% increase over 2006)
- Student Affairs is looking into improving the exercise facilities for non-athletes at the College
- The Board confirmed the Senate's creation of the cognate major in Secondary Education
- The Board was informed that the budget it considers in July will include a new $20/student fee to fund scholarships for study abroad; the fee will raise $400,000 annually
- Two of our top legislative priorities are funding for the Science Center and the new Hazard Center.

Faculty Governance

At the 22 January Senate meeting, the Nominations committee will present candidates for an ad hoc committee charged with examining faculty governance and reporting its findings to the Senate. The candidates for this committee are Alison Smith (LCWA), Linda Fitzharris and Bill Barfield (EHHP), James Williams (Library), Todd Mc Nemney and Laura Turner (Fine Arts), Bob Mignone and Wendy Cory (SSM), Merissa Ferrara and Larry Krasnoff (HSS), and Kelly Shaver (SoBE).
General Education Update

The Senate has nearly finished the initial amendment process for the General Education proposal. It has yet to consider pp. 14-18, and it has not finished its discussion of p. 13. We are scheduled to conclude this initial debate at the 15 January special meeting. This will conclude the “seriatim” consideration of each separate page of the proposal. After that meeting, the ad hoc Gen Ed committee will prepare and publish a clean copy of the proposal as amended. The Senate will consider the proposal as a whole on 29 January. Amendments to any page of the document will be in order at that meeting.

I highly recommend that all faculty examine the next-to-final document, especially with an eye towards kinks or problems the curriculum might present to your majors, and that you communicate any such problems and possible solutions to your senators.

Last week, Terry Bowers circulated via e-mail a “clean” copy of the proposal, which contains most of the curricular requirements that will be considered on the 29th. So you and your department can get a head start on evaluating the new version of the General Education proposal. After Senate action on pp. 13-18, we will circulate an updated “clean” copy of the proposal.

Enrollment news

Don Burkard presented enrollment figures at the 12 December 2007 Senior Leadership meeting with the President, and then again at the January meeting of the Board of Trustees. I think that there a few things to note that faculty will find interesting.

First of all, our applications are up by about 18% over this same time last year. The total for 2007 was 11,054. Our freshman retention rate was 81.9%, up .7%.

Enrollment Management has determined that our chief competitors—the other schools to which our applicants are applying—are USC, Clemson, UGA, UNC Chapel Hill, and Winthrop. In-state tuition at UNC and UGA is about $2400 lower than ours; ours is slightly lower than the SC schools’. Our out-of-state tuition is the lowest in this group, and we offer the fewest scholarships.

When students decide between CofC and one of these other schools, we “win” at the following ratios: against USC, we win 59% of those decisions; Clemson: we win 46% of the time; Winthrop: 67%; UGa: 27%; UNC: 26%.

Burkard suggests that offering better and more merit scholarships would help us compete in North Carolina and Georgia, and in other states as well.

Perhaps the most interesting conclusion from the analysis of enrollment data is that the College is truly a national school. Eduventures Research Collaborative classified eleven states as “tier one” student exporters and eight others as “tier two.” Of the 150 top Masters-level universities (as identified by U. S. News and World Report), only CofC draws concentrations of students from ten tier one states: Texas, Illinois, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, North Carolina, Georgia, and Florida; and from three tier two states. In the words of Burkard, “The College of Charleston was the only public master’s institution that qualified as an aspiring national university.”
Edward Hart, At-Large Senator

Hart is a composer in the Music Department whose works have been performed around the world. He writes "concertos for piano and guitar, various orchestral works, chamber music, solo piano compositions, choral music, and art songs."* His "A Tidal Concerto," performed by CofC’s Enrique Graf, is available on CD at http://cdbaby.com/cd/enriquegraf

A native of Charleston and previous student of David Maves, Hart teaches theory and composition.

* http://www.cofc.edu/music/bio/hart.html

Correction: In the last newsletter, I reported that Board Member Don Belk was taking Spanish at CofC. In fact, he is taking German and has been an active supporter of the German program here.

Meet the Board

Demetria Noisette Clemons, elected by the legislature to represent the 6th Congressional District, is a CofC grad (B.S. in Psychology) and earned an M.Ed. from The Citadel. She is the principal at W. A. Perry Middle School in Richland County.

Bertie Mack Retires!

Albertha Mack, a fixture at the College for thirty years and a name synonymous with the Secretariat office since there’s been a Senate, retired effective 31 December 2007.

Committee News

Denis Keyes reports that the Post Tenure Review committee “will begin reviewing Superior candidates' packets in January.” Ten faculty members are going up for superior this year. The Committee is grateful to David Cohen and the Library staff for providing workspace this year.