

# *The Senator*

The Newsletter of the Wake Forest University Senate

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Michael D. Hazen, President

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## **Make yourself heard!**

### **Forum on Fringe benefits --- Nov 17, 3:30 p.m. --- Room 410 Benson**

This year the fringe benefits committee is trying to bring to the attention of the administration areas where fringe benefits have eroded over time, or are in need of review. We need to know -- what do the faculty and staff want? What is important to you and what is not? For some time there has been considerable focus on improving salaries, but if salary increases are made at the expense of a loss in the value of fringe benefits, we may not have gained as much as we think!

In 1978 the tuition reimbursement benefit was 66% of Wake Forest tuition. Now it is 12%. Tuition remission and reimbursement is considered an important benefit by universities nationwide, and a survey shows that Wake Forest is near the bottom of the pack in the value of this benefit. Other benefits have not increased in value in 20 years.

Is day care important to you? How about Graylyn Pool? Is QualChoice the HMO of your dreams? What do you think of our retirement options? Are you interested in the status of the day care initiative? Do you think Wake Forest should offer domestic partners benefits for same sex couples? For opposite sex couples?

**Please attend the Fringe Benefits Forum** on Nov 17! Unless faculty and staff express their views, the administration will assume that we are all well satisfied.

## **The University Senate Explores Nine Issues in 1998-99**

The WFU Senate adopted the following nine resolutions in their October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting:

- 1. To codify what offices constitute Senior Appointments that should be reviewed by the Senior University Appointments Committee.**
- 2. To establish a relationship between the University Senate and any committees that deal with more than one school.**
- 3. To engage the Board of Trustees in a dialogue about setting up a process for the selection of the University's President.**
- 4. To explore the future role of the Office of Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs in the University.**
- 5. To explore fringe benefit issues such as tuition remission, erosion of benefits, partner benefits, cafeteria approach to benefits, status of Qualchoice Advisory Committee, etc.**
- 6. To review and make necessary changes in the Senate's bylaws.**
- 7. To explore the role of the Long Range Planning Committee in advising the VP for Planning concerning the planning process.**
- 8. To examine Hawthorne/Reynolda Campus issues such as transportation, fringe benefits, teaching and research responsibilities, etc.**
- 9. To explore the nature and future of the WFU academic culture.**

## LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

*Mary Pendergraft, Chair*

*The Long Range Planning Committee shall participate in long range planning for the University and shall monitor and evaluate the University's planning process. One committee member shall represent the Senate on the University Capital Planning Committee.*

The Long Range Planning Committee has accepted three items from the senate's resolutions to address this year:

1. Already at work is a group deciding how we can best assist VP John Anderson in evaluating and monitoring the planning process.
2. Another group is looking into "cross-campus" issues--the relationships between the Reynolda and Bowman Gray campuses. Anyone with suggestions or questions on either topic should contact Ron Wright or Lou Kucera, respectively.
3. We also intend to renew our discussion with the administration concerning senate representation on committees that address issues affecting more than one school. As an example of such representation, a member of the LRP committee, David Levy, now sits on the Committee for Capital Planning.

## SENIOR UNIVERSITY APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

*John Moorhouse, Chair*

*The Senior University Appointments Committee shall recommend persons for honorary degrees to the Senate and advise on appointments of senior administrative officers of the University.*

(No report this period.)

## FRINGE BENEFITS COMMITTEE

*Carole Browne, Chair*

*The Fringe Benefits Committee shall serve as a conduit of information from the faculty and staff to the responsible University administrator on benefit issues. The committee shall also represent faculty and staff who have concerns/problems with a benefit program to the administration and seek resolution. The committee shall also develop and advocate improvements in benefits and report back to the senate.*

The Fringe Benefits Committee has been attempting to monitor the progress on the Graylyn pool renovation. At his time, the committee is only aware that the old pool site is still filled in with dirt, as it was on the April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the University Senate. The committee has not been able to obtain information about the next phase of the renovation. We hope to report on its progress in the next issue of *The Senator*.

In addition to sponsoring the November 17<sup>th</sup> Forum on Fringe Benefits, the committee has sponsored five resolutions that were approved by the Faculty Senate at its October 21<sup>st</sup> meeting:

**1. That the University Senate encourage the University to keep the tuition remission benefit for faculty and staff children who attend other institutions constant at 50% of Wake Forest tuition.**

One of the concerns of the Fringe Benefits Committee is the erosion of benefits over the past 20 years. One benefit that certainly falls into that category has been the tuition remission. At one time it approached 50% of Wake Forest tuition, but in the last 20 years as tuition has increased, not only at Wake Forest but elsewhere, the tuition remission benefit has increased only \$500. This means that faculty no longer have the same options to send their children to a comparable private school that they once had.

**2. That the University Senate periodically send an interesting and informative newsletter (not minutes) to faculty and staff, containing information about what is going on in the Senate, including information about benefits.**

The Senate needs a newsletter to serve as a vehicle for communicating with faculty and staff. The newsletter could contain background information, newsy items, and interesting reading not generally in the minutes of Senate meetings.

**3. That the University Senate investigate erosion in benefits over the past 20 years, and discrepancies between benefits packages offered at the various schools.**

The Senate should address the issue of the benefits packages between the various schools not being comparable, and that the benefits packages offered to one or more schools are not comparable to those offered at similar institutions.

**4. That the University Senate request of Human Resources an annual update of all benefits and benefit changes for Reynolda Campus faculty and staff.**

Although occasional memos come by detailing some major change or other in a benefit, no comprehensive brochure is available which details and explains the benefits offered on the Reynolda Campus. Such a brochure is available annually on the Bowman Gray Campus. In fact, there may be benefits available of which some faculty members are unaware. This brochure would significantly improve communication between Human Resources and the Reynolda Campus faculty and staff.

**5. That the University Senate initiate discussion to determine whether there is general support or opposition for having the Senate recommend to the University that a Domestic Partners Benefit be offered as part of the standard benefits package.**

More than 60 major colleges and universities now offer domestic partners benefits. These include Yale, Harvard, Duke, Dartmouth, Emory, and William and Mary. Domestic partners benefits entitle same-sex, and in some cases opposite-sex, couples to receive the same benefits offered to married couples.