

The Senator

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Faculty Meetings with President Hearn

Over the past few months, President Hearn has been meeting with selected faculty members for a discussion of issues that concern them. Since not everyone was able to attend these discussions, several of those in attendance shared what was discussed.

The major priorities of the faculty, were:

- Need for a Provost who will take an active role in long-range academic planning and be a strong voice for academics in the executive council.
- Need for a greater faculty role in university governance.
- Faculty representation on the Board of Trustees.
- Need for greater openness and communication between the administration and faculty.
- Failure of the administration to fulfill its commitment to the College, in the Plan for the Class of 2000, to bring faculty salaries to above the average for peer institutions.
- Marginalization of the University Senate.
- Inadequate support for graduate programs.

Additional issues raised:

- Inadequate benefits: in particular, tuition remission, day care, lack of access of Reynolda campus faculty to CREF funds at retirement, consideration for women faculty of child-bearing age in tenure decisions.
- The reaction of the administration to the Board of Trustees statement on the use of Wait Chapel for a same sex commitment ceremony and the ensuing WFDD controversy
- Broken promises from previous capital campaigns
- Passing on the work of administrative offices to departmental offices.
- Low faculty morale due to discrepancy between the adequacy of administrative and faculty salaries.

The Role of Faculty in University Governance Relative to Comparable Private Institutions

The University Senate Executive Committee conducted a poll of 20 other private institutions to see what role faculty played in university governance. We focused particularly on schools that are often included in comparison groups with Wake Forest, such as Richmond, Duke, and Davidson. We asked four questions of each institution: Do they have faculty representation on the Board of Trustees? Is there significant faculty involvement in the institutional planning process? Is faculty involved in the selection of the institution's president? Does the institution have a University Senate or a Faculty Senate, and why is it or is it not effective?

Of the twenty schools polled, all but three had some form of faculty representation on the governing board, and almost all had a mechanism in place for direct communication between a faculty body and the Board. The representation varied from elected faculty sitting on all or some of the committees of the Board, to the Senate Executive committee representing the faculty on the Board, to a single faculty member who attends all Board meetings. At Duke University, the Provost (Yes, they have a Provost!) represents the faculty on the Board. However, by University by-laws, no important matter affecting the academic mission of the institution can be taken by the administration to the Board without first taking it to the Faculty Council for review. The recommendations of the Faculty Council then accompany the administrative proposal to the Board. In many institutions the Senate or Faculty Council can make recommendations or refer matters directly to the Board. At Wake Forest, President Hearn serves as the academic representative to the Board.

By far the majority of institutions include faculty in the selection of senior administrative officers, including the President. The recent presidential selection committees at Duke, Vanderbilt, Davidson and Richmond all included a significant number of faculty representatives. Faculty involvement in institutional planning and decision making takes many forms. But in most cases the Senate or Faculty Council or other committees of the faculty have considerable input into planning and resource allocation.

It is unclear why the faculty at Wake Forest are not entrusted with the same responsibilities in governance as faculty at other institutions. The 1966 *Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities*, issued jointly by the American Association of University Professors, the American Council on Education, and the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, clearly states the participation of the faculty in planning, budgeting and appointment of the highest university officials is essential for the optimal attainment of an institution's educational goals. The Wake Forest Chapter of the AAUP and the University Senate are working jointly on a proposal for faculty representation on the Board of Trustees, and the administration has indicated its willingness to consider some form of representation.

SENATE DISCUSSION BOARD

The University Senate has established a Discussion Board at <http://psych.wfu.edu/wfusenate/> where faculty and administrators can share their thoughts and opinions. We'd like to hear from you. We would also like to hear from individuals at the Bowman Gray campus about how the Senate can best serve your interests. If you prefer to remain anonymous, e-mail Carole Browne with your thoughts and ideas at browne@wfu.edu.

Faculty Senate or University Senate?

The Senate continued its discussion of possible by-laws changes to make the Senate the unequivocal voice of the faculty on questions of university policy and direction. Administrators would continue to serve ex officio, but would no longer vote. Such changes might eliminate the confusion that sometimes results when the University Senate, composed in part of administrators, makes a recommendation to the administration.

Carole Browne reported on information gathered from peer institutions. Among the group of comparable universities studied, only two—the University of Richmond and Tulane University—have a University Senate. All the other institutions have a Faculty Senate.

President Hearn expressed support for the current form of University Senate. He said that the current arrangement provides a more regular forum for the exchange of views between faculty and administration. He pledged to attend University Senate meetings regularly and to encourage members of the administration to do so as well. Other members of the Senate asked for more specific examples of occasions when having a Faculty Senate would have made the body more effective. Some considered the WFDD issue a good example of the willingness of the administration to treat the University Senate as the voice of the faculty for some purposes.

At the close of the discussion, senators completed “straw poll” ballots, indicating Yes or No for whether they supported “conversion from a University Senate to a Faculty Senate.” The vote was 15 No, 8 Yes, and 1 Uncertain.

WFDD Committee

Ron Wright updated the Senate on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee on the WFDD issue. The committee will submit its final report to the Senate within the next few weeks. The committee recommended that the Senate take two actions upon receiving the report. First, schedule a full discussion of the report at a future meeting (e.g., Feb. 9). Invite members of the committee, the administration, and others to attend and present their views about the report and its recommendations. This would allow the Senate to make more informed choices about the report's proposals.

Second, the committee recommended that the Senate authorize the committee to deliver its interview notes to Sam Gladding to help in administrative matters. However, the Senate instead instructed the committee to *meet* with Gladding and orally convey any pertinent matters from the interview notes, to keep the documents under seal for a reasonable time, and then destroy them.

Senate-Trustees Communication

During the Senate meeting, conversation turned to ways to communicate faculty views to the Board of Trustees. David Levy and Carole Browne described their recent discouraging experience in attending a meeting of the Board's Academic Affairs committee and the need for a more formal communication process with the Board. Carole Browne also reviewed some of the approaches other universities have used to allow faculty representation on their boards of trustees.

President Hearn said that the Board sees itself as pursuing the overall good of the university rather than responding to particular constituencies. Nevertheless, President Hearn said that greater opportunities for consultation between the Board and the faculty would be worthwhile. He urged the Senate to work with Leon Corbett, the Secretary of the Board, to develop plans for regular, institutionalized faculty contact with the board.

The Next University Senate Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Senate meeting is for 4:00 Wednesday February 9th in De Tamble Auditorium. Remember that all Senate meetings are open to the University community, so if you are interested in what is going on, please come. The agenda will include discussion of the report from the Senate ad hoc committee on WFDD, which will be released in January, and discussion of the joint AAUP/ Senate proposal for faculty representation on the Board of Trustees.