

The Senator

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Carole Browne, President

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The Senate Year in Review

by Carole Browne

This has been an eventful year for the University Senate. One of our goals for the year was to have the Senate serve as a voice for the university community. I believe we have been successful in this, especially in the debate over the issues raised by the WFDD matter. After rejecting the idea of converting the University Senate to a Faculty Senate, we have instead added the university staff members to the Senate, so that it can be truly representative of the university community. We have continued to push for faculty representation on the Board of Trustees, and this summer the president and president-elect of the Senate will meet with the Chairman of the Board of Trustees to discuss a plan for such representation. We have also continued to push for improved benefits. Many of the Senate's recommendations on retirement benefits for the Reynolda Campus were approved by the Board of Trustees this year. The Senate has long been a vocal proponent of a day care facility for the Reynolda Campus, which along with support from other constituencies, has resulted in a plan which hopefully will be presented to the Board of Trustees in the near future. Next year the Senate will follow these benefits issues, plus others, such as tuition remission and domestic partners benefits, which have yet to be resolved.

The other goal for the Senate this year was to make the Senate more active in issues that affect the Bowman Gray campus, and in this we were less successful. Many of the concerns of the medical school are unique to that campus, but at the same time, are of interest and concern to the entire university community. Communication between the Senate and the faculty on the Bowman Gray campus has been difficult, and has hindered the Senate's ability to represent their concerns to the medical school and university administrations. Among the changes that were enacted in the Senate by-laws this year was a restructuring of the Senate committees that hopefully will allow the Senate to focus more on issues that affect the Bowman Gray campus as well as those of the Reynolda Campus.

This year the Senate was a vital part of the University community. It is important that the Senate remain active and visible so that faculty and staff continue to see it as a forum where issues can be discussed with the administration in a productive fashion. If the Senate is able to obtain faculty representation on the Board of Trustees, we can use this line of communication to strengthen the role of the faculty in university governance. And we need to reaffirm the importance of the University Senate in communications between the faculty, the staff, and the administration.

Financial Reports to the Senate

Administrators John Anderson, Louis Morrell, and Maureen Carpenter gave presentations to the senate concerning the budget and endowment. Comments were also made concerning the \$35 million Salary Opportunity Fund. Vice President Anderson indicated that next year's budget had been approved by the Trustees' Budget Committee for \$185 million and would be considered by the Trustees at their next meeting. The endowment stood at \$982 million as of March 31, 2000, having gained \$8 million in the month of March.

Treasurer Lou Morrell discussed the University's endowment and the Salary Opportunity Fund. Over the past 18 years, the average annual return on the endowment has been 17%. Under the University's Investment Policy, the assumed average annual return is 10.6%, consisting of a real return of 7.3% and an average annual rate of inflation of 3.3%. One-half of the expected return of 10.6% is distributed to the annual operating budget and the other half is retained in the endowment principal. It is also assumed that the principal will grow each year by 1% from gift additions.

The Salary Opportunity Fund is expected to achieve a return sufficient to support a 3.5% increase in faculty salaries and a 2.5% increase in staff salaries over a two-year period. Treasurer Morrell indicated that a series of Monte Carlo simulations had been run based on various return assumptions in a diversified portfolio. The outcome suggested that there was a 50/50 probability that the Salary Opportunity Fund would last about 15 years. The assets in the fund were invested in a more aggressive manner than the core endowment in order to achieve a higher return, although with more risk. A less aggressive approach would increase the probability of depleting the principal of the fund in a relatively short period of time.

President Hearn Describes Spring 2000 White Paper

Dr. Hearn reviewed highlights from his recent White Paper to the faculty. His concerns about private higher education in the future involve several factors that create a competitive environment for Wake Forest: the increased role of public education; the economics of private education represented by tuition costs; the narrow pool of students with competitive test scores; and the consumer movement with its emphasis on cost over quality. Dr. Hearn reported that recent alums believe that Wake Forest offers good quality education and that the reputation of the school continues to grow. He cited a need for a national outreach to our alums.

Day Care Facility vs Parking Structure

Dr. Hearn also indicated that a day care center is an important but expensive decision that cannot be accomplished until our financial health is assured. He said that did not mean there would be no day care center. The cost of the project is high because a day care operation is a heavily regulated activity. Another need is for additional parking on campus through the construction of parking structures. However, current funds only can provide for one of these two alternatives and a choice will have to be made.

Faculty Representation on the Board of Trustees.

Carole Brown brought the Senate up to date on the question of faculty representation on the Board of Trustees. The Executive Committee of the Senate met in April with representatives of the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees. Carole alerted the trustees to this issue; she said that the responses and questions from the trustees were positive. Al Hunt, Chair of the Academic Affairs sub-committee, followed up with a phone call and assured her that the Board would continue to discuss this issue. Leon Corbett said the Board is reviewing its own processes. A part of that review will look at faculty representation.

Election of New Officers

The Senate elected the following officers for the academic year 2000-2001.

President: David Levy

Vice-President: Tim Smunt

Secretary: Rhoda Channing

Assistant Secretary: Larry Daniel

At-large representative to the Executive Committee: Win-Chiat Lee

Capital Campaign

Vice-President Boyette presented the plans for the upcoming Capital Campaign. Rather than being the usual bricks and mortar campaigns of the past, this one is intended to be a campaign to increase the endowment for faculty support and student financial aid. Although the goal for the Reynolda campus is \$250 million, the campaign will be combined with the Bowman Gray campus for a total goal of \$400 million consisting of an endowment increase of \$156M (composed of \$100M financial aid, \$45M named faculty support, and \$11M unrestricted faculty endowment), ongoing support of \$72M, facilities of \$22M, and Bowman-Gray of \$150M. James Bullock will direct the capital campaign.

Staff Representation on the Senate

The senate passed the following resolution concerning staff representation: Staff representatives shall consist of three staff from the Reynolda Campus and three from the Bowman Gray campus, distributed as much as possible among the professional, clerical, and service staff. Until such time as the staff is represented by an officially recognized staff organization on either or both campuses, the staff representatives will be selected by the University Senate Executive Committee from among solicited applications and nominations.

Web Course Evaluation Sites

Dr. Michael Strynick from the Dept. of English described for the senate a variety of web sites concerning on-line course evaluations, class lectures and notes compilations, plagiarism checks, and other such activities. He noted that some include Wake Forest classes, such as the 6 pages of course evaluations submitted by Wake students to virtualratings.com. Another rating site is teacherratings.com. Versity.com is one of many that pay for and sell lecture and class notes, including those submitted by the professors. UCLA and UC-Berkeley have enforced cease and desist orders to these dot-coms. To check for possible plagiarism in student papers, plagerism.com and plagerism.org offer pay services and wordcheck.com will check work you personally submit to determine if your work is being plagiarized. Prof. Strynick suggest you contact him at strynsim@wfu.edu if you are interested in finding out more about these unique applications of the internet in higher education.

Senate Issues for 2000-2001

The members offered the following suggestions for Senate attention next year: (a) parking, (b) continued increase in Senate participation by the Medical School, (c) the Senate as an appropriate "Voice of the Faculty," (d) shuttle service between the Reynolda campus and the Hawthorne campus.