

The Senator

The Newsletter of the Wake Forest University Senate

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Larry Daniel, President

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Report from the Senate President

The 2002-2003 session of the University Senate began on October 2. New senators were welcomed to the Senate and Provost William C. Gordon was introduced. Provost Gordon expressed his enthusiasm for being back at his alma mater and briefly discussed some issues that will be coming up over the next few years. One of Dr. Gordon's main concerns is how Wake Forest will adapt and grow as a national university while maintaining the unique Wake Forest spirit. Dr. Gordon accepted an invitation to speak further on his plans and vision for academic advancement at an upcoming Senate meeting.



The Chairs of the five Senate committees were introduced and each commented on the charges of their committees for the upcoming year. Most of the charges were relatively unchanged from the previous year since they deal with long term questions which are continually evolving. Among these issues are salaries, health care, parking and day care. All of these issues are severely impacted by the current economy. Just as we have done on a personal level, the University has deferred a number of large capital outlays. However, we and the University must continue to consider needs, shop for the best values and optimize the use of resources. Toward these goals, some new committee charges have been added.

Charges to Committees

University Oversight Committee (Allin Cottrell, Chair) The UOC added a charge to "Work with the Administration to provide a clear overview of the allocation of resources at the University." By this charge the UOC will continue to the work of the Financial Communication Committee which was also chaired by Senator Cottrell. The issues to be addressed are outlined in *The Senator* 4 (2):6.



The Intra-university Operations Committee (IOC), Jim Flynn, Chair, The IOC will continue to study the options for day care including a cost analysis for various options. The IOC will evaluate whether an on campus day care can be competitive with commercial rates at an off-campus facility without a large subsidy that would severely impact other programs. The IOC will also consider a plan for the evaluation of administrators (*The Senator* 4 (2):1; also see below).



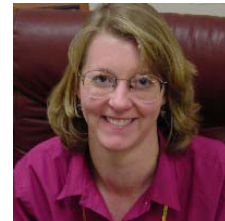
Senior Academic Appointments Committee (SUA), John Butterworth, Chair. The SUA asked for recommendations for honorary degrees. The committee stressed that they would like to consider scholars that may not have been recognized by a large number of other schools. Rather, we are asked to consider academics who show exceptional promise for future accomplishments. Candidates may be alumni but not current employees of WFU.



Fringe Benefits Committee (FRB), Dale Dagenbach, Chair. The FRB will continue to monitor benefits for faculty and staff in the areas of health care, retirement, tuition concessions, and dental and vision coverage, and attempt to provide valid comparisons of those benefits relative to those received by employees at peer institutions and comparable work places. In addition, the committee will place a greater emphasis on evaluating total compensation (salary plus fringe benefits).



Health Affairs Committee (HA), Gloria Muday, Chair. Since the change from QualChoice to a self-funded plan, the issues have changed considerably. Getting the lowest possible insurance rates are no longer a concern (or option since no company wants to provide an insurance plan). The university and insurees must now cover the cost of all health expenses, plus the administrative fee. Therefore, the concerns of the committee have shifted toward balancing deductibles/co-pays, etc. to provide for the best balance between payments from the plan and "out of pocket" expenses to our range of insured employees. The inability of some employees to afford their portion of the health benefit needs to be addressed. One option is to raise the minimum salaries and this and other options will be considered by the HA Committee.



Everyone is encouraged to contact members of the committees with concerns or suggestions. Committee Chairs, members and contact information are available from the senate website (<http://www.wfu.edu/organizations/senate/>).

Evaluation of University Administrators

In the Spring, the University Senate began a discussion on the evaluation of WFU administrators (The Senator 4 (2):1). Currently, some divisions of the university have evaluation processes for Department Chairs but many do not. In discussions, it was noted that the evaluations were effective tools for the administrators in self assessment and planning. Although, no vote was taken the general consensus was that university-wide evaluations were potentially useful and should be considered further. At the senate meeting in April, President Smunt asked for a report from the IOC. An excerpt of the report follows:

President Tim Smunt asked the IOC to investigate whether other universities had policies for evaluating administrators. The requests for information were conducted by emails to the Presidents of University Senates (or Assemblies) where web sites were available. Although rather non-scientific, the responses gave useful information. Of the 20 schools contacted, nine replied (the complete report is available as an appendix to the minutes of 10/2/02). All of the respondents have procedures for evaluating Chairs, Deans and other senior administrators. There is a wide variation in the formality of the evaluation process. Some are very formal and take many months. Others are seemingly less formal.

The evaluations generally have two components or purposes. First, there is an evaluation process that may be used in the decision to continue the term of the administrator. Second is a feedback process that seeks to inform and advise the administrator of opportunities for improvement. All the procedures have a mixture of these components. Two of the universities have procedures containing information, which may be helpful in the further study of this question. The University of Maryland has guidelines for the reviews that articulate the criteria for considering the effectiveness of a Dean (also applicable to other administrators). East Tennessee State University uses a system that is a hybrid between quantitative ranking and narrative responses. This gives an overall quantitative ranking but more importantly seeks to generate specific information in targeted areas such as support for diversity and fostering achievement. This seems to be an effective model for providing feedback and suggestions for changes.

In summary, procedures for the evaluation of administrators that include input from faculty and others are ongoing in every university contacted. Feedback from various constituencies is frequently cited as the most useful component of the process.

Speak Out

On November 9, Senators Dana Huchens, Lawrence Voss and Giz Womack sponsored a Speak Out for all WFU employees. Although the attendance was light, the questions were not. Some of these questions were:

- What organizations are allowed to use employee mailing addresses?
- Is the university now in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act?
- Meals on campus are very expensive. Can a discount for employees be arranged?
- Since tuition reimbursement can only be used for tuition, employees' children are not encouraged to apply for Pell grants which also only pay for tuition. Can this restriction be modified?

These questions were posed to the relevant administrators and answers are being posted on a new Q&A section of the Senate website as received. As the Senate addresses these and other issues, we solicit your suggestions and comments.

Closing

Thus, begins another term of the University Senate. My hope for the Senate this year is to provide a forum for discussion of the long-term academic questions related to Wake Forest's emergence as a top national university. Also, we will continue to address a number of ongoing issues that concern employee compensation. I look forward to working with the Senate to serve all our constituencies for the advancement of our University.

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Welcome to new senators:

From the College:
Robert Browne, Eric Carlson, Bob Evans

From the School of Medicine
Michael Olympio

From the School of Law
Tom Roberts

From the Calloway School
Yvonne Hinson

From the Babcock School
Scott Shafer

From the Administration
William C. Gordon, J. Reid Morgan, William B. Applegate, Ron Wellman

Information regarding the University Senate may be found at <http://www.wfu.edu/Organizations/senate/>