

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING**  
**April 2, 2008**

**1. and 2. Call to Order and Approval of Minutes**

**Chair Robert Best** called the meeting to order and asked for corrections to the minutes of the March 5, 2008 meeting. The minutes were corrected to reflect that the Faculty Advisory Committee, not the Faculty Budget Committee, will be taking up the issue of faculty salary increases upon promotion. The minutes were approved as corrected.

**3. Invited Guests**

**Professor Larry Watson** (President of the South Carolina Conference of the American Association of University Professors) presented a history of the AAUP. Professor Watson highlighted some issues of concern for the organization, which include academic freedom, shared governance, faculty compensation, faculty hiring and promotion, and the use of graduate assistants. He encouraged the Senators and guests to become involved in AAUP, and presented data on membership subscription levels. The AAUP is holding its Spring Conference at USC in Gambrell Hall on April 26. Members and non-members alike are welcome. Professor Watson suggested a visit to the organization's Website at [www.sc-aaup.org/](http://www.sc-aaup.org/) for those who want to know more.

**Professor James Augustine** (USC's University Ombudsman) discussed the function and services of the Ombuds Office. Over 200 academic institutions today have ombudspersons. The Ombuds Office offers a place where faculty can bring their concerns in an atmosphere of confidentiality, neutrality, informality, and independence. In his role as Ombudsman, Professor Augustine facilitates communication between individuals, offers information, and helps explore options. The Ombudsman does not change or set aside University policies, offer legal advice or psychological counseling. While the office is not part of the formal grievance process, or any other formal process, Professor Augustine meets quarterly with the Provost to discuss issues, trends, concerns and conflicts of the sort that are brought to the Ombuds Office. Topics that people may want to discuss include personal difficulties, harassment, discrimination, disputes in the workplace, health and safety concerns, and academic freedom. Professor Augustine invited all faculty to avail themselves of the services of the office, and to visit the Ombuds website at <http://www.sc.edu/ombuds/>.

**4. Reports of Committees**

**a. Committee on Curricula and Courses, Professor Ina Rae Hark, Chair**

Professor Hark (English) presented changes in curriculum and/or courses within: the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Engineering and Computing, the Arnold School of Public Health, and the South Carolina Honors College [see Attachment 1, pp. 10-15]. All motions carried.

## 5. Reports of Officers

### **President Andrew Sorensen**

President Sorensen had just come from the Graduate Student Day Awards ceremony, and he presented an overview of the proceedings. The President noted that the number of awards increased each year, and thanked the people in the Graduate School who had worked on the event.

The President regretfully announced bad news from the Legislature. The first draft of the budget shows a 2.68% cut on the Columbia campus; this figure varies at the other 7 campuses of the University. It is possible that the cut may, in fact, be even greater. The Provost and the Vice President for Research and Health Sciences are working with their respective deans in a series of budget meetings. It is probable that the budget will not be finalized until after commencement, but a cut is certain and, in inflationary times, the impact of a cut will be greater than the articulated figure. President Sorensen continues to meet with legislators and to press the case of the University as powerfully and as articulately as possible. His goal is to try to persuade the Legislature to make the least possible cut in the University budget.

The President announced that Darrin Horn will be joining USC as head coach of the men's basketball program. The President highlighted a heroic accomplishment of Coach Horn's: During his tenure as head basketball coach at the University of Western Kentucky, 100% of his players graduated, compared to a 63% rate of overall graduation at USC. President Sorensen has been impressed with Coach Horn's commitment to academic excellence and to the notion that the Athletics Department is a part of the University. The Sorensens have spent time with the Horns and the President is confident that Coach Horn will be a valuable member of the University community.

President Sorensen thanked the Secretary of the Faculty Senate, Professor Laura Kane (School of Medicine Library) for the wonderful job she does on the minutes of the Faculty Senate meetings.

### **Provost Mark Becker**

Provost Becker acknowledged the good work of Professor James Augustine in the Ombudsman's Office, and emphasized the confidential aspect of the office. While the Provost and the Ombudsman meet quarterly, individual persons or cases are not discussed. The Provost pointed out that any records of interactions between individuals and the Ombudsman's Office are destroyed, and that persons contacting the office can be assured of complete confidentiality and the highest ethical standards.

Following up on Professor Watson's presentation on behalf of the South Carolina chapter of AAUP, Provost Becker commended to the Senate the AAUP's statement of principles on academic freedom and tenure, available at the AAUP website (<http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/contents/1940statement.htm>) and at [http://www.higher-ed.org/resources/AAUP\\_1940stat.htm](http://www.higher-ed.org/resources/AAUP_1940stat.htm). The principles cover both

rights and responsibilities; e.g., “Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject.” The AAUP site also includes a historical chronology of the document through its revisions.

The Provost reported on the issue of faculty salary promotion increases. This issue was raised at the last meeting of the Faculty Senate and was referred to the Faculty Advisory Committee. The Faculty Advisory Committee met and discussed the issue, and the Provost subsequently referred the matter to the Salary Equity Committee. The Salary Equity Committee considers salary equity issues on an annual basis and considers individual salary issues using a statistical model. The Committee will consider data from other institutions to inform their investigation and will report to the Provost when they have a recommendation. He, in turn, will report back to the Faculty Senate.

An unidentified Senator asked whether there is an actual policy relating to salary increases upon promotion. The Provost noted that there is not a policy document, but there is a memo that the Provost’s Office sends to the deans, containing amounts given as floors or minimums.

Provost Becker added his comments to Dr. Sorensen’s endorsement of new head basketball coach Darrin Horn. The Provost was at the press conference when Coach Horn announced his priorities for his players: First, for the players under his tutelage to grow as individuals, second to succeed academically, third to succeed athletically. Provost Becker praised Athletic Director Eric Hyman for setting a tone of academic accomplishment in the Athletic Department, and for recruiting individuals like Coach Horn, who share this vision.

## **6. Report of the Chair**

On behalf of the Faculty Advisory Committee, Chair Best reminded the Senators that the revision is underway for the Faculty Manual. Three subcommittees are handling the revision: one looking at issues related to research, one looking at issues related to the tenure process, and a third special issues committee looks at all other issues. Faculty can read what’s being suggested, send comments, and make recommendations on the Faculty Senate’s Website [<http://www.sc.edu/faculty/manual.shtml>].

On April 25 and 26, USC and Chair Best will be hosting the Faculty Senate Chairs of the SEC. Eleven of the 12 SEC schools have confirmed their attendance, and we are hoping for the 12<sup>th</sup>. The faculty leaders of our institutions will come together to discuss common issues and problems, and to examine the trends in academia. This gathering mirrors SECAC initiatives lead by President Sorensen and Provost Becker. Chair Best will report to the Faculty Senate after the meeting.

Chair Best announced that the presidential search process is up and underway. He reminded Senators and guests that the process is a public one and all are welcome to attend the meetings. The nomination process is also an open one. There is a link to the presidential search site on the USC homepage [<http://www.sc.edu/presidentialsearch/>],

where faculty can make nominations. The University has engaged a search firm, and the process is moving forward. Other faculty members serving on the committee are Dianne Johnson (English), Marlene Wilson (Medicine), and Val Lumans (History) representing Regional and other USC Campuses.

## **7. Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business.

## **8. New Business**

**Professor Laura Walls** (English) brought the following resolution for consideration by the Faculty Welfare Committee: “Given the pedagogical advantages of two day a week classes and the need for faculty to keep Fridays available for research and travel, and given that the Registrar is currently requesting that 50% of each department’s courses be scheduled on Monday-Wednesday and occasionally Friday, we propose that the Faculty Welfare Committee re-examine the possibility of establishing at least one other Monday-Wednesday standard time slot for scheduling classes, preferably around the noon hour.”

The resolution, if passed, would alleviate serious scheduling difficulties. President Sorensen suggested that an extra Wednesday-Friday or Tuesday-Thursday slot also be considered to alleviate the shortage of classrooms available.

The motion passed to refer the question to the Faculty Welfare Committee. Professor Walls will send the resolution to the Chair, Professor Beth Bilderback (Libraries).

## **9. Announcements**

Chair Best noted that the AAUP State Chapter meeting will be held on the Columbia Campus on April 26, concurrent with the SEC Faculty Senate Chairs Conference, and encouraged interested parties to attend.

## **10. Adjournment.**

A motion was made, seconded, and passed to adjourn the meeting.

**The next Faculty Senate Meeting will be Monday, April 28, at approximately 3:10 pm.**