

GENERAL FACULTY MEETING
April 29, 2014

1. Call to Order.

PRESIDENT HARRIS PASTIDES greeted his colleagues across the University system and called to order the meeting of the General Faculty of the University of South Carolina.

2. Report of the President.

PRESIDENT PASTIDES first reported on national trends in higher education. U.S. enrollment in higher education is down by 2%. This is the third year in a row that fewer Americans are attending college than the year before. At the same time, the college age population is rising, so that is obviously not a good sign. Enrollment is particularly down at for-profit institutions. Enrollment is also down at mid-western universities, for reasons that are not clear. The President was happy to report that enrollments are not down at the University of South Carolina. Thursday, May 1st, is the day across the country when students are expected to have put down deposits at the colleges of their choice. USC is faring well. The number of people who took an admissions tour this year was up 15% from the year before. While attendance on the tour does not guarantee enrollment, there is a pretty good probability that if a student takes the tour s/he is likely to enroll. Enrollments are stable across the system - they are not uniformly up but they are stable. President Pastides does not believe that enrollments will be down at any one of our campuses but the interest is significantly high here in Columbia. The President noted that we are not planning to increase the size of the freshmen class this year but observed that our admissions division has a hard job to do because we have to offer the right number of admissions to fill the class, not too high and not too low. We are expecting that the yield will be approximately what it was last year, therefore enrolling a freshmen class of about 5,000.

The President then reported on the recent downgrades in the bond ratings of various institutions of higher education. Moody's is the national bond rating agency that rates universities with respect to their financial health. For the first time last year, 21 universities were downgraded in their bond rating (USC was not downgraded).

Moody's cited three things:

1. Declining state funding as a negative financial metric
2. Flat or declining enrollment
3. Lack of expense containment

President Pastides noted that we are operating under a new administrative reorganization that the Board of Trustees approved on the 21st of February where we have fewer vice presidents. While this reorganization creates an opportunity to save a small amount of money, we have to look for new revenue streams. The parameters are fairly narrow: if you can't raise tuition very much... you can't increase the size of the class very much...you'd like to improve state funding but you really can't do that very well (although we will keep trying)...the funding for federal research and contracts is constrained...so where else do you raise money?

The President and the Provost are examining ways to bring University of South Carolina's educational programming to new markets. Since we can't bring more students here, we've got to take online education to where students are who would:

- a) benefit from our educational product
- b) who want it
- c) who are willing to pay for it

The target market is abroad, so we are looking at places around the world where there is a thirst for American higher education. We are not proposing a full-fledged degree program, but are looking at clusters of courses that would serve professionals, for example, in overseas markets or other people who would like to advance their opportunity to market themselves as professionals. We are looking at places like South Africa – a country of 52 million people with a small number of accredited universities. We are looking at places like Brazil and other countries in South America where the economies are doing reasonably well but where the cost of traveling to Columbia, SC, to spend a period of time there to take a course or two or three or five or a minor or a major is completely constrained. The President hopes to report to the General Faculty at the fall meeting about the progress we might be making there.

President Pastides provided an overview of our constraints with state funding. This has not been an auspicious year with respect to our proposal that we called "Tuition Time Out." The President had thought that it was an attractive proposal for our state government, rather than if we had asked for new programming or hiring programs, building renovations or equipment, or for new acquisitions for the library (they tend to not like to support these types of acquisitions with state funding). Instead, we would ask for funding that would enable us to not raise tuition, at least for in-state students. The proposal has not been receiving the kind of response that the President had hoped for in the House of Representatives. The Senate will convene next week and we will see what kind of hearing we get there.

President Pastides confirmed that he, the Provost, and the deans will continue to support this university's academic freedom – the right of the faculty to choose books, to speak out, to engage in complex conversations ranging the whole gamut of issues that we confront daily. As the President recently told a legislator respectfully, many of our students come from towns around South Carolina and we understand the values of their community, we understand community standards, and we hope many of them will return to those beautiful towns when they graduate to seek employment and we hope to help them with that. However, for their four years at USC they have to travel around the world, figuratively if not literally. They have to encounter the kinds of challenging ideas they will need to be fluent in a professional environment. Whether they work in a bank, in government, or in a manufacturing setting they need to be fluent, educated people of the world. Furthermore, the prerogative of the curriculum has always belonged to the faculty and always will. The President noted that these are difficult conversations and hopes that the few outspoken political figures that we have all read about are not representative of the body politic in South Carolina. What is far less visible is the support we do get from other elected officials of the General Assembly who, albeit quietly, we hope are in greater number.

Jim Knapp, the Chair our Faculty Senate, spoke eloquently and read a beautiful statement to our Board of Trustees last Friday. President Pastides reported that our Board of Trustees feels exactly as we do regarding the academic freedom issue and appreciated learning more about the challenges so they might defend us and advocate for us. The President noted that these things come and go over time. We have experienced them in South Carolina before. They are experienced in other states, as well, but President Pastides wanted the faculty of this University system to know that we will continue to be the standard bearer for academic freedom. Academic freedom is a concept sometimes misinterpreted, for example, to be the ability of a single professor to promote a personal agenda. The President has heard this misconception and has tried to refute it, but has also been candid about the fact that we trust the judgment and the expertise an individual professor to select the appropriate readings in a class, the appropriate guest lecturers who will come to a class, and to oversee and engage in conversation, be it easy or complex, and that is the prerogative of the faculty. President Pastides believes that we will weather the storm but we are kind of in the vortex of it right now.

The President reported on the most recent construction project underway on campus. We broke ground on a new 878-bed public/private partnership at the corner of Blossom and Park streets, which will allow more upper classmen to live close to campus. This is not a USC project alone; it is a privately-developed project on our land. Contractors are working furiously to open the 1st phase. About 500 or so of the 878 beds will be available next August.

President Pastides announced with pride that our students have continued to win prestigious prizes. We've had two Goldwater Scholars announced, six Fulbright Scholars, and two National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellows. The President also congratulated USC alumnus Michael LaForgia, who is the youngest individual ever to win a Pulitzer Prize for reporting at his Florida newspaper.

The President then reported on upcoming events around campus, including a ceremony tomorrow recognizing our Faculty Award winners, who will be announced at this meeting by the Provost. Commencements begin this weekend at USC in this order: Salkehatchie and Beaufort both on Friday, Lancaster and Union both on Saturday, and then around the system concluding on May 9 and May 10, where we will have three undergraduate and master ceremonies here at the Colonial Life arena. We will have our doctoral hooding exercise, the commencement exercises for the School of Law, and many, many other hooding and professional school exercises as well. We have a great line up of speakers: Mac Arnold, the great Blues musician who has played with Muddy Waters and Otis Redding; Anita Zucker, technologist and philanthropist from Charleston and benefactor to our McNair Center; Robert Blocker, native son and Dean of the Yale School of Music; Jim McNerney, the Global CEO of Boeing Corporation; David Seaton, the Global CEO of the Fluor Corporation and also the Chair of Carolina's Promise; Sir John Meurig Thomas, a distinguished nanoscientist and chemist from Cambridge University; astronaut and NASA administrator Major General Charles Bolden; and Vice President Joe Biden.

We will be conferring 6,616 degrees [final number was 7,148], the largest number that we have ever commenced in one season at the University of South Carolina. President Pastides noted that

since 2008, when he became President of the University, we will have conferred 55,228 degrees [final number was 55,760] after May 20.

The previous day, we had a lovely ceremony honoring the first 94 graduating students who will receive the Distinction in Leadership designation. The President noted that, since we inaugurated this program exactly one year ago, these students have accomplished in one year the credentialing that ordinarily would be accomplished in four. About 10% of these students are in the College of Social Work, and the President congratulated Dean Anna Scheyett.

President Pastides opened the floor for questions.

PROFESSOR JIM KNAPP (Earth and Ocean Sciences) offered a friendly point of order and requested the approval of two sets of minutes from prior meetings of the General Faculty.

3. Approval of Minutes.

PRESIDENT PASTIDES called for corrections of the minutes of the meeting of September 4, 2013, and the specially called meeting of October 23, 2013. There were none and the minutes were approved.

4. Report of Provost.

PROVOST MICHAEL AMIRIDIS greeted his faculty colleagues and thanked those present for being involved and for being present at the meeting.

The Provost had just come from a luncheon with a group of assistant professors from the Humanities and the Social Sciences, as part of a program initiated by the Provost's Office. This semester, Provost Amiridis has met with approximately 10 focus groups of faculty members listening to concerns, ideas, and suggestions.

Provost Amiridis expounded on the budgetary issues that President Pastides introduced in his report. University Administration is in the middle of our own budgetary planning process. During last week and this week the Provost is meeting with the colleges, getting reports from them of their blueprints, which outline the priorities of the colleges, the events of the last year, and plans for the next year, both academic and financial. The Faculty Senate is well-represented in these meetings by the Chair of the Faculty Senate and the Chair of the Faculty Budget Committee.

The Provost echoed the sentiments of the President in regard to our efforts to raise new funding from alternative sources. We are at capacity in our traditional sources of revenue: we are at a very sensitive point in terms of tuition, both in-state and out-of-state, and we will find it very difficult to increase enrollment, as we are very near our maximum capacity. The budgetary process is very interesting, especially as we are trying to anticipate what unfunded mandates we are going to face with the understanding that some of them are very good mandates. For example, the House side of the budget has a salary pool for all state employees and it is at 1.5%

right now. What we hear from the Senate side is that maybe this will go further up, but Provost Amiridis cautioned that every time that the General Assembly votes for a state employee raise they provide only 20 to 25% of the funding and the rest has to come from increases in tuition. So that represents a challenge finding these types of funds.

The Affordable Care Act, as the Provost has mentioned repeatedly, represents a challenge for us financially because we expect the impact only for the first half-year to be on the order of 1.5 to 2 million, and then we have to calculate the rest of it in recurring funds. It is a tight budgetary process and, during this tight year that we anticipate ahead of us, it is difficult to talk about new initiatives. Nevertheless, our University Administration is listening and discussing, and the Provost hopes that we will be able to assist in directions that the faculty individually, and the Faculty Senate collectively, have been talking about.

The Provost echoed the comments of the President regarding the West Campus, as we have come to call the area west of Assembly Street and the construction that we see there. Provost Amiridis recognized the importance of these projects for the physical infrastructure of the institution, but also addressed the issue of new additional academic space in Petigru.

We are moving ahead with the new home for the School of Journalism in the former Health Sciences building. The building has been gutted internally and is on time, on schedule and on budget to be delivered one year from now.

A much-needed renovation of Hamilton is going to start this year, and the Law School construction is going to start during this year as well. This is very good news because once the Law School has been completed and has moved, we are going to renovate its present building into general classroom space and some offices. HRSM is going to move there but the renovated building will also furnish general classroom space. Provost Amiridis asked for the faculty's patience as these projects proceed. We are in a 3 to 4 year horizon until we see the first significant relief in terms of teaching space, but the initiatives are on schedule and are moving ahead.

The Provost noted that we had another record year in terms of advising and mentoring of students, and in terms of retaining students for the sophomore year. We are now bumping towards 88 – 89%; we had a goal of 90% within 5 years and it is within reach. We had another record year in terms of graduation rates. Our 6-year graduation rate is north of 75% and we will be approaching 80% as our goal was when we set our blueprint parameters and our dashboard parameters. Provost Amiridis acknowledged the efforts of the faculty, staff, and students in the strengthening of our brand, and is proud of these successes.

After three years, we are almost finished with the Faculty Replenishment Initiative. We were last fall at a tenure/tenure-track faculty count of 1,140. When we started we were at 1,000 and wanted to get to 1,200 and it looks very likely that we will be at 1,200 or just a notch below 1,200 this fall. Our Board of Trustees and our University Administration are committed to the initiative and we have gotten a fantastic class of new faculty members. It is our job now to create the environment for them to be successful, to be productive, and have long professional lives here at the University of South Carolina.

Provost Amiridis congratulated Chair Knapp on his articulation of a very clear and civil position on the issue of academic freedom, which he presented at the recent meeting of our Board of Trustees.

The Provost then announced the winners of this year's Faculty Awards. He recognized the winners for their excellent work on behalf of their students, and also for their units and for the institution.

2014 Faculty Award Winners

John Gardner Inspirational Faculty Member Award:

Joe Jones, Arnold School of Public Health – Environmental Health Sciences

Distinguished Undergraduate Research Mentor Awards:

Kate Flory, College of Arts and Sciences – Psychology

Daniel Fogerty, Arnold School of Public Health – Communication Sciences and Disorders

Doyle Stevick, College of Education – Educational Leadership and Policies

Ada B. Thomas Outstanding Faculty Advisor Award:

Judith Kalb, College of Arts and Sciences – Languages, Literatures and Cultures

Ada B. Thomas Outstanding Staff Advisor Award:

Becky Mayo, College of Engineering and Computing

Russell Research Award for Humanities and Social Sciences:

Jorge Camacho, College of Arts and Sciences – Languages, Literatures and Cultures

Russell Research Award for Science, Mathematics and Engineering

Milind Kunchur, College of Arts and Sciences – Physics and Astronomy

Prof. Milind is the 2014 Professor of the Year Award winner for South Carolina.

USC Educational Foundation Research Award for Health Sciences:

Kim Creek, South Carolina College of Pharmacy

USC Educational Foundation Research Award for Science, Mathematics and Engineering:

George Voulgaris, College of Arts and Sciences – Earth and Ocean Sciences

USC Educational Foundation Research Award for Professional Schools

Gloria Boutte, College of Education – Instruction and Teacher Education

USC Educational Foundation Outstanding Service Award:

Danielle Holley-Walker, School of Law

Carolina Trustee Professorships:

Michael Sutton – College of Engineering and Computing – Mechanical Engineering

Manoj Malhotra – Darla Moore School of Business – Management Science

Chad Leverett – USC Aiken – Chemistry

John J. Duffy Excellence in Teaching Award (for the Regional Campuses):

Wei-Kai Lai – USC Salkehatchie – Mathematics

Clinical Practice Teaching Award:

LeAnn Norris – South Carolina College of Pharmacy

Katherine Chappell – College of Nursing

Michael J. Mungo Undergraduate Teaching Awards:

Sarah Baxter, College of Engineering and Computing – Mechanical Engineering

Jeff Dudycha, College of Arts and Sciences – Biological Sciences

John Grady – College of Hospitality, Retail, and Sport Management – Sport and Entertainment Management

Saskia Coenen-Snyder, College of Arts and Sciences – History

Michael J. Mungo Graduate Teaching Award

Susan Kuo, School of Law

Michael J. Mungo Distinguished Professor of the Year Award

Rekha Patel, College of Arts and Sciences – Biological Sciences

PROFESSOR JIM KNAPP (Earth and Ocean Sciences) thanked both the President and the Provost for their supportive comments on the academic freedom issue.

He then asked Provost Amiridis to provide a little more insight on the plan for external revenue generation, particularly in two areas. (1) Does the Provost have a sense of what scale or what percentage of the budget we might be looking at ultimately returning through that exercise? (2) How might that play out in terms of our faculty resources, because this is not going to be a resource neutral endeavor? Chair Knapp noted that our faculty already have full-time teaching commitments, so there needs to be some attention given as to how we are going to affect that.

PROVOST AMIRIDIS responded that it is difficult right now to provide an accurate estimate of where the initiative is going to be in the immediate future, in the near future, and in the far future. It is uncharted territory. We wouldn't do anything if we were talking about very small numbers. We are optimistic about the market analysis that we have done that this could be a significant contribution to our budget. In a budget of a billion dollars, 2% of the budget, for example, would equal \$20 million a year. That is a very significant portion, especially when you are talking about new funds that are going to come in on a recurring basis. We hope that it is going to be significant, but we won't know how all the details will form up until we try.

The resource issue is very important. Exactly for this purpose, the Provost's Office has asked the different colleges to determine on their own if they have capacity and to run some test cases with the colleges that either have the capacity to do something like this right now or they are willing to work extra with some significant rewards.

There are different models that we are considering for these certificate programs, because these are going to be certificates of specialization. The President used the term “clusters of courses,” which many other universities do as continuing education programs. It may be pre-graduation in some areas, it may be post-graduation in some other areas, but the concept is certificate types of continuing education.

A couple of our colleges, like the Darla Moore School of Business, are used to providing this type of package. They have jumped into it and are willing to participate. Their way of doing it is to provide additional income to the faculty members who are going to participate as an extra activity beyond their current duties. And, there are a lot of takers along these lines. They are test cases. We will see how it works. At this point the investment from the Provost’s Office is relatively small. We are adding some funds as an incentive for people to develop these online clusters of courses, but we also can take some of these courses and use them in some of our regular offerings because the Provost’s Office has instructional development grants that it provides to a lot of people. The Provost’s Office has an open call whether units are participating in the external revenue initiative or just want to improve their own online activities. Provost Amiridis views this as very little risk because, regardless of what happens with the financial aspect of the whole operation, developing new online courses is a good thing for the institution. It adds to our inventory and we can offer them at the regular time. The faculty members who are involved view it as a good thing. So this is a model that may work. If our initial efforts generate good response and financial success, we may be in a position to consider hiring extra faculty members specifically to support the initiative.

We are conducting an experiment at this point; depending on the success of this experiment we will develop a more advanced model.

PRESIDENT PASTIDES agreed with the Provost that such an initiative would aim for a high volume of students served, and noted that the work that a professor would do to serve 1,200 is not more than she or he would do to serve 120 or 12. The President sees the product as continuing professional education similar to a summer institute or a weekend course. He notes that the pricing of the product will also be experimental, as students in target markets abroad may not be able to pay the per credit tuition that we expect here.

President Pastides echoed the sentiment of the Provost that such an initiative will enrich our own curriculum, as some of it will be applicable to our own students here. The President invited ideas from our faculty on how we can increase revenue. We all need to think creatively about what the new revenue model might be. President Pastides pledged to keep the faculty posted about all of these ventures.

PROVOST AMIRIDIS noted that the contemplated certificates in specialization are not credit-bearing courses. He likened them to a continuing education experience that he had at Harvard, which he found to be useful and valuable.

5. Old Business.

There was no old business.

6. New Business/Good of the Order.

PRESIDENT PASTIDES recognized Secretary Rebekah Maxwell, who in August will finish her second term as Secretary. Professor Elizabeth West (University Libraries) will be her successor. The President also recognized Parliamentarian Bill Sudduth (University Libraries).

7. Adjournment.

PRESIDENT PASTIDES invited faculty members to celebrate with the awards winners at a reception in the lobby. A motion to adjourn was seconded and passed. The next meeting of the General Faculty will be held on Wednesday, September 3, 2014, at 2:00 p.m. in the Law School Auditorium.