

**Faculty Senate Meeting
December 2, 2005**

- Call to Order:** Nancy Whitt, Chair of the Faculty Senate called the meeting to order.
- Invocation:** The invocation was led by **Melissa Tate**.
- Approval of Minutes:** Nancy Whitt asked if there were any changes to old minutes. None were suggested, so this was an affirmation of the old minutes.
- Administration Report:** Brad Creed reported on two issues:
1. SACS accreditation status report
 - a. The SACS/COC annual meeting will be held in Atlanta over the next few days. ??? Tom Baden ???? will be going with Brad to Atlanta to attend the meeting.
 - b. We've made good progress in getting ready [for accreditation review]
 - i. Faculty credential evaluation completed
 - ii. Good progress on quality improvement plan. A major topic is intercultural awareness. Still need focus groups (trustees, alumni, SGA) [to give feedback, input]
 2. Academic integrity review process
 - a. The review has been completed
 - b. Work is being made now to place the new process in the catalog.
- Resolutions Passed:**
1. Resolution recommending "that the Handbook Committee include a provision in the Handbook that indicates faculty members will choose the faculty members who will be on the search committee for President and Provost of the University"
 2. Resolution expressing the following statement: "The Faculty Senate expresses its appreciation for the work done by the faculty members of the current Presidential Search Committee."
- Old Business:** None
- New Business:**
(see transcript after the committee reports)
1. International studies report delivered by **Doug Clapp**
 2. Discussion of presidential search
 3. Discussion of upcoming intelligent design event
- Committee Reports:**
- Academic Affairs:
No report.
- Athletics: (Ralph Gold)

No report.

Business Affairs and Faculty Welfare:

Don Sandley reported that a meeting was called to discuss parking concerns.

Brad Creed commented that at a quality council meeting, **Bill Matthews** made two recommendations:

1. That the faculty/staff not be charged for parking
2. That a study team that meets regularly be created. Each school should select somebody to be on this team. Parking issues will be with us for a while.

Robin Snyder asked whether or not we would still be in a deficit [of parking spaces] after new parking structure built? **Brad** responded that he wasn't sure, but the new deck should hold 600 spaces giving us a net gain of 400 spaces.

Curriculum:

No report.

Diversity:

No report.

Elections:

No report.

Student Affairs:

No report.

Learning Resources:

No report.

Writing:

No report.

Old Business

None.

New Business

INTERNATIONAL STUDIES REPORT.

Doug Clapp delivered an International Studies Report. **Doug** indicated that M. J. Chamberlain has been the new directory of International Studies for the past nine months. Over that time, work towards establishing a vision and mission has been made that includes the following aspects:

1. Engage students in international experiences including study abroad and exchange student experiences.
2. Help faculty from every college implement study abroad.

An advisory committee has been meeting monthly [to discuss how to enact this mission].

Paul Blanchard asked "could we do more to bring more international students in [to Samford]?" There are lots of students who won't be able to go abroad ... seems cost-effective and would give these students that can't go abroad some [intercultural experience]. **Doug** responded by indicating that this has been a current topic of discussion in the advisory meetings. **Doug** indicated that there is an international community in Birmingham, too.

PRESIDENTIAL SEARCH.

Max Baber began this discussion by indicating that a lot of faculty not directly involved in the search have felt shut out from the [presidential search] process. There is a concern why the candidate will not speak to the faculty. Why is the faculty not more involved? The notion of being filtered out is disconcerting. Here follows a transcript of the ensuing discussion:

Nancy Whitt – I invited **Professor Brewer** to this meeting and also to the full faculty meeting on Tuesday.

Max – **Dan Sandifer-Stech** raised some interesting questions. Some trustees / committee members are speaking.

Mark Baggett – I was told by a search committee member that the faculty members on the committee were released from confidentiality to say that the rumors were not true, and that they felt like they have had a voice on the committee. This addresses Dan's point of concern. Still, is the question about the process? Many of these points were addressed by **Nancy, Rod, and Don Sandley** when Corts announced his retirement. The concrete point to address is the selection of the search committee; the faculty senate should be able to designate [people].

Robin Snyder – Can we release this information to everyone?

Jennings Marshall – **Larry Davenport** told me just the opposite today ... They still can't say anything.

Mark Baggett – I think this is better information. Authorization came from the committee.

Jennings – At this point, the process is so messed up, every candidate is at a disadvantage.

Don Sandley – As sloppy, convoluted as it is, this is the first time we've conducted search that is anything close to this. I'm not saying that we shouldn't have concerns, but we should temper ourselves. These are growing pains.

Nancy Whitt – I have written a letter expressing concerns to Grooms and Brewer. I have invited them to faculty meeting on Tuesday.

Mike Floyd – It's important to distinguish the larger issues of faculty governance and long term process issues vs. "how can we get the best president"? I hear ample things to believe that the choice is acceptable or maybe even very good. It's inherently a messy process. I'm not saying it couldn't be better.

Tim Banks – I was asked by email to serve on faculty staff review panel. When I said yes, I had no other information. I assumed I was chosen because I'm a senator from performing arts. A day later I found out that we were looking at one candidate. I responded to Jim Brown's email soliciting faculty to give him questions to ask the candidate. We don't know who's on the panel.

David Chapman – Howard Walthall from Law

Don Sandley – Betsy Holloway from Business

Nancy Whitt – I've started a list of questions to ask the candidate. Go to your school rep (on the panel) with questions.

Paul Blanchard – I don't know who is on the panel from Arts & Sciences.

Nancy: Stephen Chew from Arts & Sciences.

Tim Mullins – One of the questions I have... Is this the "top runner"?

Nancy – I understand it that way.

Black Sweater – Just an understanding. No information.

David Chapman – After the panel questions the candidate and [the search committee] receives feedback from the panelists, the trustees will vote on whether this is the candidate.

Nancy – An English faculty member colleague suggested to ask questions experientially. "What have you done...?"

Paul B – Question: How much time [will the panelists have]?

Tim Banks – 1 hour, several meetings.

David Chapman – Students, alumni, deans will also meet with the candidate separately from the faculty.

Nancy – If we need more time, we'll ask for it.

Paul Blanchard – Take as much time as we need. Only focus on one or two issues. Probably all we would be able to do (even with 2 hours). It's fair to say that perhaps the backbone of university will have minimal interaction with the candidate.

Nancy – We can ask for more time.

Black Sweater – A lot of us were here last time. This is a different process. Hope we learn more about the process. Communication problems.

Nancy – Faculty member should be on the top quality team. The people [on the team currently] do not know the students, do not know what's going on. Some problems with secrecy could be alleviated if a faculty member was on the team and could express concerns over issues.

Paul B – Before you [were the chair of the senate], I was invited and attended to the quality team.

Don – She's talking about Quality Council.

Paul – I was too.

Nancy – That's never been put in catalog.

Black sweater – I was told that this candidate made the comment, "I see there are not any faculty members on the council." That's refreshing to me.

David Bains: If that's true for this candidate, I would hope the candidate insist that he attend the meeting [full faculty meeting on Tuesday]. My understanding was that the last academic year (April), there was a move to allow faculty members to choose selection committee members. Seems like a good time to propose that before the president comes in.

Mark Baggett – Could we institutionalize the process for selection?

David Bains – I move that we request the handbook drafting committee include a provision in the handbook that faculty members will choose faculty members of search committee for the President and Provost.

Don Sandley – Seconded.

Paul B – Discussion. I'd like to see a motion from the Senate sent to Brad Creed first to indicate our intention.

Don Sandley – He'll have the minutes of this meeting.

Jennings – Brad and Mark [Bateman] are on the handbook committee.

Robin – Would that motion [also] take care of the # of faculty members on the search committee?

David Bains – Something to address.

Jennings – Make this recommendation [not go for too much right now]

Doug Clapp – I'm not sure if the institution gets a chance to take stock (in our department). This is what I do well, what could we do better. I'd like to share this with you, Mr. President. Department of Classics would like to ask for support on this. I'd like all academic units to communicate with the President [what they do and don't do well].

Nancy – This works at some level [already] through the deans.

Paul – In theory works through SAC's too..

Mark Baggett – I support the resolution on the floor. Not a slap on the current faculty members on the committee. We appreciate the work that has been done by them.

[At this point Nancy Whitt called for a vote on the resolution. It was approved by oral vote]

David Bains – I'd like to make a new motion: the Senate expresses its appreciation for the work done by the members of the current faculty search group.

Jennings Marshall – Seconded.

[At this point Nancy Whitt called for a vote on the resolution. It was approved by oral vote]

INTELLIGENT DESIGN EVENT.

Max Baber opened the discussion on this topic by indicating that the faculty should make a statement in response to the Intelligent Design event announcement. Here follows a transcript of the discussion

Don Sandley – I am fully appreciative of your concerns. This isn't a conference [however].

Max– The organizer immediately called the Birmingham News to announce that Samford would be hosting the event.

Steve Donaldson – At the Arts & Sciences meeting yesterday, the assembly authorized me to create a committee to address this issue. We don't want to rush a response, but we are meeting early next week. Excited about this to discuss bigger issues (faculty involvement).

Nancy – Will A&S make recommendation to the whole college?

Steve – We're under no delusions that there will be a unanimous decision [from Arts and Sciences], but resolution affecting the entire university [is a possibility].

Nancy – What is the date of the conference? February 23rd.

Robin – What's the time frame [of the A&S committee]?

Steve – The committee was formed yesterday and we'll be meeting on Monday. I will meet with them Monday as ex officio member, but then I'll be turning it over to them. I am going to make several recommendations: 1) Solicit input from faculty, 2) Ask for more faculty if necessary. Big issues underneath.

Max – Science representation on the community is in the minority.

Don – (Friendly aside) Hope that the science faculty will be friendly when Arts has problems in future.

Max – Higher education is under political attack across the nation.

Paul B – We view this issue as very problematic. Best benefit to the university by avoiding talking for us as a group. Could do us harm in recruiting. Current faculty worried about personal credentials (tenure, promotion). Maintaining low profile. We are not under-represented – George Keller (Biology) is on the committee. Collectively wait on this until A&S committee makes recommendation.

Tim Mullins – I have trouble seeing what the issue is. Is it Birmingham News saying we (Samford) are pro-intelligent design? Or is it lack of opportunity for open debate of ideas?

David Bains – That is a good question. What is the issue?

Max -1) Science issue... [ID is not an issue of science]. 2) Political issue... ID using our name. Faculty and former faculty asked to serve on committee. Perhaps we could form an evolution conference the same week – no benefit of debate.

Nancy – What do we do?

Max – Feb 23rd sounds a long time away but February will be our first senate meeting.

Paul B – My druthers would be that we ignore it and let it come and go. We don't want to contribute anything to "junk science".

Nancy – Biologist recommended we leave it alone.

Paul B – My preference is we all leave it alone. I don't want anything to boost this approach.

Steve Donaldson – How many have read an Intelligent Design book or done any research n the issue? We're a learning institution. There's probably something we can learn. Needs to be a call for impartiality of assessing issues.

Jennings – We're not going to undo this event. Hasty to do anything today. Especially in light of A&S committee. Let's get feedback from [the A & S] committee. We need to visit the process by which events happen at Samford.

Nancy – Consensus is that we don't do anything [at this time about this issue].

Adjournment: **Nancy Whitt** adjourned the meeting.