

**South Carolina State University
Faculty Senate Meeting
Tuesday, October 7, 2008
Room #121A Turner Hall**

MINUTES

Call to Order:

President M. Evelyn Fields declared a quorum and called the meeting to order at 3:35PM.

Adoption of the Agenda:

President Fields asked for a motion to move President Cooper to the beginning of the agenda. Senator Brown motioned to move President Cooper under New Business to the beginning of the agenda and the motion was seconded by Senator Whitaker. The motion carried.

President George E. Cooper's Address

President Cooper started by stating that he was glad to be here at SCSU and he has been on campus for almost three (3) months. He is also honored to be at SCSU. As he came on campus he was greeted with 'A New State of Mind' and he thinks that it's quite appropriate.

As he meets with students he tells them 'students first' because that's important as we look at the future of higher education and some of the challenges that we face today. SCSU is one of eighteen land grant institutions in the country and the only state supported HBCU in the state of South Carolina. He believes that we (SCSU) have a bright future as he looks at the credentials of the faculty. Not only does he brag about the faculty's credentials to the alumni but also to persons that he meets who don't know about our university. He believes that SCSU is one of the best universities in the country and we as faculty must believe this also because we chose to be here instead of being any place else.

President Cooper stated that he was not going to be apologetic when he states that the university has not been treated fairly by Commission on Higher Education (CHE). He understands the politics of the haves have and the haves not do not but all institutions should be equal partners. If we're not treated fairly then education in South Carolina is not going to be where it needs to be. He believes that SCSU has a purpose because we provide educational opportunities for students who otherwise may not have been educated in the state of South Carolina. That is a part of our mission but as he looks at the mission it does not mean that we are an open admissions institution because we do

have admissions standards. He challenges each of us as faculty members to maintain excellence as we reach out to our students and not compromise our standards in any way. The faculty should meet students where they are regardless of social standing, grade point average (GPA), regardless of family circumstances, we should make sure that when our students leave this university they will be capable of engaging in all walks of life.

His challenge as president is to work with alumni, faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees in achieving our mission. As gathered from the staff conference he believes that he is in agreement with faculty on what needs to be done but the challenge is how we will get there.

He met with Governor Sanford to discuss further budget cuts because there is a \$400 million dollar shortfall. The governor wanted ideas/recommendations on items where we could cut our budget even more. President Cooper stated that he did not supply him with much because he felt that it was not the time especially since we have not been treated as other institutions in the state. He stated that he got a response to his statement about not being treated fairly from a state politician; all universities are not treated equally in South Carolina because they are treated differently based on their missions. No institution of higher education in the state has a greater need than SCSU. One of the challenges is how to work with our university to overcome the struggles of not being treated equally. The other challenge for us is that we have to raise funding and he is not afraid of asking for money.

He has developed a presentation for CHE and they have asked him to meet with them but he has been unable to do so thus far. CHE is ready to sit down and engage in conversation to really understand what our needs are. Our needs are financial. His challenge and all of our challenges will be how do we maintain academic excellence in the face of the problems we are facing with the additional budget cuts? He is looking at fund raising strategies and how we can raise funds for need-based scholarships for our students. Many of the faculty members are blessed with being able to write grants to bring external funds to the university. Others of you have to face challenges of full-time workloads and have not been able to engage in faculty development. This is a priority for him. As he ask alumni to give to the university for need-based scholarships and also for unrestricted funds. He believes that a portion of these funds should be invested in the faculty. We must also form strategic alliances with the private sector and federal agencies. They have funds that have not been accessed and he is going to depend on faculty for help with this. He does have experience working in Washington, DC with the HBCU initiative with the Department of Education, NIA, NSA, and the Department of the Energy.

We should focus on what we are passionate about and learn how to market these things. The strength that he sees at the university is interdisciplinary across departments. If we can find a way to frame that as a concept it will provide an opportunity for all of our access to funds. This will also allow us to engage the future

and allow us to face challenges not from a disciplinary standpoint but allow us to face global challenges for a global economy.

He is aware of the fact that there are still some salary inequities across campus as well as among other institutions. He does plan, to the extent allowed, to make adjustments across the board because this does affect our ability to retain quality faculty to work with our students. He did engage in conversation with the senate's executive committee on yesterday to discuss some of the challenges we face.

He promised to keep the faculty informed as to what certain guidelines are and why some of the kinds of decisions were made. If we have questions he will do his best to answer them. The answer may not always be what we are looking for but he plans to always be honest and respectful to each of us. He also hopes that we will always be honest with him.

He is not looking at where we're going to be next year or the year after. He is going to look at opportunities and position our university to be better than some of our competitors. We need to do some of the things that other universities are doing such as identifying new majors. We are going to have to think outside the box and that's the 'New State of Mind' that he hopes we have at SCSU.

Out of all of the things he has talked about the highest priority is our SACS accreditation. That's what we have to focus on. We have to make some tough decisions on reallocating funds to accomplish this. He will be working with deans, department chairs, etc. to make sure everyone knows and understands what is needed.

President Cooper believes in operating by the chain of command. Although his schedule is not as flexible as he would like it to be he is open to any questions/concerns especially if you are willing to come early in the mornings or stay late in the afternoons.

His wife and he are excited to be here at SCSU and about the only thing he really misses is reading the *Washington Post* each morning. They are now housed temporarily on campus but plans to build a home here shortly, therefore they will be a part of the city.

Question & Answer

Senator Brantley: In the mist of the budget cuts what is your plans for adjusting the situation here at SCSU. President Cooper responded: He sent out a memo outlining some of them already. He is also looking at faculty and staff who finished the TERRI program. All faculty positions will remain where they are. He is also looking at talking with contributors.

Senator Rampone: He likes to read the *New York Times* instead of the *Washington Post*. Reading at SCSU is not cool. He feels that there should be a collective effort in stressing the importance of reading both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*.

What can we do to make it known to our students the importance of reading all materials such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*? President Cooper responded: He will not tell faculty what to teach in our classes but if we value a liberal education and if it's the desire of the faculty we should include current events in our classes.

Senator Ihekweazu: Are you going to have time to visit the colleges? President Cooper responded: Yes, he plans to visit the colleges and we will also see him walking around in the halls.

Senator Sanders: Does the administration have a dress code/policy already in place for the university? Is there any dress code or something that would encourage the students to dress more maturely? President Cooper responded: No, he is not aware of any dress codes/policies. He is also not aware of any such dress codes at any university. The standard can be set in the classroom. There are some things we can say but not necessarily enforce.

Senator Maultsby: Are you going to do something about Turner Hall? President Cooper responded: Turner Hall is included in renovations and especially with replacing the portable air conditioners. His perception is that education is not a priority in South Carolina starting in K-12 grades and on up through higher education. He hopes that we can change some minds. He has met with an Orangeburg delegation, Congressman Clyburn and others to talk about the conditions of the education system in this state.

Senator Wood: She has a passion for the nontraditional student. How do you feel about the operational line for these students? President Cooper responded: In the next few weeks we will be getting ready to set the guidelines for recruiting for fall semester. He also plans to have conversations with faculty to understand really what it means.

Senator Wood: It's different from recruiting the traditional student. President Cooper responded: Yes, we are going to give special instructions to the recruiting staff and we will have to make them feel welcome on the campus.

President Fields: In your vision what have you determine will be some of these partnerships that you talked about? How is it going to come together as it relates to raising money and how will this factor into launching a capital campaign? President Cooper responded: He has met with BMW, Savannah River site, and other corporations. He has joined the National Alumni association and asks more of them to give. In the last two weeks forty-five (45) persons have given \$1,000 each. Only about 8% of alumni are giving any money to the university. About 92% of alumni aren't giving at all. He's going to be looking at federal grant opportunities. We will also be starting the capital campaign.

President Fields: What role will the faculty play as you begin to formulate your leadership team? President Cooper responded: He has an idea of what he is looking for and he plans to share the position announcement with the faculty. He also plans to involve faculty in the interviewing process. This is an academic environment and the

faculty does have a voice. He wants to engage faculty on the front end instead of on the back end.

President Fields thanked President Cooper for coming to speak with faculty today.

Approval of Minutes:

Senator Cassidy moved to adopt the minutes. The motion was seconded by Senator Whitaker. The motions carried.

Treasurer's Report

Senator Spann handed out a copy of the treasurer's report which shows cash on hand in the amount of \$771.91 as of September 31, 2008. There was a total of \$400 collected in dues. The report was accepted as information.

Senator Sanders asked if personal checks were accepted and who should it be made out to. President Fields responded: yes and it can be made payable to SCSU Faculty Senate. Senator Sanders also asked what are the dues used for. President Fields stated that she would speak to her after the meeting because we have had this discussion in the past.

Senator Rahman suggested that the Faculty Senate president formulate a letter explaining what the dues are used for.

Senator Spann stated that the role of the representative is to collect the dues.

President Fields stated that we are a professional organization and the senate provides representation for each faculty member. The \$20.00 dues are used for supplies, to bring speakers, consultants, refreshments, and representation for the entire year.

Report of Committees:

Executive Committee: – Senator Cassidy reported that the Executive Committee met September 24, 2008. The committee discussed inviting Dr. Cooper to address the senate. Discussed the concerns over SACS progress and discussed receiving the list for university committees.

President Fields stated that she is still waiting on a list of university committees. There has not been a list of committees since 2004. The recommendations from the senate have been sent up about two months ago. Some of these committees are very and they need to meet to conduct business.

Membership Advisory Committee: No report at this time.

Election Committee: No report at this time.

Planning & Projects Committee: No report at this time.

Educational Policies Council: Senator Spann reported that the council met, reviewed, and acted on three (3) areas:

1. Dr. Jones, Department of Family and Consumer Services, the presentation was tabled.
2. Dr. Lewis, Electrical Engineering Technology, presented a four (4) year program at York Technical College, passed the council and should have come to the senate today.
3. Dr. Perdue, Nursing, presented five (5) courses, passed the council and should have come to the senate today.

Educational Facilities Committee: No report at this time.

Graduate Council: The council will meet next week/

Welfare Committee: No report at this time.

Research Advisory & Human Council: No report at this time.

Space Utilization: No report at this time.

Ad Hoc Committees:

- Constitution and Bylaws – The Amendments that were passed back in May needs to go to the entire faculty for a vote. Set a date of October 30, 2008 to email to the faculty for their vote. Faculty need to pay their dues in order to vote. The following persons volunteered to help with the poll from 9:00 – 2:00: Senators Whitaker, Spann, Douchett, Davis, and Varnum.

Senator Mia asked when did it become required to pay faculty senate dues. President Fields responded that in order to vote you must pay your dues and that it is written in the senate by-laws.

President's Report

President Fields stated that the executive committee met with President Cooper on yesterday at 4:00pm. We discussed the state budget cuts and what areas he was going to look at when considering cuts. We also discussed our concerns about the progress being made with SACS reaffirmation process. The QEP is due one year from this date. Everyone should know what the QEP is. We want to offer our support to Dr. Cooper with whatever is needed.

Senator Ihekweazu asked would President Fields refresh his memory about the amendments that we will be voting on. President Fields responded that most of the changes are minor and necessary because of the restructuring, changing from schools to colleges, etc. The major change was that there is no longer term limits for the executive offices.

Old Business:

The faculty survey will be sent to senators before the next meeting.

New Business:

Other Business:

Senator Thornburg wanted to address the excessive absentees for student athletes. We received a memo stating that a student must not be penalized if they miss class to represent the university. Some students will miss as much as 31% of the semester's classes.

Senator Ihekweazu stated that a student told him that if they have a 3.5 cumulative GPA they do not have to attend classes.

Senator Brown stated the following is written in the student handbook, if the student is a senior and has a 3.5 cumulative GPA he/she does not have to attend classes.

President Fields stated that she has a problem with that student handbook because it was never approved by the policy making bodies of this university.

After much more additional discussion Senator Brown move to table this discussion and add it under old business to the November 11, 2008 agenda. The motion was seconded by Senator Whitaker. The motion carried.

Adjournment

The motion was moved Senator Ihekweazu and seconded by Senator Sanders. The meeting was adjourned at 5:09PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia T. Davis
Recording Secretary