Faculty Senate President’s Message:

“The Voice of the Faculty”

Dear Faculty:

I am grateful for the opportunity to serve as President of the Faculty Senate for the 2013-2014 year. I have worked at the Center for Academic Excellence/Writing Center since 1999, and I am Professor in the Department of Library Science and Informatics. I have served in various capacities on the faculty senate since my first term as an alternate in 2003.

I came to this corner of university life with a desire to commit not only to my training’s scholarly realm but also to the institution which granted me a parcel in which to sow. I came and I trust you came similarly, with at least a willingness to commit to this place, which offered you a place, whether humble or rarified.

When that commitment was made between MUSC and me, I made a decision both conscious and unconscious, that I supported the institution’s basic mission—even those parts in which I have no training. I chose and hope you did as well to figure out a way to contribute to the mission’s various arms in any way I could reasonably do so.

Similarly, MUSC’s rules and traditions and policies, crazy or spot-on, became also my rules, traditions, and policies. In essence, by coming here and buying into the mission and sowing in my little parcel of academic earth, I at first unwittingly agreed to (but agreed to nonetheless) the institution’s various bureaucratic and policy arcana as my own. It is therefore my role to seek to give input, to correct course if my view is valid, but I have to convince others I’m right through whatever other arcane policies and structures may exist to allow it.

This, to me, is what institutional—rather than personal or ideological—commitment means. Rather than caring solely for my own parcel of academic activity or my own preferences, I am responsible for (not just affected by) what is growing in fields around me as well, the full ecosystem. Institutional commit-
ment suggests that the solution to decision-making that I question is more involvement on my part, not more indignation.

The Faculty Senate's mission and vision are clearly articulated on our website. We are the faculty interest, and the faculty interest is MUSC's mission and attendant initiatives. Our Senate is obligated to advocate for faculty not in a vacuum but...IN pursuit of the institutional mission. So we do not defend parochial interests...that is, as staunchly as we support, for example, equitable and fair compensation or evaluation, we will be equally supportive of the necessary best means to achieve MUSC's missions in difficult times. Indeed, as an institution, Faculty Senate support of fair compensation and evaluation stems from our support of the university's mission. The reason we are the faculty's voice is not because we're looking out for number one. It's because an active, growing, engaged, and collaborative faculty is among the primary means to all our university's ends.

I look forward to being your ally and supporter in the coming months. I hope you'll be mine and your faculty Senators' as well. I ask all faculty to find a way to strengthen institutional commitment, whether through the Senate or other means. To be persuasive and productive, the Senate's voice needs to be in theory and in fact--obviously also the voice of the faculty.

Happy New Year!
Tom G. Smith, PhD
2013-2014 Senate President

Our 2013-2014 Senate Officers

Tom Smith, PhD
President

Angela Mund, CRNA, DNP
Vice President

Amy Thompson, PharmD
Secretary

Faculty Senate Sponsored Workshop

On October 16th, 2013, the Faculty Senate hosted a Promotion and Tenure workshop. To watch the presentation and panel discussion please visit our site at:

http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/faculty_senate/workshop/workshop2013.html
Online Education Summit at MUSC

On Friday, November 15, MUSC hosted an Online Education Summit, sponsored by Dr. Mark Sothmann, Interim MUSC President, and the MUSC Online Advisory Council. The purpose of the summit was to broaden faculty and staff knowledge of online teaching best practices, current online teaching trends, and to gain perspective of current and future MUSC online teaching initiatives.

Keynote speakers for the summit were Dr. Nelson Baker, Dean of Professional Education at Georgia Tech, Matthew Cooper, Chief Executive Officer of Acatar, and Dr. Marie Norman, Senior Director of Educational Excellence of Acatar. Acatar is an online support company created through online pedagogical research conducted by Carnegie Mellon University (CMU).

The keynote speakers offered their perspectives of current online initiatives throughout higher education and provided examples of how online pedagogical best practices can be used to develop effective and successful online courses and programs.

The summit also featured a discussion panel that presented both current and future initiatives and challenges in MUSC’s colleges. Panel members were Dr. Gail Stuart, Dean of the College of Nursing, Dr. James Zoeller, Chair, Department of Healthcare Leadership and Management, College of Health Professions, Dr. Tom Hulsey, Assistant Dean for Global Education Programs, College of Graduate Studies, Dr. Joseph DiPiro, Dean of the South Carolina College of Pharmacy, and Dr. Betsy Pilcher, Associate Dean for Institutional Effectiveness, College of Dental Medicine.

To conclude the summit attendees were asked to break into discussion groups and share perspectives and offer solutions to typical online development challenges. Group members then reconvened and shared their perspectives with the collective group.
College of Medicine - Clinical Sciences Electoral Unit

There are a number of issues that have been relevant to the COM-clinical science faculty recently. One was the Medical University Hospital Peer-Review Process revision which was spearheaded by the ad hoc Peer Review committee of the faculty senate. This committee held discussions with key individuals tasked with oversight and implementation of the hospital peer review process. The senate proposed recommendations for substantive revision of the existing process following extensive negotiations. Agreement on the majority of Senate recommendations was reached in September 2013 and received Faculty Senate approval in October 2013.

In July 2013 the COM Dean unveiled a revised compensation plan for implementation in FY15. In response to clinical science faculty queries, the Senate sought to assess faculty sentiment regarding the new plan by means of a survey. The aggregated quantitative responses of clinical faculty to several specific features of the plan and their generally negative written comments were relayed to the Dean, who welcomed the input. Whether revision of the plan accounting for faculty concerns occurs, remains to be seen, and will be a focus of COM-CS Electoral Unit attention in the coming year.

Given the absence of a faculty assembly in the College of Medicine, such as exists in other MUSC Colleges, and the growing burden of clinical science faculty issues which are presented to the Faculty Senate as a whole, discussion has begun regarding formation of a standing Faculty and Clinical Leadership Relations Committee which would address clinical science issues, seek resolution where possible directly with COM leadership, and refer to full Faculty Senate only when necessary. This initiative will be further pursued in the coming year.

Office of the Ombudsman

John Waller, M.D.
Ombudsman

Office Hours are by Appointment.
(843) 792-7070

To request an appointment, please call and arrange to meet in person. Do not discuss your situation over the phone, on a voicemail message, or in an email.

The MUSC Ombudsman is charged with providing faculty and postdoctoral trainees an alternate, informal pathway to resolve conflicts and disputes that is independent, neutral, informal and confidential. The Ombudsman's Office offers a safe place to discuss problems or issues within the University and to review options for informal resolutions of differences. The primary goal of the Ombudsman is to ensure that faculty and postdoctoral trainees receive fair and equitable treatment.

In this role, Dr. Waller does not replace, interfere with or alter existing formal due process, appeals, or grievance procedures spelled out in the Faculty and Resident Handbooks and other University documents. Instead he works in parallel with these channels, offering a relaxed environment in which individuals can consider the range of formal and informal opportunities available to resolve conflicts or disputes before committing to any particular course of action. Key guiding principles include strict confidentiality (unless there is a risk of imminent harm) and a focus on fairness and impartiality. Because of their informal nature, discussions with the Ombudsman does not constitute putting the University formally "on notice." So if you do not know where to turn, call the Ombudsman.

More information can be found at http://academicdepartments.musc.edu/ombudsman/index.htm.
**Yearly Update From Electoral Units Continued…**

*College of Medicine - Basic Science Electoral Unit*

The electoral unit met once during FY12-13 to specify the most important basic science issues. Overwhelmingly (and somewhat ironically) compensation came up as the major issue. In general, folks are afraid that they'll be asked to recover 75% of their salaries from grants in nearer future (this % is still an estimate/projection and based on "unofficially" circulating numbers concerning the funds flow endorsed payments from the dean to the departments per FTE). If enforced, this would probably wipe out 2/3 or more of the current basic science faculty in COM and it is hard to imagine that faculty will excel in rising extramural funding given the general crunch at the NIH. This raises the question how tenure will be interpreted (see below), probably non-tenured junior faculty will be cut first (and that is already apparent from non-renewal letters handed out this fiscal year), but eventually, one would have to face a significant number of tenured faculty that do not support 75% of their salaries from grants as well.

*College of Dental Medicine Electoral Unit*

JBECDM has been challenged by a recent increase in class size, another year of significant budget cuts, and the retirement of a number experienced, senior faculty. The good news is that through key hires of both junior and senior faculty; pre-clinical and attending clinical FTEs are moving in a positive direction. Available faculty resources to support on line education is being evaluated. A continued emphasis on (virtual) CAD/CAM technology and providing continuing education in regional and national venues continue to provide faculty both challenges and opportunity.

*College of Health Professions Electoral Unit*

The CHP Faculty Assembly was involved in each of the following issues over the 2012-2013 year. Faculty approval of revisions to the CHP Faculty Assembly bylaws, clarifying which categories of faculty members have voting rights in the Assembly (December 2012). Faculty approval of a new CHP Tenure Policy (March 2013). Release of a CHP Career Development and Mentoring Plan document (November 2012). Release of a Promotion Implementation Guidelines document developed by a faculty committee in conjunction with CHP administration (September 2013). Formation of a committee to develop a Tenure Implementation Guidelines document. Formation of a committee to review and revise the existing Interim Review Policy.

*College of Nursing Electoral Unit*

The CON moved to Harborview Tower (10th floor) in December 2012 due to extensive renovations to the College building on Jonathan Lucas Street. Expected return is December 2014. A workshop in Cultural Competence was held for all faculty. A college-wide retreat was held June 10th, 2013 with faculty and staff to discuss CON strategic planning. Faculty development and mentorship plan was developed by the CON chair in collaboration with several faculty members. Mentoring activities according to the mentorship plan have been started in September 2013 with two mentor/mentee training workshops.

*College of Pharmacy Electoral Unit*

South Carolina College of Pharmacy (SCCP) Executive Dean Joe DiPiro has announced that he will be stepping down from the position to become Dean at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, Virginia, effective June 1, 2014. No announcement has been made in regards to a search for a replacement or interim at this time.

*Department of Library Sciences and Informatics Electoral Unit*

DLSI faculty input sought and then voted to approve revisions to ATP guidelines. Guidelines incorporate two promotion cycles per year—previously, only one. In January 2014, Shannon Jones, M.Ed., MIS, MLS, will begin her position as the Library’s Assistant Director for Program Development & Resource Integration. The Library shifted to "learning commons" model. The Library website has been restructured to include resource portals for students, clinicians, researchers, and educators.