

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
FACULTY COUNCIL ON UNIVERSITY RELATIONS**

The Faculty Council on University Relations met on Monday, **February 14, 2001**. Chair Christina Emerick presided.

**PRESENT:**     **Professors** Emerick (Chair) Dziwirek, Fridley and Goldblatt;  
                  **Ex officio members** Arkans, Doherty, de Tornyay and Grover.  
                  **Guest** Harry Hayward, Director of Strategic Communications, University Relations

**ABSENT:**     **Professors** Ahmad, Crittenden, Hauser, Hicks, Palmer and Robertson;  
                  **Ex officio members** Ludwig, Regnier, Russell, Sjavik, Weaver and Whitney.

**Approval of minutes**

The minutes of December 13, 2000 were approved as written.

**Council on Strategic Communications - Norm Arkans**

Arkans said excellent progress is being made in the directions and initiatives recommended by the Committee on Communications, Constituency-Building and Outreach (chaired by Dean David Thorud of Forest Resources and comprising a broad representation of faculty and administrators, including FCUR Chair Christina Emerick) in its Report to the President, submitted in May 2000, and entitled "Connecting the Community." The Report was distributed to and discussed by FCUR in a meeting last Spring.

A recommendation was made in the Report that the new Vice President for University Relations (Jack Faris) pull together senior administrators and faculty who, because of the nature of their departments and the work they do, communicate with significant members of the "outside public." (Educational Outreach, Development, Admissions, some schools and colleges and Health Sciences are representative areas.)

The Council on Strategic Communications was the result of this recommendation. It is in ways such as this that University Relations touches base with other parts of the University, said Arkans. He said it is hoped that the Council on Strategic Communications can convene on a quarterly basis to discuss programs and coordinate efforts that benefit both the University and the community. Participating members have found that their own departments and units also benefit from the coordination and collaboration in the council. (The programs of radio and television spots highlighting UW students from disciplines across the campus are dramatic examples of Strategic Communications programs that will benefit all sectors of the University.) And certainly offices such as Educational Outreach and Admissions benefit enormously.

Arkans said, "All of us at the University need to focus our communications efforts so that they come from a consistent platform." And departments and administrative offices should "cross-fertilize" to glean what they can from each other in efforts to design the best possible communications strategies, and to present those strategies in a unified voice. "We're now trying to coordinate objectives and goals throughout the University," Arkans said, "and we're seeing the benefits of doing so." Hayward said, "We're getting widely-based support on our initiatives because of our interaction with these other University constituencies."

Hayward played four of the five radio spots that have been produced thus far (video spots are showing as well). The students - accomplished and well-spoken - represent not only different disciplines within the University but different regions of the state. In each instance, the student has made a significant academic contribution, and eloquently speaks to the advantages of being a student at UW simply by sharing his or her story. Hayward has upwards of 60 students already selected for future radio and video spots, many of them from the arts and humanities. The council recommended finding students who show a wide range of interest in their university experiences, for example, a physics student who also enjoys poetry. Hayward and Arkans said this is an excellent idea, and will be looking for just such students. Goldblatt said the other

campuses should be mentioned in the spots. Hayward said students from UW Tacoma and UW Bothell will be included in the radio and video spots.

**“Op ed” in the Seattle Times: “Higher Education and the Public Good”**

Arkans distributed an “op ed” entitled “Higher Education and the Public Good” written jointly by the presidents of Washington’s public four-year institutions of higher education. (It is to appear in the Seattle Times on February 15, 2001.) The op ed page points out that “the State of Washington has built a strong and varied system of public higher education. In our six colleges and universities, students can find different models of undergraduate education, different social and geographic settings, different fields of study. Whatever their choices, students who graduate from these institutions can look forward to enhanced careers, greater earnings, and richer lives.” It states that the University’s “highest priority is gaining resources to recruit and retain outstanding faculty,” since all that the University does “only works if the education we offer is good.” Gaining resources, acquiring space and equipment for research, and keeping up with the extraordinary changes in technology, are difficult accomplishments at a time when “legislative budget-writers face a daunting task,” the presidents report. “Nevertheless, the state simply cannot afford to shortchange higher education. It is too important to our common future.” And the presidents conclude, “In the long term, there must be creative new ways of funding public higher education. Such education is a broad public good. It requires public support.”

Fridley recommended that efforts be made to find other significant figures who could speak out on behalf of the University, whether in an “op ed” or in other media-based outlets: print, video or audio. Arkans said this will be part of the work of the Strategic Communications council, and is something University Relations is continually seeking.

**Honorary Degrees (revised Class “C” Resolution) - Christina Emerick**

Emerick distributed the following revised DRAFT of the proposed Class “C” Legislation on Honorary Degrees.

**DRAFT REVISION  
PROPOSED CLASS “C” LEGISLATION ON HONORARY DEGREES**

WHEREAS, state statute and the University Handbook provide that the Board of Regents may, upon recommendation of the Faculty, confer Honorary Degrees upon persons of great accomplishment; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Regents and the Faculty have not exercised this prerogative in recent decades; and

WHEREAS, Honorary Degrees conferred upon deserving individuals would pay tribute to outstanding achievement across a range of human endeavor consistent with the mission of the University;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the University resume offering Honorary Degrees to deserving individuals of great accomplishment, and delegate to the Faculty Council on University Relations the role of evaluating candidates for such honors.

Nominations for Honorary Degrees may come from a variety of sources, including faculty councils, committees, departments, programs, schools, colleges, and campuses within the University of Washington.

The Faculty Council on University Relations will deliberate and, on behalf of the faculty, recommend candidates for Honorary Degrees to the Regents.

Honorary Degrees may be conferred at either a commencement ceremony or at a formal academic convocation.

. . . . .

Emerick said the Senate Executive Committee found the first DRAFT too specifically linked to commencement, notwithstanding the DRAFT's allusion to other occasions than commencement for the awarding of Honorary Degrees, and notwithstanding the fact that most Honorary Degrees are indeed awarded at commencement exercises. In the revised DRAFT, Emerick has uncoupled the mention of Honorary Degrees from commencement exclusively, and instead writes: "Honorary Degrees may be conferred at either a commencement ceremony or at a formal academic convocation."

Also, in the revised DRAFT, FCUR is mentioned as, in effect, a filter for Honorary Degree nominations, and will recommend Honorary Degrees to the Board of Regents.

It was mentioned that the Resolution should in some way suggest that the number of Honorary Degrees should be kept to a minimum, perhaps one initially, and two or three at the most after several years. (Though it may well be that in some years no Honorary Degree would be awarded.) This would retain the value of the Honorary Degree, and would make more credible the notion that it is a privilege for the University of Washington to bestow this "rare and special honor."

Emerick will make final revisions of the Resolution and E-mail it to the council for an E-mail vote of approval.

**Next meeting**

The next FCUR meeting is set for Wednesday, March 14, 2001, at 2:30 p.m., in 36 Gerberding Hall. This meeting may or may not be held, depending on whether there are agenda items necessitating a meeting.

Brian Taylor  
Recorder