

**UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON  
FACULTY COUNCIL ON STUDENT AFFAIRS**

The Faculty Council on Student Affairs met at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, **June 4, 2002**, in 36 Gerberding Hall. Chair Lee Nelson presided.

**Approval of minutes**

Due to lack of quorum, the minutes of April 9, 2002 and May 7, 2002 could not be voted on for approval.

**Undergraduate education as it relates specifically to Student Affairs issues - George Bridges, Dean, Undergraduate Education**

Bridges said, "University of Washington undergraduate students face particularly difficult challenges. They are in a critical developmental stage, in the process of becoming adults. I'm understanding and appreciative of that process. Indeed, most of the best learning that undergraduate students accomplish occurs not in the classroom, but in other contexts, and in other environments. So, ironically, an office like mine must have a good working partnership with Student Affairs and Minority Affairs."

Bridges said he has "talked with Rusty Barcelo [Vice President, Office of Minority Affairs] and Dr. Ernest Morris [Vice President for Student Affairs] about ways to combine forces to extend academic life into student life. Over the next several months, several important activities involving students and faculty will be planned and carried out. A major event to be planned is 'Welcome Week' for incoming students in Autumn Quarter of each year, starting in 2003. Faculty, students, staff, and student mentors all will participate in the series of events to take place during the week. The council can certainly make an important contribution to the preparations for 'Welcome Week'."

Bridges said the University of Washington is "a bit behind our peer institutions in linking student and academic learning. We are the leading university in the nation in affording undergraduate students research opportunities, and opportunities to work with faculty. I'm very optimistic about this. But we do want to improve in linking student and academic learning."

Asked to discuss the chief mission of Undergraduate Education, Bridges said, "An important part of our mission is to ensure that freshmen and sophomore students have access to courses and to the best learning experience possible. Assessment, classrooms, Honors, interdisciplinary programs, funding for access to courses: these are some of the high priorities in the mission of Undergraduate Education. It is vital to create flexibility in the curriculum because of program interest changes. For example, there has been a large increase in students' interest in computer science in recent years. This places enormous pressure on departments. We help departments be more flexible with two- or three-year grants and other funding. Departments do not have money for the influx of students they sometimes receive."

Bridges said a significant contribution to undergraduate education at the University is the Teaching Academy, comprised of some 300 faculty who have received the Distinguished Teaching Award. The Teaching Academy's purpose is to "enhance the quality of undergraduate education at the University of Washington," said Bridges. The Office of Undergraduate Education oversees the Teaching Academy.

Asked how the Office of Undergraduate Education measures itself, and determines how well it is doing, Bridges said, "We have routine evaluations in Undergraduate Education. We also have parent evaluation programs, which we look at closely. We have FIG, the Freshmen Interest Group, a program that has served as a model for universities throughout the country. We have Orientation preceding each Autumn Quarter, which we are continually adapting to the changing academic environment. We now have the Summer Bridge programs, which are proving extremely successful. All of these programs and

evaluations help us determine how well we are doing, and what we need to do to improve undergraduate education at the University of Washington.”

Bridges said the University has improved its development of students competing for Rhodes Scholarships and other international competitions. “We have had Rhodes Scholars from the UW in each of the last two years. And it appears very likely that we will have another Rhodes Scholar this year.”

Bridges said, “We want closer ties to Student Affairs than in the past, and are very hopeful about this collaboration.” Schwartz said that with a diverse student community such as that at the UW, “students can fall through the cracks” if they do not feel themselves to be a genuine part of the University community. Bridges said the only way to address that problem is through collaborative efforts between different groups who have the students’ best interests in mind.

Nelson said that gathering spaces for students is an issue at the University. Red Square, she noted, “is a sterile space and is therefore underutilized as a gathering space.”

Bennett asked Bridges what the council can do to help Undergraduate Education. Bridges said the council can serve as a liaison between students and faculty, and help with activities such as “Welcome Week” and other group activities that bring students and faculty together. He said one thing he would like to see happen is for faculty, at Orientation in the Fall and wherever else possible, to let students know just what is expected of them at the University of Washington. He said FCSA can help in this process.

Nelson said the “intellectual community” needs to be extended to students more vigorously than it has been. Students could be asked to read a particular book that they would then discuss with faculty. There could be a common reading of the book. Kravas said, “There must be a challenge for the students: one that connects with an ongoing program. Faculty need to get involved with residence halls, with the Greek system, and with other student groups and sectors of the student community. Many faculty are doing this now, in various ways, but much more needs to be done.”

### **FCSA Recommendations for Class C Legislation to Faculty Senate**

Nelson said it would be an excellent idea if the council were to send Recommendations for Class “C” Legislation to the Faculty Senate in the 2002-03 academic year. [From the University Handbook: “Class ‘C’ actions are on-legislative actions, including passage of resolutions, appointment of committees, approval or disapproval of committee reports, receipt of reports or information, and determination of Senate by-laws. They become effective upon adoption by the Senate. See Volume Two, Sections 22-71.C and 22-75, Senate Procedure: Class A Actions.”]

Nelson said the mission of faculty councils is being enhanced. The Rose Task Force, to which she has referred in previous FCSA meetings, will be recommending a reorganization of certain faculty councils (though FCSA seems unlikely to be changed), and there may be University-level councils comprising equal representation from faculty and administration, with each member of the council being accorded voting status. These councils would represent a condensation of the present faculty councils. Though the precise nature and extent of the reorganization is not as yet determined, there will definitely be significant changes in the structure of the councils. One result is that the councils will have more power than they do now.

Schwartz said the FCSA recommendations should emphasize the strengths as well as the council’s concerns about campus climate. Kravas said Bridges’ observation that undergraduate students do not feel a strong sense of community, and that that community needs to be built, should be represented in the recommendations. In particular, freshmen and sophomore students need help in acclimating themselves to University life. “It’s important to get them off to a good start,” said Kravas. He said he is involved

with a program in which regents interact with students, which is not only appreciated by the students, but by the regents themselves.

Kravas pointed out, as an example, a gathering of commuter students and regents that was especially rewarding. He said commuter students have the most difficult time of all students in establishing a sense of community at the University. And there are now more commuter students than non-commuter students.

Nelson said, "That's important. A lot of people I've worked with are commuters, and often these students have to work, and many of them have families. What's needed is curriculum that has a sense of community built into it. It has to be an organic component of the coursework. These students don't have time for single big events (which do not build a true sense of community anyway); they need 'community' built directly into their curriculum."

Bennett said a major concern of his is student services at the University. "Over the years, funding for student services has markedly declined, while the student population has gone up." Lewis said there has indeed been an erosion of support for student services, and that we must find different ways to get these services to students. Nelson asked, "How exactly *do* these services go down?" Kravas observed that state funding for the University has fallen sharply, with every department and unit being compelled to undergo budget cuts. Feetham said the Graduate School will have to lay off people as a result of the budget cuts.

Kravas said, "Bearing this in mind, counseling at the University must be coordinated well, and outreach becomes crucial in this context." Bennett said, "Many students don't even know what services are there. They are reactive more than proactive." Kravas said, "National mental health statistics show that 25% of the population could profit from counseling at any one time. Translate that into the counseling needs of students, and you are talking about thousands (approximately 9,000 students at the University of Washington) who need counseling. And as we have heard, a great proportion of students need some kind of assistance and aid. We need to create an environment in which people help people."

Schwartz said, "We need to have people know that the whole University community is being helped by effective services to students." Lewis said, "Yes, student services contribute to the whole University experience." Bennett told the council that each summer he does what he calls "parent events, so that it's coming not just from the institution, but from the other side as well. More parents and students are coming to parent orientations each year. It helps parents better understand what they're paying tuition for."

Nelson said, "In an era of cutbacks, we need faculty involvement to make this a more livable place." Schwartz said, "Some faculty do such things as bring students into their labs. There *are* faculty out there doing some of these things." Bennett said, "You're in research, however. In the Arts and Sciences it is harder to get faculty involvement in this kind of activity." Kravas said, "Students appreciate faculty going a little ways beyond what is usual." Lewis said, "Many faculty are *already* making special efforts, in work/study and lab situations, and in many other contexts. We can build on these efforts."

Nelson stressed that there are "great rewards for faculty who do get involved." Kravas observed that "in a small liberal arts school [such as Reed], this kind of culture just organically forms; in larger institutions, it is a more difficult evolution." Schwartz said, "I do what I do *because* of a faculty member who went the extra step."

As for the recommendations, Nelson said she would emphasize, among current developments: improvements in housing; the excellent food services at the HUB; the very successful "Dog Days" celebration on Red Square; the positive steps taken by the Office of Minority Affairs (OMA is now

connecting with the academic side of student life); the Cultural Center (“an exciting place, especially for minority students”); the Instructional Center (which is making a significant difference in students’ lives); and many other current efforts to work together on student issues. Kravas suggested addressing the commuter students’ interests in the recommendations (“We need to know more about them.”); the Student Mental Health Services (“They’re on the edge, with tenuous funding, and finding it harder to be able to do what they need to do.” And as Schwartz said, “What does the University want to do in that area? They have to make a commitment.”); class instruction (“Everyone wants to teach at 10:30 a.m.; that will have to change.”); the Teaching Academy and community building (“They are linked; the faculty in the Teaching Academy help with Faculty Fellows – the 100 or so new faculty at the University – among their various services.”).

Nelson will also mention in the recommendations the areas of student affairs that need heightened attention and enhanced resources. There is a strong concern that students are much more dependent on loans than formerly. Undergraduate students on student loans graduate with an average debt of \$15,000. Lewis said this figure is still considered a reasonable level of debt, but Financial Aid is monitoring this closely.

**Next meeting**

This was the final FCSA meeting of the 2001-02 academic year. The next council meeting will be held in October 2002.

Brian Taylor  
Recorder

**PRESENT:** *Professors* Nelson (chair), and Schwartz;  
*Ex officio members* Bennett, Clark, Feetham, Kravas and Lewis;  
*Guest* George Bridges, Dean, Undergraduate Education

**ABSENT:** *Professors* Herwig, Karmy-Jones, Lehman, Nicholson, O’Neill and Williams;  
*ex officio members* Baker, Hatlen and Rasmussen.