

MINUTES
GRADUATE FACULTY ASSEMBLY
April 25, 2003

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Dwight Dimaculangan. The minutes of the February 21, 2003 Graduate Faculty Assembly were approved as distributed.

Dr. Dimaculangan indicated that he had no introductory remarks other than to say that he wanted to participate in the discussion about graduate support later in the meeting. Dr. Dimaculangan also indicated that Dr. Melford Wilson, Vice President for Academic Affairs, was not present because of illness. Dr. Dimaculangan made an announcement for Dr. Marilyn Smith asking that the names of the new chairs of committees be turned in to Dr. Smith.

Dr. Wilhelmenia Rembert, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, was out of the room so Dr. Dimaculangan proceeded with the report from the Graduate Council.

Dr. Bill Rogers, Chair of Graduate Council, was not present. Dr. Laura Dufresne reported for Graduate Council. College of Arts and Sciences curriculum changes were approved for the Department of Biology, the Department of Chemistry, and the Gerontology Certificate Program. College of Education changes were approved for the Educational Leadership program, the Curriculum and Instruction Department, and the Department of Health and Physical Education. Graduate Faculty Assembly approvals included Dr. Clarence Coleman Jr. and Dr. Michael Cornick, College of Business; Dr. Alice McLaine and Dr. Linda Schoonmaker, College of Education. There were no petitions at the last Graduate Council meeting. There was a report from Dr. Rembert. Presently, the Council is working on a new thesis instruction manual for the fall. Also, the tabled letter (regarding support for graduate students) from the previous Graduate Faculty meeting was discussed. A new, revised version of the letter was unanimously approved. The revisions were mainly editorial.

Dr. Wilhelmenia Rembert, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs, indicated that she would speak about several items including graduate support. Dr. Rembert noted that Dr. Dimaculangan, Dr. Rogers, and others have been actively involved building a case for increased support for graduate students. Dr. Rembert went on to say that she had met with graduate directors, Sharon Johnson, and Lori Carpenter several times during the year to discuss the need for increased support. Also, talks with the University Advancement Office indicated that they would probably be more aggressive in seeking graduate support from potential donors. Dr. Rembert reported on her attendance at a conference of southern graduate schools in February where stipends and compensation were discussed. Most schools in attendance did not feel like they had a competitive package for graduate students. Dr. Rembert indicated that she had shared updated information from Dean Franklin's study in 2000 with Dr. Wilson, President Digorgio, Dr. Dimaculangan, and Dr. Rogers. Dr. Rembert's second item was the announcement of the graduate commencement ceremony on May 8 at 7:00 and the thanking of those involved with the planning of the ceremony. Dr. Rembert also added that during the last meeting with the graduate directors they discussed how graduate students with extra accomplishments or achievements might be recognized. Dr. Rembert asked that anyone with ideas about how to recognize these students to please share those ideas with her. Following Dr. Rembert's remarks, it was noted we need to make sure we have accurate numbers and we accurately compare our graduate stipends and assistantships with schools we compete with for graduate students. Dr. Rembert responded and indicated she made some assumptions perhaps she should not have made and she will go back and ask the institutions for the same things making sure the assumptions are the same for Winthrop and the other institutions. It was also noted that Winthrop was below virtually all its peer institutions attending the conference of southern graduate schools.

Dr. Dimaculangan introduced the old business of the February 21, 2003 tabling of the motion to support the Graduate Council's letter of concern, "A vision for graduate student support at Winthrop University." There was a motion to untable the previous motion. That motion was approved. After the approval of the motion, Dr. Dimaculangan stepped down as Chair of the meeting and was replaced by Dr. Jean Silagyi-Rebovich. Dr. Dimaculangan then made a presentation regarding the need for maintaining and increasing support for graduate students. After Dr. Dimaculangan's presentation, faculty members voiced support for the need to study graduate aid and commended Dr. Dimaculangan (and the Biology Department) for addressing the graduate support issue. Dr. Rembert indicated that, at present, the faculty/staff campaign does not have a place for giving to graduate support. After much discussion and many comments, a motion to endorse the letter prepared and adopted unanimously by the Graduate Council at its April 11, 2003 meeting was unanimously approved by the Graduate Faculty Assembly.

There was no new business.

There were no announcements.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Carlton Bessinger, Secretary