

A report from the Collegiate Senators regarding College Enrollment Increases

The Faculty Senate received 2013-2014 Academic Year presentations from Wake Forest University administrators; all signs point to a significant budget challenge over the next few years.

There appear to be many needs: renovating the dorms and maintaining competitive salary/benefit packages for faculty and staff are just two that are often mentioned.

One solution that has repeatedly surfaced is that of increasing the number of undergraduate students in the College. Few faculty express support for increasing the number of students on campus. Still, if the administration decides to increase the number of students, there is a need to first construct an appropriate model on how additional resources will be utilized to support the mission of the university. This is especially important since there is a sense among faculty that the model for undergraduate enrollment that occurred in recent years was not complete. Members of the Collegiate Senators thought an exploration of what should be included in the enrollment growth model would be beneficial for the University decision-makers. Our goal is to help the administration craft an appropriate plan for growth, if growth is needed, that encompasses the needs of all involved entities: students, faculty, staff, and administrators.

Pressing needs and few reserves.

The previous enrollment growth plan of one hundred students per year for five years included no money for additional faculty.

- Without additional faculty, class sizes and wait lists become large and unmanageable.
- Students are not able to enroll in the required courses in the semester order recommended or required.

Wake Forest continues to lose ground to comparable colleges and universities in terms of faculty salary and benefit packages.

- In order to compete for the best faculty for the Wake Forest University Teacher-Scholar model, it is important that salary and benefit packages be more than just "competitive."

Wake Forest needs to address the state of the dorms surrounding Hearn Plaza.

- They have issues such as mold and mildew.
- They are out of date.
- They are not attractive to the current generation of students.

With the number of college-age students decreasing in future years, maintaining a demand for Wake Forest must include keeping the university physical plant in good working order. The administration has apparently identified the dorms around Hearn Plaza as needing to either be retrofitted (cost \$80-100 million total or \$4-5 million annually). There are currently few reserves set aside in the budget for this situation.

It all requires money.

Failure to construct models that account for the addition of faculty, continuation of appropriate salary and benefits, and the renovation/replacement of buildings could cause these problems to become chronic to Wake Forest University.

Items that should be included in the next model

Before the university decides to increase the number of students on campus, we believe that a comprehensive enrollment growth model should be developed that either includes or addresses the following items:

1. Resources should be set aside to hire enough faculty to cover the courses required by the additional students in both the previous increase and the future increase. Dean Fetrow has developed a comprehensive faculty staffing model. Resources should be set aside to implement this model.
2. Identifying the number of additional staff required for addressing the increased number of students is important. There have also been recent reports of large increases in administrative and staff positions; many of these positions do not seem to be related to the increased number of students on campus. Dean Fetrow has a model of the number of staff required in the College for additional students. Other offices, such as Counseling, that serve students should also be asked about their needs. Provost Kersh has agreed to do a thorough study of the staffing situation at this university. This report should include identifying how many staff need to be increased for the additional students and where potential savings can be realized by decreasing the number of underutilized staff. This report should be shared with the faculty.
3. Enough money must be set aside so that Wake Forest administrators, faculty, and staff can have competitive salaries and benefits. There is a need to come to an agreement regarding the collection of colleges and universities that Wake Forest University should use when comparing administrative, faculty and staff salary and benefit packages.
4. Increases in departmental budgets for the additional students and additional faculty should be planned. Higher enrollments in some departments cause additional expenses in terms of copying of exams, finals and other student materials. Additional faculty means that there is a need for additional resources for conference travel and other types of scholarly support including the library.
5. Expenses associated with additional classrooms and offices required for the new courses and faculty should be included in the model.

6. Rainy-day set asides for short-term medical benefit spikes and long-term construction needs should be included in the model.
7. The relationship between Wake Forest College and the Wake Forest Athletic Program needs to be reconsidered; there is a need for the Athletic Program to become more self-sustaining. Athletics needs to find additional sources of revenue and increase its endowment. We recognize that being members of NCAA Division I and the Atlantic Coast Conference has benefits for the College in terms of the recruitment of students. However, the long-term financial health of the College mandates a reconsideration of the amount of money transferred between the College and the Athletics Program.

Final Requests

The Collegiate Senators request that, prior to deciding to increase student enrollment, the administration develop a model which addresses the preceding issues. We request that the administration present this model to the faculty and ask for faculty input and response.

Appreciation

We very much appreciate the willingness of members of the administration to work with the Wake Forest College Faculty and the Faculty Senate on these important issues.