

Addendum H: Report to the Senate of the January, 2014 Academic Committee Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Submitted by Jay Ford, Faculty Representative

The BOT on the Reynolda campus, April 10, 2014. The committee discussed the following agenda items:

1. *Approval of Academic Committee charter:* The committee reviewed the latest version of the Academic Committee Charter, which sets out the purpose, authority and responsibilities of the AC. The Committee's charge is to review academic programs of the University, review the operation of each college or school of the university with the exception of the Med school, review and inspect libraries and other instructional resources of the University, and report/submit recommendations to the larger board. The committee unanimously approved the Charter.
2. *Undergraduate Admission Update:* Martha Allman, Dean of Admissions, presented an update on current year undergraduate admissions. Acceptance letters were sent out on March 26th. 34% of applicants were admitted, and 22% were from NC. Pool admitted came from 44 different countries. This year was evidently a record year across the country for early decision applicants. WFU admitted 40% of the class through this process this year, which is the highest ever. Total number admitted at this point is 3783 which is pretty much the average number admitted across the last 2 years. Martha noted that yield numbers are becoming increasingly difficult to predict because students are applying to an increasing number of schools. There will be a handful of students admitted over the summer that are primarily athletic scholarships, typical for Division I institutions.
3. *Report on the U.S. News Rankings:* Phil Handwerk, Director of Institutional Research, explained the various factors and weights of the U.S. News ranking system. He also noted that these may arbitrarily change, based on the decision of one individual, from year to year. Discussion focused in particular on (1) the six-year graduation rate¹ and (2) peer assessment scores. WFU's average graduation rate is 87%, which ranks well below WFU's overall ranking (i.e., this measure drags down our overall ranking). Mr. Handwerk has created a model of the U.S. News formula that enables him to change variables in order to see the effect on overall rankings.
4. *School of Divinity Report:* Dean Gail O'Day reported on the Divinity School's progress after its establishment 14 years ago (1999). She explained the School's three priorities: 1) to establish more firmly the school's programs and reputation; 2) expand the school's size and quality; and 3) innovate in light of the changes embroiling higher education generally and theological education in particular. The School is achieving outstanding results in terms of admissions, diversity of the student body, and job placement. The Divinity School has already achieved 71 percent of its capital campaign goal.

¹ This is a measure of the percentage of entering students who graduate from WFU in 6 years. Students transferring to other schools, dropping out for financial or health reasons, and so forth, have a negative effect on this measure. Also, students who transfer in and graduate are *not* included.

5. *Honorary Degree Nominees*: Provost Kersh the nominees and explained how Commencement speakers are selected. The AC unanimously approved the nominations.
6. The regular meeting was adjourned and went into its Executive session to vote on tenure nominations.