Call to Order

Provost Steve Allred called the meeting to order at 12:17 PM in the Alice Haynes Room of the Tyler Haynes Commons.

Consent Agenda

The following consent agenda item was approved by voice vote without dissent or abstention.

1. Approval of the Minutes of October 29, 2008 Meeting (available online)

New Business

1. Approval of the Strategic Plan (The Richmond Promise) (available online)

Provost Steve Allred introduced Doug Hicks, chair of University Faculty Council (UFC). Doug noted that the UFC devoted several meetings to discussing the Strategic Plan and endorsed it, with three recommendations for amendments at their most recent meeting. Doug then moved that the Strategic Plan be approved by the faculty. The motion was seconded.

The Provost prefaced the discussion by emphasizing that the Strategic Plan's five principles are the critical elements. The action steps should not be construed to be an immutable blueprint for the implementation of the plan. The action steps will be subject to review and possible revision annually. The metrics that will evaluate the plan's implementation are yet to be developed and will be shared with the University community as they are developed. Although the Strategic Plan looks concrete, it is a living document that is subject to change and evolution.

With this, the Provost opened discussion to the floor. Scott Davis questioned why a shared first-year experience was included in the plan when such experiences originated as remedial efforts in the 1970s at the University of South Carolina. Steve noted that this recommendation came from working group on an Integrated Academic Experience who discussed a first-year experience at length and surveyed the faculty regarding the Core course. Scott expressed his preference that this be removed from the plan.

Jane Geaney asked whether the “ad hoc faculty task force” under Principle I, Goal 1, Action Step (vii) would be elected. After some discussion, it was determined that the Committee on Committees is charged with determining membership of such committees through a process it deems appropriate. Kathrin Bower moved that the word “elected” be added to the phrase. The motion was seconded. The ensuing discussion elicited several points including comments that there is a presumption that the committee be representative and that the faculty delegated the process for such appointments to the
Committee on Committees. The motion failed on a hand vote: 23 in favor, 31 opposed, with no abstentions.

Kathrin Bower made an alternative motion that the word “representative” be added to the phrase. This motion passed unanimously by voice vote. Where the bracketed item indicates the addition, this action step on page 3 now reads:

**I.1. (vii).** To ensure implementation of these action steps, establish and charge an [a representative] ad hoc faculty task force to propose a revised undergraduate first-year experience, general education framework, and upper-division curricular opportunities consistent with an integrated academic enterprise.

Jane Berry asked whether action steps will play a role in budgeting since principles are most important. The Provost indicated that although they are fluid, action steps will guide budgeting.

Carol Summers raised a concern that the ability to teach in new and innovative ways needs to ensure enough faculty to support that effort. The opportunity costs of other initiatives, e.g., the development center and the building of a diverse and inclusive community, could hamper that effort. Additional discussion raised a question about the need and efficacy of the development center. The Provost made the following points.

- He and the President are keenly aware of resource issues and opportunity costs.
- In the case of the development center, some money is available from a Mellon Grant and Kathy Monday has donated an unfilled position to help staff the center.
- He does not see the development center as a tradeoff with faculty lines. If he did, he would not support the development center.
- The Integrated Academic Experience working group views the center as an opportunity to provide resources which are needed for teaching and research.
- The lack of specific details will allow the idea to evolve or die.

A question was raised whether there are any details in the Strategic Plan with reference to new faculty lines. A point was made that they are implied in the language and the Provost noted that decisions regarding new faculty lines would be part of the budgeting process.

Carol Summers made a motion that I.1. (ii) be revised to include a phrase to “create new faculty lines to support...” The motion was seconded. Carol accepted two friendly amendments. The first from Kathrin Bower was to write this as a stand-alone sentence and replace “create” with “provide.” The second, from Doug Hicks, was to make this a separate action step replacing I.1. (ii) and renumbering the current action steps I.1. (ii) – I.1. (vii) as I.1. (iii) – I.1. (viii), respectively. The new action step on page 3 would read as follows.

**I.1. (ii).** Provide faculty lines to support innovative programs. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

Hearing no more discussion, the Provost called for a vote on the motion to adopt the Strategic Plan. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.
Respectfully submitted,

Bob Schmidt, University Faculty Secretary