April 2013
New Senate Meeting Location
Faculty Senate will now meet in the University Union senate chambers at 2:30pm on the second Tuesday of each month (except in July) and on the third Tuesday in August. All are welcome.

Senate President’s Report
Centennial Professor and Alan Schaffer Award Update
I would like to thank the Office of the Provost for making a long-term commitment to funding the Senate’s Alan Schaffer Faculty Senate Service Award, and for agreeing to resume the awarding of a Centennial Professorship this year.

‘Teaching at Its Best’ Update
Many of you responded quickly to the Senate’s offer of a gratis copy of Teaching at Its Best—courtesy of the generosity of author Linda Nilson. I would like to thank the Office of the President and the Office of the Provost for their support in securing additional copies to meet the strong demand. Members of the Clemson teaching community are invited to register for an Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Innovation (OTEI) workshops where they will receive a copy of the book.

Clemson Funding Priorities
Faculty who liken Sikes Hall to Sister Fatima’s taffeta booth where “all is known, but nothing is revealed” might be able to glean some information about the direction of the university, future capital projects, etc, by pointing your browser to: http://www.clemson.edu/governmentalaffairs/documents/13eg3.pdf

The Alan Schaffer Faculty Senate Service Award
This year’s Alan Schaffer Faculty Senate Service Award recipient is Michelle Piekutowski, Interim Chief Human Resources Officer. Jeremy King, Faculty Senate President and her nominator, had this to say: “Michelle has worked in an outstanding, collaborative, and transparent fashion with the Senate since her appointment as Chief Human Resources Officer. She has worked tirelessly at a variety of levels and in a number of ways to dramatically transform our HR enterprise to better serve faculty and other Clemson employees. I believe her outstanding service merits recognition by the Faculty Senate.” Dan Warner, 2011-12 Senate President said a few words and presented Ms. Piekutowski with her award plaque at the April 9th Faculty Senate meeting.

Michelle Piekutowski has served on President Barker’s Compensation Advisory Committee. She was heavily involved in the market-based raises that many faculty received this past fall. In the future she would like to make software available for tracking market-based compensation. She was also involved in the movement to improve employee classification systems. Ms. Piekutowski included past Senate President and current Senate

Continues on page 2
Alan Schaffer Service Award
Continued from page 1
President in the search for the new HR Directors of Costumer Service, and Compensation and Recruitment. She pushes for greater communication and transparency in university level decision making. She has created a procedure to ensure uniformity in faculty benefits. She is also working towards a separate state level HR commission. Ms. Piekutowski has eased many other Senate and joint faculty-administration projects.

The Alan Schaffer Faculty Senate Service Award is given to faculty, staff or administration that perform excellent services for faculty senate. Recipients demonstrate leadership, innovation, and commitment to Faculty Senate issues. The Award was created to honor the late and former Senate President, Alan Schaffer who was a Professor of History at the University. Dr. Schaffer was an ardent supporter of faculty, the senate and shared governance. The recipient is granted a stipend of $500 with $1,000 awarded to the Clemson Libraries in the recipient’s honor. They also receive a copy of Life, Death & Bialys, a book written by Dylan Schaffer, son of Dr. Schaffer, about their father-son relationship.


Senate Transitions
Your Faculty Senate officers for the 2013-2014 academic year are Kelly Smith (President; AAH; kcs@clemson.edu), Antonis Katsiyannis (Vice President/President-Elect; HEHD; antonis@clemson.edu), and Alan Grubb (Secretary; AAH; agrub@clemson.edu).

New senators and delegates from Agricultural, Forestry and Life Sciences are Amy Lawton-Rauh, Genetics & Biochemistry; Renea Hardwick (del), Biological Sciences; and Christine Minor (del), Biological Sciences. New senators and delegates from Architecture, Art and Humanities are Jan Rune Holmenvik, English; Matthew Powers, Landscape Architecture; Daniel Smith, Languages; Mark Holser, Performing Arts; Ashley Cowden (del), English; and Lance Howard (del), History. New Business and Behavioral Sciences representatives include James Gaubert (del), Marketing; and Judson Jahn (del), Accountancy and Finance. From Engineering and Science are Dan Warner, Math Science; Dvora Perahia, Chemistry; Chenning Tong, Mechanical Engineering; Neil Calkin, Math Science; Hye Jung Kang, Physics and Astronomy, Joshua Summers, Mechanical Engineering; Sherry Biggers (del), Math Science; and Elizabeth Stephan (del), General Engineering. New senators and delegates from Health, Education and Human Development are Janie Lindle, Leadership, Counselor Education, Human & Organizational Development; Jackie Gillespie (del), Nursing; and Kathleen Meyer (del), Public Health Sciences. Gypsey Teague, associate librarian is the new senator for University Libraries.

Retiring senators from Agriculture, Forestry and Life Sciences this year are Susan Chapman, Dale Layfield, and Dave Tonkyn. All are professors in the Biological Sciences department. Retiring from Architecture, Art and Humanities are Susanna Ashton, English; Graciela Tissera, Languages; Robert Hewitt, Planning and Landscape Architecture; and Kelly Smith, Philosophy and Religion. Retiring from Engineering and Science are John Meriwether, Physics and Astronomy; Bill Pennington, Chemistry; and Jeremy King, Physics and Astronomy. Denise Anderson, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management and Scott Dutkiewicz, Cataloging are retiring from Health, Education and Human Development and University Libraries, respectively. The full list of representatives, including alternates is available on the Senate’s website: http://www.clemson.edu/faculty-staff/faculty-senate/handbook/roster.html.
President’s Report
Continued from page 1

University-Related State Legislation
Two pieces of State legislation should be of particular interest to faculty. The first is S.535 The Clemson University Enterprise Act, which would create an enterprise division in the University containing certain programs (e.g., athletics and housing) that would have streamlined procedures and processes for construction, procurement, human resources, etc. http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess120_2013-2014/bills/535.htm

The second is H.R 3518, which provides a trajectory towards accountability-based funding for state-assisted institutions. The bill notes that the General Assembly would effect annual appropriations via accountability beginning in 2015-2016 FY. This process would rely upon: a) benchmarking to peer institutions; b) evaluating higher ed institutions on the basis of completion rates, affordability and access, quality, economic development and mission; c) a mandate to the Commission on Higher Education to provide metrics associated with the qualitative criteria in (b). The CHE will also have the opportunity to propose elimination of burdensome compliance measures, needed enhanced institutional autonomies, and maintenance of components of the current funding process. http://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess120_2013-2014/bills/3518.htm

U.S. Secretary of Education Issues Open Letter to University Presidents and Boards
Faculty may be interested in U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan’s open letter to university presidents and governing boards encouraging them to consider and remedy perceived harmful incentives associated with their athletics programs. Faculty will have to watch and wait to see if this letter is public-spirited encouragement or a shot across the bow of Division I athletics. http://chronicle.com/article/An-Open-Letter-to-Division-I/138279/

Tobacco Free Task Force
The Tobacco Free Task Force on which I represent the Faculty Senate has been meeting the past few months to discuss implementation of the Tobacco Free concept endorsed by the University’s Administrative Council. This task force has diverse representation of various campus constituencies. Discussions to date have been thorough, frank, and devoted to considering a wide range of ethical, moral, economic, enforcement, policy, benefit, and communication issues. I expect the Task Force to develop a straw draft within the next month or so for the purpose of soliciting feedback from campus. Please monitor your e-mail, and respond to requests for feedback—whether you’ve never used tobacco, currently use tobacco, or are an ex-tobacco user.

BOT-Administration-Faculty Task Force on Administrative Searches/Structure
This year has seen a very large number of queries to the Faculty Senate concerning Part VI of the Faculty Manual, which deals with Administrative Structure (including administrator definitions, searches, and evaluation). As many of us appreciate, this part of the Manual needs attention. That attention is coming (initially, anyway) through a joint BOT-Administration-Faculty task force; President Smith and I are among several faculty members on the task force, which has also been charged by the BOT with ensuring we have policies that promote and support sustainable quality leadership at the university. I would anticipate the Task Force presenting draft changes to next year’s Senate early in the Senate year.

Surprising Statistic of the Month
According to the recent CDC National Survey of Children’s Health (http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/slaits/nsch.htm), roughly one-fourth of school age boys in southern states (including South Carolina) have received an ADHD diagnosis. As reported in the Grey Lady (www.nytimes.com/2013/04/01/health/more-diagnoses-of-hyperactivity-causing-concern.html), reputable ADHD health professionals are dubious—a suspicion that will only grow given that diagnoses are set for further increases given
changes by the American Psychological Association liberalizing the criteria for an ADHD diagnosis—and concerned that perhaps 1/3 of prescribed medication ends up with those without prescription. While Murray Sperber provided overwhelming evidence and arguments that beer-and-circus was a fair characterization of large public universities a decade ago, faculty now face the prospect that this culture has evolved to a psychostimulant-beer-and-circus culture….a circumstance not without well-known evidence on our campus.

**PPACA and the 30-hour Rule for Health Benefits**

In January, the IRS proposed rules for universities in tallying the work hours of faculty such as our lecturers and senior lecturers for the purpose of PPACA compliance with the 30-hour rule. The AAUP has published a statement encouraging institutions to use “fair methods” for calculating hours worked. My understanding is that HR is reviewing the IRS rules and considering how this impacts PPACA for our employees. The situation is complex inasmuch as PPACA exempts self-funded health plans from some, but not all, provisions of the legislation. However, it should be noted that the 30-hour rule is a threshold for other federal programs (some student loan forgiveness programs) unrelated to PPACA that may impact our special ranks faculty.

https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2013/01/02/2012-31269/shared-responsibility-for-employers-regarding-health-coverage


**Dartmouth eliminates AP Credit**

Based on comparative performance of AP-credit-holder and non-AP-credit-holders in coursework, and the woeful results of examinations given to AP-credit-holders, Dartmouth College is ending provision of college credit based on AP scores. It seems that the use of acronyms has led to collective memory lapse: ‘P’ = Placement.

http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/18/education/dartmouth-stops-credits-for-excelling-on-ap-test.html?_r=0

**MOOCs and Academic Standards**

Q: What happens when a faculty member’s rigidity concerning academic standards meets a MOOC with 37,000 students? A: The manifestation of reasonable concerns that many faculty have with MOOCs. Find out what happened in a Coursera-based microeconomics MOOC by pointing your browser to: http://chronicle.com/blogs/wiredcampus/professor-leaves-a-mooc-in-mid-course-in-dispute-over-teaching/42381?cid=at &utm_source=at&utm_medium=en

Faculty may be interested in a working paper from Columbia University’s Community College Research Center that contains a large analysis of performance in online vs. traditional courses in Washington State. The authors find that lesser prepared, male, black, and younger students especially suffer lower performance in online courses.

http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/publications/adaptability-to-online-learning.html

Faculty needing to catch up with MOOC-mania might also enjoy the thoughtful and balanced article by Andrew Delbanco, the Director of American Studies at Columbia. http://www.newrepublic.com/article/112731/moocs-will-online-education-ruin-university-experience

**Financial Exigency Guidelines**

When the Great Recession hit, a particular thorny governance issue that immediately struck me was that financial exigency guidelines present in the Faculty Manual and recommended by the AAUP were only designed to deal with Armageddon—a fiscal situation so dire that it represented a systemic threat to institutional existence. The AAUP has remedied that with the issuance of new guidelines to handle adverse financial conditions that are less dire. Senator Bill Pennington began working on new guidelines of our own with the late Clay Steadman a couple years ago. With the release of the new AAUP guidelines, I hope next year’s Senate might consider revisiting the issue of financial exigency in the Faculty Manual. http://www.aaup.org/report/role-faculty-conditions-financial-exigency
NCAA Report of Faculty Athletics Representatives


Among the results that I found interesting are:

- Roughly 20% of FAR’s support no competition for first-year athletes
- Over 60% of FAR’s note that student athletes cluster in particular majors, and suggest that this is due to the need to meet academic progress requirements and avoid practice/competition conflicts with coursework.
- While institutions have long and repeatedly claimed that special admissions policies/criteria for athletes are not utilized, the majority of FARs surveyed contradict such denials.


Clemson LGBTQA Resources

A Clemson University Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) Task Force will soon be formed with four guiding objectives: (1) to create a welcoming environment that supports both inclusion and diversity; (2) to make recommendations regarding the policies, procedures, and practices which affect the LGBTQ campus community, with the goal of improving access and opportunities; (3) to ensure that the university appropriately addresses issues of safety and welfare of LGBTQ faculty, staff, students and guests; and, (4) to advise the university administration, faculty, staff and students on matters pertaining the LGBTQ campus community. Joshua Morgan a 2010 graduate and now employee with Clemson Libraries worked with helpful and invested administrators, faculty, staff, students and alumni. He credits Joy Smith, former Dean of Students, Susan Hilligoss, Professor of English, and Leon Wiles, Chief Diversity Officer as instrumental in providing the Task Force proposal to President Barker.

The Clemson Harvey and Lucinda Gantt Center for Student Life offers three programs to help fully include and affirm LGBTQ people as valued community members. The Center strives to facilitate a more meaningful understanding of personal and social identity as well as provide space for introspection, cultural exploration and action.

- **Ally Training Workshops** aim to increase awareness and understanding of LGBTQ issues and to train allies to stand with, and advocate for LGBTQ people: [http://www.clemson.edu/ganttregr](http://www.clemson.edu/ganttregh)
- **SpeakOUT** is a narrative tool, used to engage the Clemson community in a healthy dialogue regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. All speakers (students, faculty, staff and alumni) are trained in narrative storytelling and identity development. To request a SpeakOut visit: [http://www.clemson.edu/studentaffairs/forms/speakout](http://www.clemson.edu/studentaffairs/forms/speakout).
  To volunteer as a speaker visit: [http://www.clemson.edu/studentaffairs/forms/speakoutpanelistapplication](http://www.clemson.edu/studentaffairs/forms/speakoutpanelistapplication)
- **Clemson Gay Straight Alliance (CGSA)** is a group of open-minded students, faculty and staff who have come together to share their support for the LGBTQ Community by increasing dialogue and raising awareness of related issues: [http://clubsandorganizationsumbrella21023.orgsync.com/org/clemsonsga](http://clubsandorganizationsumbrella21023.orgsync.com/org/clemsonsga).
  You can also email CGSA at: cgsa@clemson.edu.

The **informal Dinners for LGBTQ and Allies** held in Clemson and surrounding communities offer an opportunity for social support and peer networking in a fun and casual atmosphere. Partners and friends welcome. Guests have included CU faculty, staff and students; Tri-County Tech, PFLAG, CASE, and church and community members. Please join us and find out more information about resources in the community.

Contact Robin Chambers (teresac@clemson.edu) for more information.
Sexual Harassment/Assault & Faculty Responsibility

Clemson University’s Harassment Policy states that “every supervisor or other University official who receives a complaint of harassment (which includes sexual assault) has a positive responsibility to immediately report the complaint to the Office of Access and Equity, regardless of whether or not the alleged harasser has been identified.” This responsibility extends to the classroom and academic environment where faculty are also responsible for taking action when knowledge of harassment has taken place. The key is to get help from the appropriate offices that have been designated to respond to such allegations (CUPD in the case of assault).

There are times when a conflict between an individual's desire for confidentiality and the University's duty to investigate may arise if an individual informs a faculty member about sexual harassment/assault, but asks that person to keep the matter confidential and take no action. Inaction by the faculty member in such instances could lead to University liability. While it may seem reasonable to let the individual determine whether to pursue a complaint, Clemson University has an obligation to prevent and correct the harassment/assault. Therefore, it is important that all allegations of sexual harassment/assault be reported by faculty to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Access and Equity.

Clemson University Police Department’s (CUPD) Chief Link encourages assault victims to meet with police officers as soon as possible in order to receive prompt medical attention and for officers to gather information in a timely manner so they may identify, arrest, and convict the perpetrator. Prompt notice to law enforcement is always important but especially critical when the victim does not know the perpetrator. CUPD’s victim advocate will ensure the victim will be offered medical treatment and counseling services, regardless of his/her desire to pursue the matter criminally. Redfern Health Center provides counseling and other programs to help the victim cope with the trauma of an assault. The Dean of Students can also provide students with service and support information. The Office of Human Resources can provide employees with confidential counseling services through the Employee Assistance Program. Additionally, the Office of Access & Equity has a sexual harassment counselor on staff.

CUPD encourages all victims of sexual assault to pursue criminal sanctions and there are additional options for victims if the perpetrator is a Clemson University student, employee or someone affiliated with Clemson University. The victim can file a complaint against a Clemson University student perpetrator with the Office of Community and Ethical Standards (OCES), which will conduct an independent investigation that could result in sanctions against the perpetrator. For perpetrators who are employees of or someone affiliated with Clemson University, a complaint by the victim can be filed with the Office of Access and Equity, which is responsible for investigating charges of sexual harassment including sexual assault involving employees or visitors.

Office of Access and Equity – 864-656-3181
CUPD – 864-656-2222 or 911
Dean of Students – 864-656-0471
Redfern Health Center – 864-656-2451
OCES – 864-656-0510
HR – 864-656-3360 or 864-656-2726

For incidents occurring off campus call 911 or local law enforcement. CUPD is available to help determine the proper law enforcement jurisdiction.

Information provided by Jerry Knighton (Director of the Office of Access & Equity & Title IX Coordinator) and Chief Link (CUPD) with contributions from: Vernal Howell (Dean of Students), Kimberly Poole (Redfern & CU CARES), Alesia Smith (OCES), Erin Earl (Human Resources), and Renee Roux (University General Counsel).
I am privileged to have had the honor to serve you as Faculty Senate President this year. I enjoyed meeting and talking with as many faculty as I could, and hope that I served you as a strong advocate for faculty to the administration and Board of Trustees. I’d like to thank the administration for working collaboratively with the Senate. Special thanks are certainly due to President Barker and Provost Helms in this regard. I know we didn’t agree about everything, but I appreciate their collaborative spirit and willingness to engage in vital discussions on many issues. I leave the presidency with confidence that they are proponents of faculty and shared governance. Faculty should also know that there are many passionate fans of faculty serving in the administration that have helped the Senate in many ways this year.

Thanks also to you. According to Google analytics, the newsletter receives about 350 hits from unique IP addresses each month, while the Faculty Manual receives about 250. Faculty Manual consultant Fran McGuire informs me that, historically, the Senate usually receives 2-3 inquiries about Faculty Manual interpretations in a given year. This year, by my reckoning, the Senate received about 35 requests. Thank you...I think! We tried to call the balls and strikes equitably—using the letter of the Manual whenever possible, the spirit of the Manual when necessary, and common sense suggestions that accommodated reasonable interests when the Manual was utterly silent on a given issue.

In kicking off this final Column, I know I’ve given some issues a lot of (I hope fair and intellectually honest) criticism. I also hope I managed to poke a little fun at myself. If not, then I’m sure various constituencies might find it amusing that I do have an LEV parking pass, carry my papers in a Clemson Thinks 2 QEP bag, and just might try to convince my wife to let our youngest son play football. Reflecting on the past year, it’s also important to acknowledge things I wish I’d done differently. I’ll channel Dylan in offering a mea culpa by saying that I was older then, but I’m younger now. One of those things was touched upon in an Open Forum that was published as I write this: the strategic hires. While I’m pleased that arguments for a bottom-up, faculty-driven proposal process for strategic hires won the day, I see now that much of the resources could probably be at least as productively spent on supporting and transforming current faculty and programs – you deserve it. Despite what I think were passionate, exhaustive, and relentless arguments, I was not able to win the day for faculty hoping for de facto access to these funds in the bread n’ butter arts and humanities. That remains a grave concern and source of sadness to me.

It’s also a bit puzzling inasmuch as we have a progressive President who has worked to commit a few percent of capital budgets to art. Of course, it’s clear that many people are guided by thinking that this is, after all, the 21st century, and we are still in the early morning hours of a day already soaked in the sunshine of scientific and technological progress that will inevitably solve all our fundamental problems and to which we can hitch our revenue wagons. From previous columns, you know my response to this: Meh, maybe.

I say this because nearly all time I spent in discussions with the administration was expended on moral, ethical, political, socioeconomic, financial, and governance problems and dilemmas. That human-centered photonically-driven carbon-nanotube-based quantum computer capable of software-defined networking with a cloud-based virtual reality housed in server farms sustainably powered by cosmic dark energy (whatever that is) sounds like the cat’s pajamas...until one realizes what it’s not going to tell us: how to mitigate student deaths from binge drinking, how we should feel and act when a Death Valley crowd boos the President of the United States, how we can improve the graduation rates of African-American students, whether political
compromise or accommodation is more effective, the ideal balance between equality and liberty, how to ensure an effective K12 education regardless of class, how to fund and assess higher education, whether public education is a public good or a private positional good whose value is only loosely related to its utility, what it means to have effective leadership, the best distribution of incomes or wealth in a society, how we should live and how we should die.

Once we and our students have lost a commitment to and knowledge of historical and theoretical paradigms, process and methodology, and a few thousand years of content, we'll have lost everything as we sit with our human-centered photonically-driven carbon-nanotube-based quantum computer capable of....

At the same time, though, faculty must face the music. At the risk of firing the first salvo in the great coming generational war, one of the big 21st century themes predicted by the late and great Peter Drucker, I urge my more senior colleagues to hark back and channel Bob Dylan (the attentive, or sufficiently old, will notice I meet you more than half way in channeling Don McLean in the President's Report), for the times they are a changin'.

We do need to assess what we’re doing, we should see how we measure up to other institutions—especially if we’d like to be paid like those at other institutions and if we’d like to not lose good students to those institutions—and we do need to be entrepreneurial. The current political climate’s simultaneous averseness to both tax increases and reductions in non-disccretionary spending suggests the logical terminus is a state budget wholly spent on K12 education, corrections, and (mostly) Medicaid. The terminus of the long-run federal budget would not be much different except for the additions of defense, medicare/social security, and debt service (oh, and Congressional staff).

The big picture, long-term thinkers in higher education leadership who understand this are scrambling to diversify revenues. Hence, all the Sikes-speak about faculty-generated revenue sources over the past few years. Indeed, Moody's Investor Services has recently noted that university mid-term financial outlooks are much more favorable than stand-alone research institutes precisely due to revenue diversity.

I am, however, less sanguine because of what higher ed leaders seem to have only just begun to realize via chatter about eliminating the deductibility of charitable contributions: a growing culture of public kleptocracy, perhaps inevitable and/or necessary, in the Western world that may pressure universities' private and corporate revenue streams going forward. Just ask the medical device makers who face special surtaxes, or bank depositors in Cyprus—even the ones who aren't Russian mobsters or oligarchs or both. Of course, the U.S. was Cyprus before it was cool to be Cyprus: the Federal Reserve has quietly picked the pockets of millions of savers and fixed income investors byexplicitly depressing interest rates below market values. Amongst the victims of this pandemic petit larceny are university donors, foundations, and parents and grandparents saving for children’s educations.

While a learned former Harvard president assured us a couple years ago that our economy had achieved escape velocity, the reality that surreal danger persists is perhaps best illustrated by telling you that the effective real yield on TIPS I hold in my state optional retirement plan account is negative! Non-believers should see: http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/data-chart-center/interest-rates/Pages/TextView.aspx?data=realyield

The times they have a changed. The economic, financial and political ecosystem in which the university sits is nothing like that of the good old days to which some yearn to return; howling at the Moon will not change that circumstance. Faculty at some universities will be insulated from the toxins in the current ecosystem. Our university's late entry into the development enterprise, and concomitant small endowment, may not afford us this luxury.
That scads of people besides me would clamor to commit to off-the-top losses for the privilege of buying inflation-protected Treasuries, signals the perception of danger of whipsaw inflation if/when it comes time to unload the Federal Reserve’s balance sheet. Perhaps it is impolite to further note the inconvenient truth that this balance sheet shows the Fed has leveraged its assets around 55-to-1...because, I guess, AIG, Bear Stearns, GM, European banks and PIIGS, etc didn’t really mean anything. After all, it has been a whole 5 years. Leverage is back, and now it’s not just blessed and encouraged ala the Greenspan Fed, but actually employed by the Bernanke Fed. The times they have a changed. Let us hope the 1600 SAT score of our Princeton colleague, Uncle Ben, suggests he might know what he’s doing.

Or perhaps we should fear that he knows exactly what he’s doing. Universities have cleverly figured out how to grow without growing: e.g., Bridge students who are students except when you don’t want to count them as students and then they are not students, but always could be if it’s convenient for them to be students unless it’s not. Similarly, the Fed knows how to default without defaulting: through pocket picking, inflation, and currency devaluation. The latter two are a boon to current college grads with substantial student loan debt. Soon-to-be students? Not so much. Federal funding? It could be pressured to zero by a political leadership crisis intentionally disguised as a fiscal crisis due as debt service costs explode if rates rise as Fed market manipulation ceases and as it attempts to unload assets from its balance sheet. The times they may be a changin’ dramatically for the faculty enterprise as we know it.

My senior colleagues must also come to understand that the U.S. dollar of their youth and early academic career is fundamentally different than the U.S. dollar of today. The change to a fiat U.S. dollar in 1971 has set in motion the greatest monetary experiment in human history with stakes, given the dollar’s status as the world’s reserve currency, that are effectively infinite. Fiat currencies are accompanied by unavoidable greater capital risk. This increased risk raises the price of capital. As a result, demands concerning the return on capital by those providing capital must necessarily also rise lest capital markets not be actuarially rational (...and we all know that could never happen). Thus, fiat currencies create the conditions where those that have get a lot more than those who do not have.

Thus, my more senior colleagues, in harking back to Dylan, also hark back to a time (from post World War II through the de facto end of the Bretton Woods agreement in 1971) of uniform income growth and Happy Days and the Wonder Years. The advent of the fiat U.S. dollar, not coincidentally, also marks the beginning of divergent income growth (until the beginning of the Great Recession anyway).

This all impacts faculty in a manner that can be presented as two questions. First, can higher education close the income gap and/or its rate of growth? We have no shortage of stakeholders (including faculty understandably excited to hop aboard an anticipated gravy train) of all political and ideological stripes long on belief, but short on reason or direct empirical evidence. We should understand that the direct role of universities in this variant of “economic development” is as experimental as the fiat U.S. dollar. Second, how do we balance access and exclusivity and maintain a financially sustainable billion-dollar enterprise following several decades of income gap growth that has culminated in the dire necessity of tuition revenue?

While we may not be in the uppermost echelon of research universities, and while it’s not clear we can function as a stand-alone non-profit version of Bell Labs, scholarship, accompanying student engagement therein, and revenues are important against the backdrop of this uncertainty. I now am convinced that some portion of the strategic hire funds not invested in current faculty/programs (including arts and humanities) should be put into backstopping a modest number of new non-tenure-track research faculty who could be placed in REC’s and work with graduate students and bolster
revenue generation and the research enterprise. Our few dozen current research professors are roughly 2 orders of magnitude fewer per regular faculty capita than the numbers at many other public universities. Adding a few dozen more seems a sensible experimental expansion that would hardly be anything close to resembling a transformation into, e.g., Georgia Tech.

This greater differentiation of the research enterprise and associated faculty is one of the core recommendations of Indiana University’s Murray Sperber in his stimulating book “Beer and Circus: How Big-time College Sports is Crippling Undergraduate Education”. If soon-to-be-President Smith doesn’t suggest this as a faculty summer reading assignment, I will. While not intentional, the Senate has worked over the past year or two to implement other proposals of Sperber: forcing the evaluation of teaching in the performance-based market raises, and de-emphasizing the use of student evaluations. Based on the hackles from some quarters of campus, it is clear the Senate has touched a nerve with those who think these ideas are dangerous. At the risk of unintentionally frustrating those hacking, this pleases me, for all really good ideas are dangerous (or, I believe, so said Oscar Wilde); I encourage the Senate not to relent.

Consider, for example, the primary reliance on student “evaluations” of “teaching”, which have formed the basis of a perverted and debilitating mutual faculty-student non-aggression pact (as Senate Past President Dan Warner was fond of calling it), whose unintended consequences are eating public higher education across the country alive by giving less concerned faculty and chairs and deans and others a pass on assuming responsibility for the quality of undergraduate education. Alas, one might notice, as I have, that the pool of future higher education administrators comprises a lot of individuals more than happy to place their faith in or, worse yet, demand reliance upon these survey instruments. Lather, rinse, repeat.

And, as noted in this Column before, we have recently seen peer-reviewed evidence that student evaluations are anti-correlated with learning outcomes as measured by longitudinal performance in follow-on coursework in physics. If TPR committees, chairs, deans, and others relying on student evaluations to measure quality are not filled with self-doubt or concern, empirical evidence strongly suggests they should be.

Faculty, however, have to take ultimate responsibility for these circumstances. It is faculty who select, mentor, evaluate, and promote the faculty that ultimately become administrators. Faculty complain about efforts to make higher education a credentialing enterprise. Yet, faculty-based search committees provide us with administrator candidates that, nowadays it seems, need a table of contents for their credentials (including student “teaching” “evaluations”) in their (glossy color) CVs; one should ask where one could acquire as much written exposition and attention to presentation concerning candidates’ management philosophy, broad vision, beliefs about the structure of higher education, the balance between undergraduate and graduate education, keys to effective leadership and shared governance, and relevant values. Halfhearted attempts to infer information about these qualities are made in short meet n’ greets or in formal settings by faculty-dominated search committees using behavioral description interviews based on stale questions, provided by search firms (nice work if you can get it), the frequently brightly polished answers to which are subject to no factual verification. Faculty complain about administrative leadership, but one should also scrutinize faculty leadership in changing the culture surrounding the hiring and appointment of administrators.

More ironic are complaints from faculty concerning public land grant’s cervisia et circenses environment—the confluence of corporatized big time professional university sports, a Greek-dominated culture, and the fuel of alcohol leading to student academic ennui. Adding psychostimulants to this cocktail means such complaints
are only going to amplify. The popular conception is that we, and even university presidents and boards, are powerless to change all this in the face of dark interests so potent and nefarious that they can't even be named here. Meh. All parties are just locked in a Nash equilibrium in which they've mutually maximized their own returns. For faculty, those returns are being able to count papers, dollars, contacts, projects, and check-boxing previous administrative positions instead of demanding and assessing quality or prospects of leadership. You might recognize these—they're the very same things that faculty complain administrators like to do.

There's no doubt that such Nash equilibria are incredibly robust. However, we should examine ourselves and our role in preserving this equilibrium by selecting administrators primarily on the basis of monetary and scholarly and networking credentials; those things are not necessarily robust metrics of relevant leadership. Acting on the unexamined hope that they are such metrics certainly is a valid outcome of faculty governance, but should not necessarily be equated with faculty leadership. We need to put on our own oxygen masks first before assisting the administration with theirs.

Despite these challenges, I remain as optimistic as I stated in last May’s column. The reason is that public higher ed will persist on its current path only until it can’t. We are seeing signs on multiple fronts that we’ve entered the “it can’t” regime. That presents challenges, but it also presents faculty with tremendous opportunities to reshape the future. In doing so, faculty will be required to think carefully about timeless values and enterprise elements that must be maintained and treated to reinvestment.

Jeremy King is solely responsible for the views expressed in The President’s Column. They neither reflect the views of nor are endorsed by the Faculty Senate or Clemson University.