

PROVOST TIEFENTHALER'S ANNUAL ADDRESS TO THE FACULTY HOSTED BY THE UNIVERSITY SENATE, FEBRUARY 22, 2010

I'd like to thank the University Senate for this opportunity to speak with you today. With everything going on in the world—especially the events in Haiti over the last month—and with the *busyness* that can overtake our lives as we care for our families, students, and communities, being here allows us to catch our collective breath and think for a short time about this special place where we work and live. In our time together, I would like to highlight a year of great achievement, update you on current progress and reflect on the challenges—and changes—ahead.

A few weeks ago we held a conference on *Energizing the Future* that brought together business leaders, leading researchers, and policy makers. Over 2400 members of our campus and wider community packed the chapel to hear *New York Times* columnist and author Thomas Friedman. Many of us went away with a greater understanding of the complicated relationship between energy, the environment and public policies. Maybe some of us even went away feeling more hopeful about the future.

Besides being intellectually and socially stimulating, this conference, and others like it, also gave us an opportunity to remind ourselves and others what Wake Forest is all about. We put into practice what it means to be a collegiate university.

What is a collegiate university? I believe that three characteristics define this collegiate university, and they are the core components that have long distinguished a Wake Forest education. First—the people. The faculty shape any university—and that is certainly true here. All universities emphasize getting the best faculty. Each is looking for the best minds; those thinkers who are pushing the boundaries of their disciplines. But at Wake Forest, we look at a subset of this larger pool for those great scholars who are also passionate about teaching. And not only those who are eager to teach a small seminar of graduate students in their narrow field of study, but those who are just as passionate about teaching first-year undergraduates or professional students.

At Wake Forest, we seek out the very best teacher-scholars—faculty members who are top researchers at the very peak of their disciplines *and* who choose to focus on teaching as well as research.

We also want the best students, those who can take advantage of this faculty's commitment and expertise. We look for students who are eager for challenge in a place that sustains both the intimacy and accountability of a college and the opportunity and push of a university. This means selecting those who are eager to learn from our faculty, prefer small, engaged classes, and bring diverse perspectives to the table.

Once here, our faculty and students expect—and deserve—to find an experience that goes well beyond classroom learning. Our faculty are here to educate the whole person, which has long been our tradition. Our students are here to learn more about themselves and how to live a well-considered life. Along with our teacher-scholar model, this commitment to educating the whole

person truly distinguishes this collegiate university. Faculty, administrators, staff, and alumni contribute by committing to mentor and guide our students.

When I was coming to know this community and people asked me to describe my biggest surprise, I always answered that I was overwhelmed with how much our faculty LOVE our students. You care for them as individuals. You are committed to helping them become better people.

The other core value we promote is an emphasis on sustaining a vibrant and rigorous intellectual and social community. The recent conference on *Energizing the Future* is but one example of this. Investing in centers and institutes, bringing visiting scholars and artists to campus, and revitalizing physical space are a few of the ways we infuse energy and creativity into our community.

When I talk to others about our collegiate university model—a vibrant intellectual community with a faculty of the best teacher-scholars providing a well-rounded liberal arts education inside and outside the classroom—I also share how much we've accomplished in the last few years. We are very fortunate, especially in light of the recession and the challenges facing so many other public and private institutions. Because we enjoy strong leadership, vibrant collaboration across our units, and community members at all levels who are devoted to our success, Wake Forest has stayed true to our mission and advanced our core values in powerful ways.

HIGHLIGHTS OF A PRODUCTIVE YEAR

So let me address the excellent progress we've made toward our goals this year—goals that are key elements of our strategic plan. Our faculty is stronger than ever. Last year we recruited 22 new faculty members and all are excellent additions to the community. We have new teacher-scholars from Germany, Romania, Netherlands, France and Spain—scholars who received top degrees from Columbia, Michigan, Cornell and many other fine universities. We are very pleased to have these scholars and are equally optimistic about the current hiring season. With another 20 searches underway, we anticipate another very strong year.

But we don't build our strength only by adding new colleagues. We also grow stronger by retaining and supporting those who are the backbone of Wake Forest now. Competitive salaries are one key to this strength, and I am pleased that we continue to make great progress toward our goal of reaching the mean of the AAUP-defined peer group by 2012-2013 for the average salary in each rank. Last year, we reached the goal for associate professors and narrowly missed the goal for full professors. With this year's current substantial investment in salaries for assistant professors, we will be close to meeting our overall goal.

And you are working hard to help bring external resources to campus. Already this academic year, our colleagues have submitted 105 proposals requesting nearly \$43 million and receiving awards totaling over \$7 million to fund research. This is an increase in new awards of 66 percent over last year—a period when Biology and Chemistry both more than doubled their awards, and HES and Physics increased theirs by 30 to 40 percent. We are on pace to receive over \$10

million in new research awards for the first year in our history. Here are just three examples of the ideas that attracted the funds.

The first two are prestigious training grants that are doubly important because they expand the reach of our teacher-scholar ideas across time, space and social barriers. Leah McCoy in Education and Angela King in Chemistry won almost \$900,000 over 5 years from NSF to aggressively recruit undergraduate students in biology, chemistry, math, and physics who aspire to become teachers in these fields. In addition, biologists Wayne Silver and Susan Fahrback worked to win NIH support to prepare underrepresented minorities for careers in neuroscience by making our undergraduate minor available to students at Winston-Salem State.

And Jed Macosko in Physics along with two students received support from the MacArthur Foundation for their Cellcraft project, a video game that allows players to explore the inner workings of a cell. The funds create summer jobs for K-12 teachers and undergraduate students, providing increased skills for teachers and an experience that could motivate more students to seek careers in the biomedical sciences. We also know that Michaelle Browsers in Political Science and Claudia Kairoff in English will be National Endowment for the Humanities fellows next year, perhaps the first time we have had two NEH fellows in one year.

Along with the increase in funds for projects, the increase in books and articles by our faculty is impressive as well. In December and January alone, 25 new books by Wake Forest faculty appeared, ranging from Paul Escott's *Confederacy* to Anne Hardcastle, Roberta Morisini, and Kendall Tarte's *Stories of Transformation in World Cinema* to Steve Nickles' book on debtors and creditors. These authors join newly published authors in art, biology, chemistry, computer science, divinity, economics, German and Russian, law, music, political science, and sociology, to name a few. At the same time, in the fine and performing arts, faculty continue to distinguish themselves with many creative accomplishments, including a series of concerts, dance performances, plays, exhibitions and art commissions. Threepenny Opera, a joint production of the faculty and students in Theatre and Music is, is a wonderful example that is showing at the Mainstage Theatre.

Just as the arts rely on extensive collaboration and allow us to see the world in new ways, our interdisciplinary centers are bringing faculty and students together to address complex issues. The Center for Bioethics, Health and Society is in the process of developing an educational forum for issues in bioethics that engages the academic community and the public. The Center for Translational Health will inform the ways we promote and maintain functional health in aging. The Global Humanities initiative that started two years ago has supported multiple scholarly collaborations across campus and expanded to become the Humanities Initiative. The Humanities Initiative is now applying for an NEH Challenge Grant in the hope of becoming a Humanities Institute that can provide comprehensive support to Wake Forest faculty engaging in collaborative humanistic research and scholarship. The NEH Challenge Grant would provide an award of \$500,000 and requires the institution to provide a 3:1 match. We hope we get the opportunity to prove our support!

Last month, we saw the founding of the Institute for Public Engagement, which we began to think about two years ago as part of the strategic plan. I'll talk more about the Institute a bit later.

One of the hallmarks of the collegiate university is that we work across departmental and school boundaries to address topics and questions of importance to society. And now, with one-year planning grants, scholars are developing more of these connections including:

- Energy, Environment and Sustainability
- Ethics, Law and Religion
- Molecular Signaling
- Microenterprise Development
- Migration and Cultural Diversity Studies

You have made important service contributions as well. President Carole Browne and the executive committee of the University Senate have strengthened the faculty voice by designing a process for a faculty senate that will go to the Board of Trustees this spring. They have also taken on the difficult and overdue task of updating our faculty handbook. Thank you! Our business school faculty members have been hard at work to integrate their programs. It is wonderful that they are now speaking with one strong voice.

To help our students in these uncertain times, we have a new career development strategy for the entire University that helps students focus on a few key questions like: Who am I? Who shall I be? These are the questions that have always formed the core of humanistic inquiry, and now we are extending them into the very practical realm of career development. In this changing world, a liberal arts education has never been more important. However, students today are also less experienced with the world of work. By combining a traditional liberal arts education with exceptional career development, we can best encourage and help students to extend their focus from finding a job to finding their place in the world.

An additional effort to educate the whole person has brought Khalid Griggs, imam of the Community Mosque of Winston-Salem, to Wake Forest as our first Muslim chaplain. Imam Griggs will provide leadership to our growing Muslim community. We are also working on a plan to hire an associate chaplain for Jewish life. Both appointments will encourage a greater awareness of different faith traditions and promote a more inclusive dialogue based on understanding and respect.

As I outlined last year, investing in diversity is an essential part of our strategic academic agenda. It is wonderful that our first year class is the most diverse in our history—with 24 percent students of color; double the number of international students; and 10 percent representing the first generation from their family to attend college. We have made great progress in the professional schools as well. For example, more than 40 percent of the students in this year's MA in Management program are from diverse backgrounds. The faculty and staff colleagues have welcomed these students warmly. In a show of commitment to inclusiveness, over 150 staff members have voluntarily participated in a new diversity education program. Our investment in diversity and inclusiveness is necessary for an academic community that is vibrant in the 21st century.

Our sponsorship of campus events that reinforce this goal is also critical. A few weeks ago, the Schools of Business brought together executives from IBM, PepsiCo, Wal-Mart and Hewitt for a discussion of the rethinking of diversity in corporate America and the importance of higher education efforts to broaden students' understanding of diversity. As part of "Wake the Weekends," students, faculty and staff celebrated cultures from around the world at the World Cultural Celebration. In January, we marked the 10th annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration with GospelFest, an invitational basketball tournament, and a keynote lecture in the chapel from Dr. Maya Angelou.

We are proud of all these marks of progress, and we also remain committed to revitalizing the campus with needed facilities. First, work on the new residence hall is proceeding well, just in time to accommodate the enrollment growth that started last fall. We have broken ground on a new facility for Admissions, which will help us do more to welcome our visitors—whose numbers are up more than 20 percent again this year. The Board has approved a request from the Schools of Business to raise funds for a new building. In addition to offering state-of-the-art space for the newly-integrated business programs, the facility will free space for the Law School and the College.

During the holiday break, several other projects were completed. The new Dance Studio behind Scales provides an additional dance floor. Also in Scales, a coffee bar was added to the renovated lobby, the Main Stage hydraulic lift was replaced, and the theater received new seating. In Salem Hall the exhaust system for the teaching and research labs received new fans and a state-of-the-art computerized control system to improve lab safety, accommodate additional fume hoods and save energy.

THE AGE OF CHANGE (AND HOW WE CAN'T STAND STILL)

Just as we've come to accept changes as part of our physical landscape, I believe we'll see a more rapid rate of change in the ways we teach and learn. What does that mean for Wake Forest?

I think it means that we need to be more nimble than ever before. Change is the new normal, not the exception, and it's going to be the rule of the world. It's particularly important to embrace this idea. If we don't, we will find ourselves reacting to outside forces rather than acting in ways that are true to our values.

By embracing change, we protect our core values and keep them relevant in the world. This is more necessary than ever because of external factors that are sharply converging on higher education these days—some of which are actually pushing against our core values. Let me briefly describe a few of these forces.

The push to up the ante in research challenges our teacher-scholar model. As Harry Boyte of the Humphrey Institute at the University of Minnesota writes, "Cultures of research oriented schools have become increasingly competitive, individualist, and characterized by the 'star system.'" Faculty identities are drawn away from the local civic community and toward national and international disciplinary and sub-disciplinary reference groups." One result is that, in his words: "Every department, every discipline, every unit of our research universities experiences

pressures to draw back from connection to the whole.” And I would also add, from a connection to undergraduates.

Last year I talked about how the changing demographics in the U.S. are exerting new pressures on higher education. Along with the rising tide of high school graduates from more diverse backgrounds, especially Latino and first-generation college students, comes a greater need for financial aid and an infrastructure that can help these individuals be successful in what can be a very challenging environment. As I said last year, I welcome these changes because it represents an opportunity to create a richer community, but we cannot ignore that we must be ready with needed support.

Other external pressures include certain market-based values and the belief that colleges should—and can—be held accountable. The trend towards a more utilitarian education pushes against our core belief in the liberal arts and the goal of educating the whole person. The extension of this is that a growing number of students and parents want to hold colleges accountable for course availability, graduation, and jobs after graduation. The rising cost of a college education is contributing to this growing pressure for more accountability. Some public officials are calling private and public colleges to task for graduation rates and learning outcomes. According to one individual quoted in a recent *Time Magazine* article: “Universities definitely get too much of a free pass.”

In the last few weeks a survey conducted for the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education reported that six out of 10 Americans now say that “colleges today operate more like a business, focused more on the bottom line than on the educational experience of students. The number of people who feel this way has increased by 5 percentage points in the last year alone.”

Yet another external factor that is exerting pressure on the academy relates to the inescapable presence of technology in the lives of our students. The *Chronicle of Higher Education* released a study that indicates access to technology, especially as it relates to convenience, will increasingly figure into students’ decision making about higher education. We are now hearing about elementary students who are frustrated by limits placed on their use of technology. In less than a decade, these students will be enrolling here.

Faced with these changing conditions, I believe that the key strategy to sustaining our values—exceptional faculty-student engagement, educating the whole person, and a vibrant intellectual community—is to create the very best faculty development program in the country. Because the culture of research universities pushes against our teacher-scholar model (President Hatch has called our model “counter cultural”), we must do even more to support your efforts and value and recognize excellence in teaching as well as in scholarship. With excellent faculty development we can also support our teacher-scholars as you adapt to more diverse classrooms, integrate appropriate technology into your courses, and work with students to see the importance of their liberal arts education in finding meaningful work.

Therefore, we are increasing leadership and resources. We have asked Associate Professor of Law Steve Virgil and Teaching and Learning Center Managing Director Catherine Ross to guide the Institute for Public Engagement and the Teaching and Learning Center respectively, and I

have asked Associate Provost Mark Welker to work closely with them on new faculty development efforts. Mark, along with Assistant Provost for Diversity and Inclusion Barbee Oakes, will regularly meet with associate deans from all of the schools to boost our efforts to recruit and hire the best faculty and then orient them to our mission. One related challenge to each dean and faculty is to improve the way we evaluate teaching. The quality of our teacher-scholar model depends on our innovation and devotion to this important work.

Never have the liberal arts been more important with the loss of companies that are household names across America and the disappearance of employment possibilities for so many individuals. In this new economy, people who can select the right nuggets from the mountains of information we all receive, think critically about ideas, and educate themselves throughout their lives are the people who will thrive.

I enlist you, as our most powerful agents of change, to continue explaining the importance of liberal arts to our students and, at the same time, showing them how the liberal arts develop skills of critical inquiry and nimbleness that are crucial parts of career development.

As for technology, it is simply a tool that we use to enhance our models of learning. With the laptop program, we once led higher education in terms of the adoption of technology. At that time, students needed guidance on using new technology. Today, our students—in fact, small children including my 8-year-old—use new technology easily. However they have trouble sifting through and prioritizing what is available. We must be at the forefront of helping our students to acquire this 21st century liberal arts skill of managing information.

In addition, as our technology and information innovation planning group reports, technology can transform the nature of collaboration. Therefore, we can use it to enhance our core value of building community rather than allowing technology to work against that goal. From learning management systems like Sakai, to Google Wave, and amazing forms of video conferencing, interaction need not be confined to the classroom or even this continent. For example, libraries will become much less about warehousing books and much more about providing space and tools for collaboration. We must leverage our experience and our significant financial investment to collectively work to regain our technology edge by, once again, focusing on how the next iteration of technology can again build our intellectual community and support faculty-student engagement.

Before I leave the subject of our dynamic and ever-changing environment, I must mention that, as you know, students are always changing, and fulfilling our promise to them requires constant reinvention. Certainly, we can't ignore the growing influence of the millennial generation, those young people born between 1978 and 2000 who are our future. Numerous reports indicate that Millennials are the most civic-minded since the generation of the 1930s and 1940s.

As someone has said: "It's part of this generation to care about something larger than themselves. It's no longer keeping up with the Joneses. It's helping the Joneses."

Millennials, or Generation Y, as they're also known, bear striking similarities to the Boomer generation in terms of their progressive outlooks. A survey from a recent *Harvard Business*

Review article pointed out that both cohorts are particularly determined to make positive contributions to society and the health of the environment: 86 percent of Millennials say it's important for their work to give something back.

And according to data from the Center for American Progress, Millennials take race and gender equality as givens, are tolerant of religious and family diversity, have open attitudes about immigration, support gay marriage and show less interest in fighting over divisive social issues of the past. This should be music to our ears.

This also has implications for Wake Forest in the way we engage Millennials while they are with us as students. In fact, I believe that through public engagement we can enhance our core values while addressing many of these external factors that I have cited today: research-oriented silos, changing socio-economic demographics, economic pressures, accountability, and technological changes – as well as engaging this new generation of students.

INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

In a world facing a whole host of new challenges, our commitment to building both character and intellect—ambitions captured in our motto of *pro humanitate*—has never been more important. Earlier in these remarks, I mentioned the new Institute for Public Engagement. With this Institute, we gain the capacity to respond to changing needs both within and outside the university. For this we owe a great deal of thanks to support from a Jessie Ball DuPont Foundation grant and the counsel of the Public Engagement Faculty Advisory Board. I'd also like to acknowledge that the Pro Humanitate Center, funded by an endowment from the Lilly Foundation seven years ago, has laid the groundwork for the Institute.

In terms of public engagement, we already have many reasons to be proud. Two-thirds of the student body performed more than 85,000 volunteer service hours last year. We have more than 120 community partners and agencies with whom we collaborate locally, nationally and internationally. More than 50 courses incorporate community service or community-based research into their curriculum, and 59 faculty members have been named ACE Fellows and trained in teaching methods that incorporate service learning and community work.

Building on this already incredible commitment, our faculty are designing the Institute for Public Engagement to build on our educational philosophy by “developing for the common good university-wide excellence in public engagement, collaborative skills, and interdisciplinary teaching and research. The Institute prepares students for civic leadership, action and reflection and supports innovative relationships among faculty, students, administration, staff, alumni, and the broader community.”

The Institute will uphold its mission in tangible ways. To build reciprocal relationships with community partners, the Institute is creating an advisory board.

In addition, it is supporting service that is steeped in opportunities for reflection and integrated learning. One approach is to develop a clearinghouse that integrates opportunities for learning, civic engagement, vocational discernment and career exploration.

To advance teaching and scholarship, the Institute will help faculty foster knowledge in the service of humanity. Resources will include a professional development program for faculty at all stages of their careers and all stages of their commitment to experiential learning, and experiential teaching initiatives across disciplines and schools. Another important aim is to work with community partners to encourage quantitative and qualitative research.

But even with all of the direct benefits to our community, how does public engagement help us to protect our values in the face of the external pressures?

First, by bringing together faculty from across the university to work collaboratively on issues of concern in our communities and to share pedagogical innovations in service learning, it will support interdisciplinarity and break down research silos. As Jack Rejeski noted, “a vibrant academic community promotes cross-talk across traditional disciplinary boundaries.” In addition, by supporting faculty in their roles as both teachers and scholars, the Institute will be a strong source of faculty development. As Jane Albrecht wrote, “I expect that the Institute will help some of us address feeling burned-out and isolated, and help us think about new ways to incorporate service-learning in our classes and conduct community-based research.”

Steve Boyd gives a great example of the Institute’s potential. He notes that the Institute can both support his effort to place students in nonprofit organizations for his course, Religion and Public Life, and his plans to “collect the fruit of this collaborative work and publish a book that presents the theory, methods, and results of the course for use in a growing body of courses in other universities across the nation.”

The Institute for Public Engagement is also the right idea for engaging this generation of students. While we were the TV generation (we like a good show), the Millennials are the “point and click” generation (they want to be involved in their learning). They are also extremely service-oriented and want to understand how their efforts will make a difference. Through service-learning coursework and opportunities to participate in community-based research, our students can see their liberal arts education in action. In addition, student engagement with local and global communities eases the socioeconomic barriers that often keep our students from understanding and trusting others. With public engagement, we are “walking the walk and talking the talk” in terms of preparing our students to be imaginative thinkers, civic leaders, and caring individuals who believe in the importance of applying and using knowledge in the service of humanity.

And you have seen the benefits to our students. Service learning propelled one of Christy Buchanan’s students who is now teaching in Liberia to set up a network between high school students in Liberia and in the U.S. It permitted the students of Dany Kim-Shapiro to gain a better understanding of what those suffering from sickle cell disease are dealing with day-to-day. It allows young scientists, in the words of Jack Rejeski “to realize that their activities have profound implications for society and, like it or not, their activities are value laden with ethical and moral underpinnings.” And as Jeanne Simonelli said, they will learn that “doing projects *with* people is a long way from doing projects *for* people.”

And our students are voting with their feet! Anne Boyle observed that an increased interest in her writing seminar that included an engaged learning component. She wrote, “When I first taught it, students didn’t understand the focus on community engagement, and I had to spend a few weeks working to educate them on the challenges and benefits of this pedagogical approach. Now my section fills up rapidly and many first-year students petition me to add more spots.”

By supporting service-learning courses, enhancing opportunities for community-based research, and supporting faculty who want to disseminate their work to wider audiences (to serve as public intellectuals), the Institute opens up new avenues for making the case on the importance of higher education to the public.

When we step back and view the American system of higher education as a whole, we have much to be proud of. As Jonathan Cole wrote in his *Chronicle* article, “Our finest universities have achieved international pre-eminence because they produce a very high percentage of the most important fundamental and practical discoveries in the world. That is true across the board: in the sciences and engineering, the social and behavioral sciences, and the humanistic disciplines.”

But faced with the changes I cited earlier, perhaps we should be doing a better job of informing the public about our contributions. If we did, perhaps we wouldn’t find public funding for education being eroded, such as we’re seeing in the University of California system. I couldn’t agree with Cole more when he writes, “What most legislators in California and other states fail to appreciate is that it is far more costly to rebuild lost excellence than to maintain it.”

In this environment for change, and with tough things happening inside the economy and around the world, I would like to propose that we take it upon ourselves to educate the public, especially our alumni and other strong supporters, about the critical function our University serves in the world. The work of the Institute for Public Engagement needs to resonate deeply through our community—and it can. I believe that our faculty is our front line for change: you are the ones with the ideas. When our students and alumni hear you talk about the value of community engagement, they listen.

I could choose from dozens of examples of how this is already happening at Wake Forest, but instead let me wrap up by quoting from Harry Boyte again, “The concept of civic agency highlights the broader set of capacities and skills required to take confident, skillful, imaginative, collective action in fluid and open environments where there is no script.”

I believe the Institute for Public Engagement keeps us firmly on the path of our values. With its founding, we signal a new chapter for Wake Forest and perhaps for higher education as well.

CLOSING

Soon we will be moving into a new capital campaign – a time to raise money for this great institution but also a time to celebrate our intellectual community and the important contributions we make to the world; a time to hold up our individual accomplishments and collective excellence. More than ever, it’s important to communicate the importance of our faculty, both in

terms of recruiting new members and retaining valuable veterans, to alumni and friends. I'll be asking you to help the deans and me in this endeavor, and I look forward to working with you as we make deeper investments in the core values that make this community such a valuable resource – and a great place to work and live.

I welcome your questions and your insights about what is ahead. Let me close by thanking the Senate once again for this opportunity and thanking you, the faculty, for all that you do for Wake Forest.