



Remembering Dr. Don Fowler



Dr. Don Fowler '57, a longtime Democratic Party leader on the South Carolina and national stages, died Tuesday, Dec. 15 in Columbia, South Carolina. He was 85.

Fowler chaired the state Democratic Party from 1971 to 1980 and helped two governors win elections. He oversaw the 1988 Democratic National Convention and spent two years as chairman of the Democratic National Committee from 1995 to 1997. His time leading the DNC included President Bill Clinton becoming the first Democrat since Franklin D. Roosevelt to win reelection.

"Don was one of our most loyal, generous and visible alumni," says President Nayef Samhat. "He's the ideal example of someone who brought honor upon his alma mater by going out into the world and doing well and doing good. He will be missed, and our thoughts are with Don's widow, Carol, and his two children, Donnie, and our colleague in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology Dr. Cissy Fowler."

Fowler taught political science at the University of South Carolina for more than 50 years and was teaching a course in American Politics up until his death from COVID-19. Fowler was a Wofford trustee from 1992-2003, and he was a longtime consultant to the college in the areas of marketing and communication strategy. He occasionally taught courses at Wofford and served as the college's vice president for marketing and communications in the mid-2000s.

Fowler was born in Spartanburg and was a student-athlete while attending Wofford. He was an All-American on the men's basketball team and his No. 13 is retired at the college.

Van Hipp '82, who chaired the S.C. Republican Party in the 1980s, tweeted that he was a teenager when he first met Fowler and they both served in the U.S. Army Reserve together.

"We were on opposite sides of the political aisle, but I always enjoyed talking politics, military issues & all things South Carolina with him," says Hipp in his tweet. "Don was a patriot who loved America."

JEDI Working Group 2 Update: Curriculum, Teaching and Advising

Dr. Christine Sorrell Dinkins (lead), Kenan Professor of Philosophy; Dr. Begofía Caballero, dean of diversity and inclusion, associate professor of Spanish; Dylan Goshorn '22, vice president of Campus Union; Dr. Trina Janiec Jones, associate provost for curriculum and co-curriculum, professor of religion; Dr. Dan Mathewson, associate provost for faculty development, associate professor of religion.

Our working group has explored questions of pedagogy, classroom environment, curriculum (general education and majors), student success, student preparation gaps (especially in STEM), advising (general education and major), equity-focused professional development for faculty and staff, and better accountability and structures to ensure equity in the student academic experience. To inform our process, members of this group have met with Dr. Carol Wilson '81, who coordinates the general education advising program; Dr. John Miles and Dr. Ben Bryan, Office of Institutional Research; academic department chairs and representatives of the biology department. We also received input and information from Dr. Boyce Lawton, dean for student success, and Amy Lancaster '01, dean of international programs. In addition, Dr. Jones met with Campus Union officers and with members of WARC (Wofford Anti-Racism Coalition) in her capacity as associate provost over the summer; she shared information from these meetings with the rest of the working group. We have worked with the Office of Institutional Research to gather information about student achievement and persistence rates, including DFWI data (the rate of D and F grades, withdrawals and incompletes), along with enrollment in majors, disaggregated by race, ethnicity and Pell-eligible status, with a particular focus on courses that serve as gateways to majors or career paths.

Informed by conversations with students and colleagues, we are in the process of discussing a variety of curricular initiatives to present to the JEDI committee and, if approved, present to the faculty for consideration. These initiatives include:

- A general education requirement for Race & Ethnicity (R&E) specific to the U.S., analogous to the current Cultures & Peoples requirement.
- The creation of race, ethnicity and equity-focused course modules or courses for all majors.
- Curriculum design and professional development to allow for more thoughtful diversity and inclusion teachings in all FYI (First Year Interaction Seminar) courses and first-year orientation.

Our data gathering and sharing is still in process. Some of our outstanding goals include:

- Noting inequities evidenced in the data at a general and department level.
- Presenting these data to the JEDI committee and to the faculty to provide groundwork for a conversation about what faculty can do, individually and collectively, to improve equity in our academic program.
- Gathering data on how much of our current general education and overall curriculum is focused on white colonial Western knowledge and history.

We will work with Institutional Research on this question and ask departments to share what

they already offer or are working on that involves R&E – for instance courses, course modules, courses that involve BIPOC authors, exploration of inclusive pedagogies, R&E history relevant to the discipline.

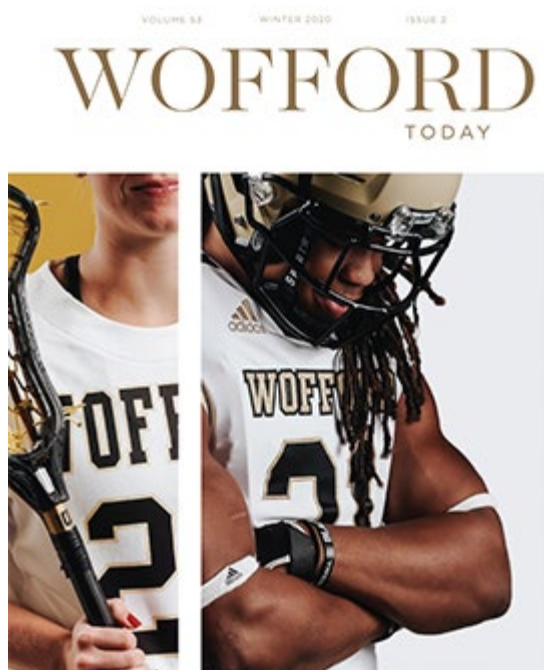
In our focus on advising, we discussed with department chairs some of the work individual departments are doing to address advising concerns and offered support of this work including help from committee consultants and looking into funding for professional development opportunities specific to major advising. Our discussions of advising have considered topics such as: How to implement diversity and inclusion guidelines/training for all advisors; what structures and policies would ensure equitable practices and accountability for advisors; an understanding of advising as teaching, and the need for advisors to receive professional development on relationship-building, knowledge of resources for student support, framing of conversations and a growth mindset. As one outgrowth of these conversations with faculty and the provost, the provost has committed to funding professional development in summer 2021 for a group of faculty across STEM in health fields to develop a model for major and career advising.

In the Spring semester, we will be soliciting input from departments on their ongoing diversity and inclusion initiatives, and we will invite faculty and staff to share suggestions and concerns regarding equity in Wofford's academic program.

Survey for classes of 2010 and 2015

Wofford is participating in the National Alumni Career Mobility survey, and the college wants to survey members of the classes of 2010 and 2015. Wofford would like to hear about the experiences of those alumni at the college and their subsequent career pathways. Participation in this survey will provide critical information about how well Wofford is preparing its graduates for future careers. [Take the survey.](#)

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Wofford Advent Calendar

Wofford's Alumni Association has an Advent calendar just for Terriers! Each Sunday, the Rev. Dr. Ron Robinson '78, Wofford's Perkins-Prothro Chaplain and Professor of Religion, will have a new message throughout the season. The calendar is being updated daily with activities for families and opportunities to win Wofford Christmas ornaments. [View the Wofford Advent Calendar.](#)

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