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Acting Dean Emeric Fischer Takes Over Interim Position

By Margaret Askew

Since last spring, a new personality has appeared in the main office of the Law School. While only temporary, Acting Dean and Professor Emeric Fischer is trying to bridge the gap in Law School administration following Dean James P. Whyte's resignation and prior to the naming of a new dean sometime this school year.

Fischer's appointment perhaps came as a bit of a surprise to many returning students. Dean Whyte's original resignation, submitted last May at a faculty meeting, was to have become effective no later than June 30, 1976. At that time Whyte had asked that he be returned to a full-time teaching position.

According to Fischer, Whyte decided to effectively resign in August, and at that time president Graves needed to appoint an acting dean for this school year, or until a new dean was selected and took over the duties.

The President's appointment of Fischer as acting dean was "strictly an administrative procedure," Fischer said. The position is an interim position which "the President has powers to appoint," he added.

Fischer said he thought the President's choice was strictly his own, and not based upon requests from Law School faculty. "I do not believe that the faculty in any way conveyed any quasi-nominations to the President."

Dean Fischer also stressed that he is not in any way seeking the permanent dean position, but that he received his temporary appointment on "momentary notice."

"I was as surprised as everyone else," he said. "I was not aware that the Dean had resigned effective immediately."

Dean Fischer said his main goal during his temporary stay in the dean's office is to "create an atmosphere in the Law School that will be conducive to excellence in education."

"It's no secret that there have been tensions within the Law School," Fischer said, adding that it is his hope that he will be able to relieve some of those tensions.

Fischer said he also hopes to be able to talk with students in his attempt to create a better atmosphere around the Law School. He has contacted SBA President Guy Strong and asked Strong to "get together with the heads of all student organizations and give me a report on what matters the student body feel need attention."

Besides appointing two new committees, Fischer said he has also directed some existing faculty committees to look into specific areas of concern.

The two new committees and their duties are: the Financial Advisory Committee — appointed to research what internal financial directions should be taken within the "extremely limited budget we have for things that come up" and to research the best use to be made of the Alumni Association funds; and the Bylaws Revision Committee — appointed to determine if the Law School Bylaws need revision.

According to Dean Fischer, he has asked the Library Committee to determine what matters in the Law Library need immediate modification.

Fischer added that he has also asked the Curriculum Committee to restudy the whole curriculum and decide if additions or deletions need to be made, if too many related courses are conflicting, and to try to keep scheduling conflict "at the minimum possible."

Concerning the question as to whether the sudden appointment of an acting dean will affect Marshall-Wythe's drive for a new Law School building, Fischer said he "hopes there will be no adverse effect."

"Although I did not seek this job . . . I will work as if I were permanent dean," Fischer said. "I have always been against lame-duck congresses and lame duck presidents. I don't intend to have the same thing happen in this office."

Fischer said he plans to have intensive discussion with members of the legislature regarding the new Law School building, budget increases, and the Law Library and the need for additional library staff.

These matters are all important due to expanded enrollment, he said. "These matters are not only urgent, but critical."

Another important matter concerning Marshall-Wythe is the American Bar Association's questioning of some matters concerning the Law School, Fischer said.

An ABA consultant on legal education for the ABA "will be here on September 16 at my request," Fischer said. "We will go into deep detail as to what exactly the ABA report means and what corrections they expect of us."

When the drive for the new Law School building begins to be more visible, "I will mobilize every group that can help," Fischer added. "Definitely, student help will be requested by

me when the time comes."

Fischer has been on the Marshall-Wythe faculty for 11 years. Originally from Rumania, he came to the United States when he was eleven years old. Fischer received his B.S. from the University of South Carolina and his CPA license from the State of South Carolina.

Prior to obtaining his law degree, he practiced under his CPA license in South Carolina from 1951 to 1960. Fischer received his J.D. from Marshall-Wythe in 1963 and his M.L.&T. in 1964. Since then he has taught here, with his main areas in recent years being various tax courses, insurance and legal accounting.



Acting Dean Emeric Fischer will be performing the duties as Dean of the Law School until the selection of a new dean and his assumption of the dean position sometime this school year. Fischer has been a professor on

the Marshall-Wythe faculty for eleven years. During his temporary position as Dean, he plans to work with both faculty and student committees to further projects beneficial to the Law School.