ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
Minutes of
August 8, 2005

Attendees: Lauren Adamson, Roy Bahl, Ron Colarusso, Erin Erskine, Bill Fritz, Ron Henry, Fenwick Huss, Steve Kaminshine, Susan Kelley, Carmen Newton, Jeff Owens, Carl Patton, Nancy Peterman, Jerry Rackliffe, Chris Rosenbloom, Sterling Roth, Debbie Rupp, Dene Sheheane, Rebecca Stout, Edgar Torbert

Minutes of July 6 were approved.

President’s remarks

Dr. Patton reported on the Board of Regents meeting in progress and positive signs for the two Georgia State capital projects.

New Format for Commencements

Dr. Fritz and Ms. Erskine presented two options for changing commencements. It was noted that students are currently most concerned about the limit of four tickets for family and friends. Students are also emphatic that individual graduates have their names called during the ceremonies. The first option called for one commencement weekend per year (in the spring) with a large event off-campus (probably at the Georgia Dome) with a renowned speaker on Friday evening and then college diploma ceremonies on-campus on Saturday to call names and present diplomas to individual graduates. The Friday event would be preceded by a PhD hooding ceremony and other special recognitions such as honorary degrees and faculty awards. The second option called for large ceremonies off-campus in both the fall and spring with no college diploma ceremonies.

Dr. Kaminshine pointed out that the College of Law would want to retain its traditional hooding ceremonies, and that such could precede the large off-campus event. He also spoke for a scheduling pattern which would be sensitive to religious observances, as currently done by alternating Saturday and Sunday ceremonies from semester to semester.

Dr. Adamson stated concern that college diploma ceremonies might become too disparate if left to each college to design and fund. Ms. Erskine indicated the university would continue to provide support for the college diploma ceremonies with regard to facilities, set-up, etc. Dr. Patton cautioned it might be necessary to go to eight diploma ceremonies under the current arrangement to accommodate the larger number of graduates in the spring. Dr. Fritz confirmed fall and spring commencements were growing in numbers of graduates, while summer was dropping.

Dr. Bahl suggested some of the secondary ceremonies could be by degree program rather than by college; eg., MBAs, and that these could also precede the large off-campus event in order to reduce the size of the college diploma ceremonies.

Dr. Henry and others commented on the implications for attendance with the single commencement weekend in the spring (people coming Friday, but not Saturday; and people completing degree requirements in summer and fall not coming at all). Dr. Rosenbloom remarked that faculty attendance might improve with the single commencement weekend since faculty split up among the commencement weekends under the current plan.

Dr. Huss stressed the importance to the university image of having a major speaker, whose presence would ensure press coverage not only locally, but on CNN and through other national and international media. Dr. Adamson suggested informing incoming freshmen in fall 2005 that their class would be the first to have the single spring commencement in spring 2009. Dr. Henry noted the majority of graduates were not in the four-year pattern.

Discussion resulted in a third option to be considered: a large off-campus event and college diploma ceremonies on consecutive days in the spring and college diploma ceremonies only on one day in the fall.

Branding the University

Dr. Henry invited comments on the document, “Branding the University-Next Steps, July 2005”. The document had
been reviewed by Deans Group, which resulted in refining the list of branding factors. Members of Administrative Council were asked to score each factor for importance (IMP) and satisfaction (SAT) on a 1(low) -7(high) scale.

Dr. Patton commented on progress made since the early years of the Presidential Scholars competition, when winners declined scholarships because of the lack of a “real” university image. Dr. Huss advocated a set of surveys designed by marketing professionals, perhaps pro bono, for a number of key audiences.

Dr. Henry requested that members of Administrative Council, who did not turn in their IMP and SAT scores at the conclusion of the meeting, send them to him as soon as possible.

Announcements

Mr. Sheheane requested letters to the Atlanta City Council members regarding the proposed panhandling ordinance.

Ms. Erskine requested assistance in distributing information to department chairs and faculty about the 1913 Society.

Dr. Huss reported on a national ranking of the Computer Information Systems faculty as #1 in research productivity.

Dr. Kaminshine announced that a College of Law alumna was appearing as a contestant on the reality TV program, “The Law Firm”.

Dr. Colarusso announced the College of Education received exclusive FY2006 funding from the Board of Regents “Double the Double” initiative to double the number of graduates with teacher certification.