Minutes of June 6 were approved.

**President’s remarks**

Dr. Patton welcomed new members, Jim Alm and Randy Kamphaus.

Dr. Patton noted the Board of Regents had approved all 9 items pertaining to Georgia State on their August agenda, including special interest housing at Edgewood and Piedmont, conversion of space on the 4th and 5th floors of Classroom South from offices to classrooms, and a second building at the Alpharetta campus. He also noted $10M in funding for the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) initiative and the launching of GHEFA (Georgia Higher Education Facilities Authority), which will issue construction bonds for the Georgia State special interest housing project.

Dr. Patton reminded that the grand opening of University Commons would be at 10:00 a.m., Friday, August 10.

**Web accessibility policy**

Ms. Casto distributed copies of the proposed web accessibility policy (updated August 7, 2007). She noted changes made to the sections on the student technology fee, compliance and exceptions, including changes recommended by Ms. Hurt concerning accessibility of external databases.

Dr. Adamson questioned the compliance statement, “…someone from the posting unit should be specifically named on every page posted as a contact person for individuals encountering difficulty in accessing material.” Ms. Casto suggested including such a statement in the footer on core pages only. Dr. Heyward suggested changing the statement to read “core pages” instead of “every page”. Dr. Fritz suggested changing the statement to read “…pages maintained through the enterprise content management system should include a link to a notice….” It was agreed to make the change suggested by Dr. Fritz and to drop the requirement of a “specifically named” contact.

Dr. Patton stated Administrative Council would vote on the revised policy as a motion made by the University Senate Committee on Information Systems and Technology. Dr. Alm seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**RPG**

Dr. Patton commented on the impact of RPG (retention, progression, graduation rates) on institutional evaluations and funding from the Board of Regents. He observed that while there has been significant improvement, students continue to complain about such matters as availability of classes in the evenings.

Dr. Henry reminded that the $750K per year RPG allocation to Georgia State for three years would be retained only with documented improvement. He noted that the FY2008 competition for RPG funding within Georgia State had resulted in funding for 13 of 30 proposed projects. He added that evaluations of the projects funded in FY2007 would be due in September, but noted encouraging results already reported from several of the projects. He highlighted improvement in the success rates of students in ACCT 2101 and ACCT 2102 and the Major Matters program initiated in the College of Arts and Sciences. He identified retention after the sophomore year as an issue for FY2008 noting sophomore-to-junior retention rates were below the national average. He predicted the new Sophomore Connections program would extend the benefits of the Freshman Learning Communities program and improve retention following the sophomore year.

Dr. Henry stressed the importance of an across-campus emphasis on retention. He pointed to increased involvement of faculty in advising students, development of retention plans by each academic department to track how their majors are
progressing, and development of a campus culture for success.

Dr. Henry noted that the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which had been administered each spring since 2001, showed many students did not feel academically challenged. He added that a sense of belonging to the university was lacking, and there was a continuing notion that Georgia State is a commuter campus. He anticipated improvement in this regard with the opening of University Commons.

Dr. Henry reminded that approximately one-third of undergraduate students are part-time students, and that for them a major issue was availability of courses at times when they can take them. He pointed out that progression to graduation on-time was one of the major aspects of RPG. He noted on-going concern with stumbling block or gatekeeper courses. He cited ACCT 2101 and ACCT 2102 as courses, which had previously been gatekeeper courses, but were now turning into gateway courses.

Dr. Adamson described the Major Matters program. She commented on the use of the maps metaphor for courses and enrichment opportunities for majors. She added that advising majors in clusters, with pizza served, had been a pilot project in FY2007, and would be continued in FY2008 with earlier and more frequent meetings. She noted that the College of Arts and Sciences Office of Academic Assistance had new and more spacious space, which would also aid in assisting students. She pointed out the challenge of providing courses for part-time students was more complicated than merely offering a section in the evening with other factors such as which time slot and which evenings. She commented that the Department of African-American Studies was remarkably successful in getting all majors to commit to being available for a final year seminar through early communication of the requirement.

Dr. Henry responded that all departmental retention plans should include schedules of courses well in advance so that students could plan. He added that this required knowing what the student population is like and what times they want courses.

Dr. Patton reiterated the importance of a customer service orientation. He observed that if the customer wants to come at night, then Georgia State needs to be prepared to deliver at night.

Dr. Kaminshine asked if night sections were generally smaller than day sections as was the case in the College of Law. Dr. Henry replied this was the case. Dr. Kaminshine explained that the College of Law had encouraged day students to try night sections in order to even out the faculty load.

Dr. Alm reported the Department of Economics had adopted a rotating schedule to inform students when courses would be offered on a four-year cycle. Dr. Patton commended this approach given the need to know for part-time and other students. Ms. Hurt echoed this point noting not only part-time students wanted classes in evenings. She also suggested implementation of more on-line courses. Dr. Patton commented on the shift in biological clocks for students in the new millennium.

Dr. Adamson spoke to the difficulty in scheduling additional classes in evenings because of the lack of available classrooms. Ms. Williams pointed to problems caused by one session per week classes in the evenings, which crossed two clock schedule periods and thereby reduced room utilization opportunities. Dr. Patton reminded that the 10:00 a.m. break had to be eliminated in order to convince the Board of Regents of the need for a classroom building and suggested that a change in the clock schedule might also be needed in this case. He suggested looking at one-half hour shifts to increase room utilization. Dr. Duhaime cautioned that students, who have to go to work early the next morning, did not want classes starting any later and that classrooms were difficult to get early in the evening. Dr. Patton added that the traffic woes of Atlanta were affecting Georgia State more and more.

Dr. Fritz recommended increasing opportunities for undergraduate students to get involved in research as a proven means of improving student-faculty interaction. Dr. Reitzes noted NSF initiatives for undergraduate research and efforts in the Department of Sociology such as a Sociology Research Day to build a sense of community among students and faculty. Ms. Hurt added that recording undergraduate research papers in institutional repositories was a growing trend, and that as Google picked up these listings, there was added prestige. She indicated that there would be a campaign in fall semester to acquaint students and faculty with the institutional repository concept.

Dr. Henry indicated the report to the Board of Regents on the 14 RPG projects in FY2007 would be prepared in September, and he predicted the report would show good progress in retention.
Announcements

Ms. Hurt announced the opening of the library bridge on August 20. She added that the Learning Commons would be assuming the service role of the Library South computer lab with the closing of that lab. She stated there would be even more computers for students, help desks, etc. She noted the library would extend hours of operation to midnight during the week with current staff, and would add one staff person to extend weekend hours, but not to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays as experience showed very little use.

Dr. Fritz announced the Mega One Stop Shop would be operated in the Student Center ballrooms as had been done very successfully the preceding spring semester.

Dr. Kaminshine announced plans for celebration of the 25th year of the College of Law.

Dr. Covey announced that the residential areas of the University Commons were ready for the arrival of students, and the Health Clinic would open in the University Commons after Labor Day weekend. He noted national research showed on-campus housing to be a positive factor in RPG and that the opening of the University Commons would signal a new era in campus life at Georgia State. He stated there was a waiting list for University Commons rooms with 130 males and 180 females on the list.

Ms. Casto reiterated the advantages of relocating the open lab functions from the Library South computer lab to the Learning Commons and the upcoming departure of IS&T personnel from Classroom South space, which would be converted to classrooms.

Dr. Adamson announced the opening of the College of Arts and Sciences Office of Academic Assistance on the fourth floor of General Classroom Building.