ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL
Minutes of
September 5, 2007

Attendees: Lauren Adamson, J.L. Albert, Jim Alm, Doug Covey, Dean Dabney, Dabney Dixon, Mary Finn, Ron Henry, Kerry Heyward, Charlene Hurt, Fenwick Huss, Beth Jones, Steve Kaminshine, Randy Kamphaus, Tom Lewis, Robin Morris, Nancy Peterman, Don Reitzes, Christine Rosenbloom, Sterling Roth, Robert Sattelmeyer, Edgar Torbert, Shelly Williams

Minutes of August 8 were approved.

Provost's remarks

Dr. Henry welcomed Dr. Sattelmeyer to the Administrative Council as director of the university-level honors program.

Enrollment update

Dr. Henry reported 27,068 students enrolled for a total of 321,500 credit hours after two rounds of tuition payment reconciliations. He pointed out increases of 900 students and 13,000 credit hours over the previous fall.

Dr. Henry explained that the impact on tuition revenues from the increases in students and credit hours was undetermined and subject to diminishment because of the tuition plateau for 12 credit hours and above. He added that the average course load for undergraduates now exceeded 12 credit hours, and that for all students the average course load exceeded 11 credit hours. He stated that tuition revenue information would be available in 2-3 weeks.

Dr. Henry noted an increase of 500 new freshmen over the previous fall. He also noted an increase in freshman and especially sophomore transfers, while junior and senior transfers dropped. He pointed out that the number of new graduate students increased for the first time in several years, up 40 from the previous fall.

Dr. Henry stated that six-year graduation rates showed improvement from 41% in FY2006 to 47% in FY2007, but cautioned that FY2008 would see a drop to 43% based on losses already recorded. He predicted graduation rates would rebound in FY2009.

Dr. Henry reported a first-year retention rate of 82%, which marked continuing improvement. He added that second-year attrition, which is approximately 10% nationally, was also moving in the right direction with successive year rates of 17%, 13% and 11%.

Dr. Henry commented that fall trends generally carried over to the following spring, so enrollments would be expected to increase in spring as well in comparison to the previous spring. He expressed gratitude to all who had worked hard to achieve the enrollment growth for fall.

Compensated absence reporting

Dr. Henry called attention to a recent audit report on compensated absence reporting, which had a recommendation concerning reporting of sick leave by faculty. Mr. Roth added that the report had been sent to all of the deans. Ms. Jones handed out copies of a sick leave policy approved by the Faculty Affairs Committee and the University Senate in FY2002 and a recommendation for recording faculty sick leave hours, which had been developed prior to finding the “lost” policy statement.

Dr. Henry observed that the approved sick leave policy met the objectives of the audit report. Mr. Roth agreed and commented that there was a need to increase awareness of the policy.

Dr. Huss pointed out that the policy did not address whether evening and weekend hours could be used to offset hours missed because of sickness. Dr. Rackliffe indicated that the University of Georgia policy only addressed classes missed. Dr. Kaminshine responded that the second sentence of the preamble to the policy mentioned instruction, research and service components of faculty work load. Dr. Henry advised that the policy should be left as approved for
now. Dr. Sattelmeyer suggested bringing the policy to the attention of department chairs at one of the regular meetings of the Provost with department chairs.

Ms. Peterman asked if policies of this type were published on a central web site. Dr. Henry replied that Drs. Finn and Heyward were heading an effort to develop such a web site for university policies.

**Weekend facilities fees**

Dr. Henry opened discussion of weekend facilities fees, which were implemented July 1, in order to defray costs for security and facility services, which were unbudgeted. He noted concern about the short notice of implementation for programs with budgets already set.

Dr. Torbert provided background information concerning the fees. He noted fees for weekend use of Aderhold Learning Center began shortly after the building opened in 2002. He explained that units providing services for other buildings had raised the issue of having to absorb the same costs for opening those buildings, and that there was a pattern of groups requesting free space rather than pay for space in Aderhold Learning Center or the University*Student Center. He stated that the Classroom Facilities Council had recommended to the university administration that the $31 per hour plus $5 per room-hour fee be applicable to all buildings not otherwise open, with a waiver for credit hour producing use. Dr. Torbert also noted a sharp rise in thefts of equipment from classroom buildings this summer, which had resulted in the state insurer raising the policy deductible and premiums for the university.

Dr. Adamson spoke to the hardship for Model UN, Model Arab League, the Debate Team, and other College of Arts and Sciences student organizations, which were inadequately funded by student activity fees and depended on modest revenues from events they hosted on weekends in order to continue their programs. She pointed out that the Debate Team was hosting a tournament, which required the use of many rooms and would have incurred fees in excess of $10,000, except for a waiver granted by the Provost. She urged review of the fee approach.

Dr. Kaminshine commented that there was an obvious tension between solving the problem of how to cover the costs of weekend operations and fulfilling the desire to bring more students and others on campus on weekends. He also urged a review of options.

Dr. Dabney suggested exploring more cost effective ways of providing security, such as using security guards at the main entrance desk of Aderhold Learning Center rather than off-duty police to let people in and out of the building.

Dr. Kamphaus urged a streamlining of the requests for fee waivers in order to reduce turmoil about the fees.

Dr. Dixon urged compilation of data about weekend use to inform decision making.

Dr. Kaminshine suggested a differential approach for charging student organizations.

Dr. Adamson suggested clearer communication with users concerning expectations for their care in using the facilities. Dr. Torbert added that users having paid the fees sometimes had expectations of housekeeping services being provided during programs rather than only clean-up afterwards.

Ms. Hurt suggested limiting the number of buildings open on weekends as a way of lowering costs.

**Thematic goals for 2007-2008**

Dr. Henry invited discussion of thematic goals for 2007-2008 toward attaining the distinction of being the leading urban research university in the nation. He suggested a focus on RPG as one such goal.

Dr. Adamson suggested expanding and nurturing the faculty as a focus. She commented that this involved more than addressing faculty salaries with attention to work load issues, research support, etc. as well.

Dr. Alm suggested renewing the effort to build areas of excellence through another Areas of Focus initiative.

Dr. Morris suggested a focus on research growth, in particular toward mega-projects involving groups of faculty, which
Dr. Dixon suggested a focus on building a sense of community so that faculty and students would have more opportunities for interaction in social settings rather than only in classes.

Dr. Sattelmeyer suggested a focus on recruiting academically stronger undergraduates. He pointed out that the large freshman class enrolled this fall had an average SAT score two points lower than the previous fall.

Dr. Finn suggested the QEP initiative as a focus.

Dr. Adamson suggested an overarching focus on enhancing the intellectual community. Dr. Reitzes emphasized the aspect of recruiting and retaining high quality faculty.

Dr. Kamphaus suggested a focus on attracting a higher quality graduate student body. He noted that success in this endeavor would help to fuel the research engine. He pointed to inadequate financial support for graduate students as a particular issue.

Dr. Huss suggested a focus on addressing the survey results mentioned at the August meeting, which indicated many undergraduate students were not sufficiently challenged. He commented that this would entail looking at the competition and determining changes needed to attract higher quality undergraduate students given that current students were not challenged.

Ms. Hurt observed that the suggestions mentioned to that point were all inward in focus, and suggested there should be at least one outward focus as well. Dr. Henry responded that the suggestions were consistent with the goal of obtaining “top 100 research universities” and US News & World Report recognitions, which would in turn attract better faculty and students to Georgia State. Ms. Hurt clarified that her concept of outward focus pertained to service to the metropolitan area and state.

Dr. Henry asked for further discussion of specific means to nurture faculty. Dr. Adamson advocated looking at aspirational universities in terms of how faculty are provided time to do their research. She mentioned semesters off to focus on research as one strategy. She also pointed to the need for additional faculty positions in order to maintain instructional capacity under such a plan.

Dr. Kamphaus suggested as a modest first step establishing 40 research prizes for faculty of $500.

Dr. Rosenbloom commented that it would be helpful to see the successful RPG proposals. Dr. Henry replied that the proposals were posted on the Provost web site under “News” and then under “RPG”. He added that the final reports for the prior year projects would also be posted there when received in September. He indicated that a web site dedicated to RPG would be set up shortly.

Ms. Hurt suggested a focus on infrastructure improvements.

Ms. Williams suggested a focus on staff recruitment and retention. She pointed out the lack of career paths for staff. Dr. Finn noted the need for partnerships between faculty and staff in order to accomplish goals.

Dr. Adamson suggested a focus on capturing the diversity of Georgia State for outside audiences. She also noted the centralized international affairs offices were overwhelmed by their current work load.

Dr. Kaminshine asked if the intent of thematic goals should be incremental effects or transformative effects. He observed that having a large number of such emphases would force the approach to be incremental. He noted focus on the graduate experience as potentially a transformative effect.

Dr. Huss commented that investment in such areas as faculty retention should be preceded by looking externally as well internally in order to determine if the current level of turnover is in fact unreasonable. He noted that the associate deans of the business schools at the area universities get together periodically to talk about such issues.

Dr. Dixon raised the issue of faculty time consumed by paperwork.
Dr. Henry stated discussion of thematic goals would continue at future meetings with some narrowing of the focus to a small number of themes.

Announcements

Ms. Hurt announced the grand opening of the library would occur in November. She reported the library was “packed to the rafters” with students.

Dr. Huss announced Comptroller General David Walker would be speaking on campus October 1.

Dr. Rosenbloom announced AARP CEO William Novelli would be speaking on campus October 25.

Dr. Alm announced New York Times columnist Paul Krugman would be speaking on campus September 28.

Dr. Kaminshine announced Harvard professor Frederick Schauer would be speaking on campus on September 10.

Mr. Lewis announced Mr. Sheheane had resigned to accept a position at Georgia Tech, and Jim Flowers from the Board of Regents staff would be taking his place in External Affairs/State Relations on October 1.

Ms. Peterman announced $1 million had been pledged for start-up of football.

Dr. Covey announced Einstein’s will open in the Student Center by mid-semester, and Landmark Diner will open in the University Commons by September 15. He also reported on start-up of shuttle bus service between the University Commons and other parts of the campus.

Dr. Morris announced the science lab building packages were out for bid, and actual groundbreaking could occur in November. He also announced forthcoming changes to PERS.