Minutes
Meeting of Faculty Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate
Thursday, February 19, 2004

Members present:  Glenn Abney, Ben Baez, Margo Brinton, Harry Dangle, Valerie Fennell, Nancy Floyd, Gerald Gay, Hugh Hudson, Marian Meyers, Dick Miller, Charlotte Petrek, Wayne Reed, Dorothy Roberts for Barb Carroll, Jim Senn, Cherian Thachenkary, and Armenia Williams

Members absent:  Pam Barr, Gayle Christian, Shelby Frost, Emanuela Guano, Ralph LaRossa, Charles Marvin, Mona Matthews, Linda Nelson, Lloyd Nigro, Ted Poister, Jerry Rackliffe, Debra Snell and Marta White

Cherian began the meeting by introducing a new member of the group, Valerie Fennell, the University Ombudsperson. Cherian mentioned that many of the members of the committee are confused about the services offered by various campus resources which provide aid to faculty and staff. Valerie explained that her department helps both faculty and staff to handle difficult situations which arise within the University. The Ombudsperson plays a neutral and confidential role and coaches its clients to solve their own problems via various means. No written records are kept by this office, which stresses resolution at the lowest level possible. The Ombudsperson tries to help, but not in an advocacy role.

Ben moved to approve the minutes of the January meeting. Glenn seconded the motion, and the group voted to approve the minutes.

Cherian asked for input on the proposed list of Selection Committee members to determine the recipients of this year’s Faculty Awards. Marian pointed out that there were no women nominated. Marian moved to approve the list of Selection Committee members with an admonition that future lists will not be passed unless women are included. Harry seconded the motion, and the group, with the exception of Glenn Abney, approved the motion.

Harry Dangle requested that Faculty Affairs find a replacement for him as a member of the Selection Committee for the Instructional Innovation Award and the Instructional Effectiveness Award, which is new this year. This is due to the fact that the competitors include members of Harry’s department. The assignment will involve a meeting from ten until noon on March 24th and approximately two hours of reading the materials. As there were no volunteers, Cherian asked Gerry if he would assume this responsibility. Gerry declined, due to workload, but Ben volunteered to take on this task.

A discussion of the subcommittee’s resolution concerning online evaluations followed. The resolution would eliminate paper evaluations entirely, and move to an on-line process exclusively. The suggested effective date for adoption is Maymester 2004. The suggested procedure is:
1. In order for a student to access his or her grade for a particular course, the student must have either filled out an online course evaluation or actively declined to participate.
2. Students would not be able to complete an evaluation after the grade has been viewed.
3. The evaluation period will extend from 2 weeks before the last day of classes and continue until seven days after grades are made available to students. At this point, results will be released to faculty within two business days. After the official period, students will still be required to make a choice about evaluation in order to view their grades, but the evaluations will not count as part of the official record.

Glenn reviewed the online response rate for Fall, which was 92.06%. The response rate for paper was about the same as for previous semesters at 69.72%. 86.6% completed the online evaluation, and 5.6% declined to complete the evaluation. 7.94% never logged on to make a choice. The total online response rate figures were drawn down by the low figures from Law, which is on a different calendar.

The online response rate was approximately 45% before we linked completion of a evaluation or declining to
participate as a requirement to see one’s grade. For Fall, 39% of the evaluations were completed by the last day of class. If we stop counting evaluations after seven days following the date that grades are available, using Fall’s numbers, we would lose 5% to 6% of responses.

In looking at the data for the effectiveness questions by college, there was a small drop in effectiveness percentages between those who submitted the evaluation before the final and those who submitted after finals. Gerry expressed concern that averaging such data might not be appropriate or useful. He did not believe that you could average two populations. Jim suggested that in order to validate the data, each section would need to be looked at. Glenn disagreed, feeling that such a review would simply show that results differed by section. He wondered what he would be looking for by doing such a review, variance by class size, etc. Glenn suggested that perhaps the better students might have filled out evaluations earlier. Margo thought that perhaps, with paper evaluations, the low and high students were the ones who filled out the evaluations, and now, the middle students are being heard from.

The group agreed that the length of time that students were given to complete the evaluations was far too long for Fall. The proposal that the evaluation period will extend from 2 weeks before the last day of classes and continue until seven days after grades are made available to students generated significant comment.

Marian expressed serious concerns of the faculty in Communications. Her colleagues felt that: 1.) the length of time given for completion was far too long, 2.) evaluations should end on the last day of class or at the end of finals, 3.) faculty were put in a difficult position by not being able to give a student his or her grade until the evaluation had been completed, and 4.) if the final were included in the evaluation period, grade inflation could result from faculty giving finals that students would like. Marian felt strongly that there must be some way to balance the need for a high response rate with faculty concerns. She suggested that perhaps we could make grades available two weeks early to those students who complete an evaluation. There was some doubt as to whether or not the Registrar’s Office could handle this.

Nancy agreed, echoing similar sentiments from faculty in her area. Margo pointed out that, under FERPA, we cannot give out grades over the phone in any case. There appeared to be two schools of thought, one that the final is an evaluation of the student not the instructor, and the other that the final is part of the course and should be part of the evaluation. Jim felt strongly that the resolution as presented should not be imposed on the faculty. Nancy suggested that perhaps we revisit this issue in a year, after considering various incentives for student completion. Glenn disagreed, stating that GA Tech still has a response rate of around 40%. Despite using various incentives. Harry pointed out that other large institutions had not been successful in finding an incentive that would raise their response rate. Glenn also pointed out that if the evaluation period were to end on the last day of class, we would go right back to a low response rate (39% for Fall). The potential for legal action resulting both from a low response rate and from including the final in the evaluation period were noted. Dick pointed out that litigation could result either way, and that, perhaps, the best idea might be not to rely so heavily on student evaluations in promotion and tenure decisions.

Jim moved to adopt the use of online evaluations exclusively. Hugh seconded the motion, and all but Ben approved.

Glenn moved and Ben seconded a motion to adopt the resolution of the online subcommittee. Nancy amended the motion to have the evaluation cycle end on the last day of classes, as was the case with the paper evaluations. Dick amended Nancy’s amendment to add a one year period of evaluation by Faculty Affairs. The motion carried, with 7 for and 5 opposed.

On a motion by Dick and a second by Charlotte, the Resolution was amended to read:

Whereas the University should utilize only one method of evaluation,
whereas more than twice as many students are enrolled in classes using online evaluation than in classes using paper evaluation,

whereas the online method of student evaluation insures that all instructors required to be evaluated will be evaluated,

whereas in it implementation the online method of student evaluation is more efficient and less likely to result in lost or unusable evaluations, and

whereas the online method of evaluation is more likely to result in thoughtful and legible written responses, the University Senate enacts the following resolution:

1. The University shall use an online procedure for all student evaluations of instruction in all classes effective Maymester 2004. The University shall provide technical support for only the online method of evaluation.

2. With the implementation of online evaluations for all classes, the policy of the University shall be to evaluate all classes each semester or teaching period.

3. The procedure for the implementation of online evaluation shall be as follows:

A. The official evaluation period for a regular semester, i.e., Spring and Fall, will be the last two weeks of classes. For all other non-regular terms, the evaluation period will be the last week of classes. Results will be released to the faculty within two business days.

The group approved the amended resolution, with Glenn's single no vote.

After checking the minutes of the meeting on Thursday, a problem in the on-line resolution approved by vote in committee was noted. The amended resolution now reads:

A. The official evaluation period for a regular semester, i.e., Fall and Spring, will be the last two weeks of classes. For all other non-regular terms, the evaluation period will be the last week of classes. Results will be released to the faculty within two business days.

The last sentence calls for evaluation results to be released "within two business days." The original resolution from the sub-committee would have cut off the evaluation period 7 days after grades are released and evaluation results to be released 2 days after that. Thus, faculty will get their results 9 days after grades are released.

Evaluation results cannot and should not be released to faculty before the final exams nor before the university releases final course grades to students.

Thus our choices are to release the evaluation results according to:

1. The original schedule of 7 + 2 days. (But, since we have amended the original resolution to make the cut off date for completing the evaluation on the last day of classes, the 7-day open period is no longer relevant.)

Thus an alternative release date to consider is:

2. The evaluation results will be released "within two business days from the date when grades are released."

Or,
3. Some other date the Committee wishes to recommend

Assuming we are in favor of Option 2: “within two business days from the date when grades are released,” an e-mail vote indicating your YES vote would suffice, and a majority vote will carry the “re-worded” resolution to be sent to the Senate. (Keep in mind the Senate rule on electronic voting.)

The following voted for option 2 by the requested deadline:
Brinton
Guano
Dangel
Marvin
Petrek
Meyers
Floyd
Christian
LaRossa
White
Miller
Gay
Baez
Senn

There were no dissenting votes nor other alternatives suggested.

The last item considered was the Policy on Lecturers. Cherian reviewed the history of the Lecturer Policy. On April 2, 2003, Faculty Affairs Committee had approved a motion dealing with the Policy on Promotion of Lecturers to Senior Lecturers. This is attached as Appendix B in the current subcommittee report. It was tabled at the Spring 2003 meeting of the University Senate. The subcommittee was subsequently charged to review the policy in light of the Memorandum from the University Chancellor dated May 12, 2003 (Appendix A) and in light of the concerns expressed by the Senate Executive Council, as conveyed in an e-mail by Anne Emanuel (attachment).

Overall, there are two concerns: 1. conditions under which appointments can be terminated and 2. appeal of non-renewal of appointment after completing six consecutive years of service. University Attorney John Marshall has commented on the present sub-committee report in an e-mail distributed on February 18, 2004. He expresses concern about the report’s treatment of termination “for cause,” and also about the appeal process being so formal as in the case of termination for cause. He argues that a more flexible termination policy is desirable to meet the staffing needs of the university, and notes that the law does not require an appeal process as elaborate as presently stated. In his opinion, a standing committee of the College could hear complaints of discrimination or arbitrary treatment.

Cherian then asked Hugh Hudson for a clarification. Since Faculty Affairs Committee had already approved the previously cited motion dealing with promotion policy and since the current report has not altered that policy but deals with the procedures for appeal of non-renewal, should there be two separate motions to send to the senate: the earlier motion on promotion and a new one dealing with appeals? Hugh felt that it was best to combine the two into one comprehensive motion. Cherian then invited Hugh to present his sub-committee report for discussion.

Hugh started by stating he definitely disagreed with the opinions offered by the University Attorney.

The Policy on Lecturers presented by Hugh’s subcommittee adds an appeals process to provide an impartial review of decisions regarding the non-renewal of Lecturers/Sr. Lecturers. Jim asked why such an appeals process is necessary if Lecturers/Sr. Lecturers are covered under Article XI of the University Statutes. Hugh pointed out that Article XI covers termination during the contract period, and the appeals process presented to the group pertains to
non-renewal only. Jim also wondered why a separate appeals process is even needed, considering that all of the colleges have their own grievance policies. Hugh said that he had looked at all of these policies, and each one clearly stated that the policy could not be used for non-renewal.

Jim suggested that having each college and the AYSPS develop its own grievance policy for non-renewal seems more in tune with the common practice of the University not mandating but suggesting that the colleges develop their own policies to cover common situations. Jim also felt strongly that the reasons for non-renewal need to be enlarged to include strategic changes, such as a shift from an instructional to a research focus. The group agreed to approve the policy, as amended by Jim’s comments. Hugh and Jim will get together to work on these changes, which will be attached to these minutes.

Dick reported an increase in crimes against women, specifically purse snatching, which was verified by GSU Police. Glenn will memo the Classroom Facilities Committee, which has members from Police and Administration, of this group’s concerns.

The meeting adjourned at 12:20.

Revised Policy on Lecturers approved at this meeting:

**Policy on Lecturers**

In conformity with Board of Regents Policy 803.03 the colleges and schools of Georgia State University are permitted to employ full-time lecturers “[t]o carry out special instructional functions such as basic skills instruction.” Each college and school must establish a policy that governs the review of lecturers and procedures for retention and possible promotion to Senior Lecturer. These policies must include two types of reviews: a third-year review and a fifth-year review. In these reviews, the primary consideration will be contributions in instruction and service.

Reappointment of a lecturer who has completed six consecutive years of service to an institution will be permitted only if the reviews of the lecturer demonstrates exceptional teaching ability and extraordinary value to the institution. In conformity with Board of Regents Policy 803.0301, Lecturers who are reappointed after the fifth year review can be considered for promotion to senior lecturer, to begin in their seventh year of service. The processes for evaluations, including the composition of the contract renewal committees, will follow the established college policies, as specified in the required policy documents. Lecturers whose reviews do not demonstrate exceptional teaching ability and extraordinary value will be terminated at the end of their sixth year.

Lecturers who have not been reappointed after six consecutive years of service will be subject to the following schedule of notification of renewal/non-renewal:

- At least three months prior to the institution’s first day of classes in the fall semester for lecturers at the end of an initial one-year contract;
- At least six months prior to the institution’s first day of classes in the fall semester for lecturers at the end of a second one-year contract;
- At least nine months prior to the institution’s first day of classes in the fall semester for lecturers after two or more years of service in the institution.
Lecturers/Senior Lecturers who have been reappointed after six years of continuous service will be notified of renewal/non-renewal according to the schedule for faculty who have been awarded academic rank: at least nine months before the termination of a contract.

Non-reappointment of Lecturers who have been reappointed after completing six consecutive years of service as described in the paragraph above or of Senior Lecturers shall be for adequate cause related to 1) realignment of department or program strategy, (2) programmatic modifications, (3) reduced student demand leading to reductions in class sections offered, (4) significant budgetary constraints on the department, college, or university, or (5) the fitness of the lecturer or senior lecturer in his or her capacity as a teacher.

In cases of non-reappointment of Lecturers who have been reappointed after completing six consecutive years of service or of Senior Lecturers, in accordance with the Chancellor’s Directive of May 12, 2003, the Lecturer or Senior Lecturer is entitled to a review of the decision. The procedures that govern that review will be developed by the Colleges and the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies and submitted for approval by the University Senate.
APPENDIX A

To:                   Institutional Presidents
From:             Thomas C. Meredith
Date:               May 12, 2003
Subject:            Reappointment of Full-time Lecturers and Senior Lecturers

In accordance with Board Policies 803.03 and 803.0301, the following guidelines will be in effect for the reappointment of full-time lecturers and senior lecturers:

A. Full-time lecturers and senior lecturers are appointed by institutions on a year-to-year basis.

B. Lecturers and senior lecturers who have served full-time for the entire previous academic year have the presumption of reappointment for the subsequent academic year unless notified in writing to the contrary as follows:

   i) For lecturers with less than three years of full time service, institutions are encouraged to provide reappointment information as early as possible, but no specific notice is required.
   ii) For lecturers with three or more years but less than six years of full-time service, institutions must provide reappointment information at least 30 calendar days prior to the institution’s first day of classes in the semester.
   iii) For senior lecturers or lecturers with six years or more of full-time service, institutions must provide reappointment information at least 180 calendar days prior to the institution’s first day of classes in the semester.

C. Lecturers or Senior Lecturers who have served for six or more years of full-time service at an institution and who have received timely notice of non-reappointment shall be entitled to a review of the decision in accordance with published procedures developed by the institution. The procedures must be approved by the Chancellor or his/her designee prior to implementation. Additional appeal procedures are contained in Section VIII of the Bylaws of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

D. In no case will the service as lecturer or senior lecturer imply any claim upon tenure or reappointment under other conditions than those above.
Policy on Promotion of Lecturers to Senior Lecturers

Lecturers who are reappointed after five years of consecutive service following the required evaluation for retention are eligible for promotion to senior lecturer, to begin in their seventh year of service. The processes for evaluations, including the composition of the contract renewal committees, will follow the established college policies, as specified in the required policy documents and in conformity with the Board of Regents Policy 803.03, which specifies that a lecturer may be retained after six consecutive years of service “only if the lecturer has demonstrated exceptional teaching ability and extraordinary value to the institution.” Lecturers not reappointed after five years will be terminated at the end of their sixth year.

Each college of the University must establish a policy that articulates clearly stated promotional criteria and governs review of lecturers and procedures for promotion to senior lecturer. These policies must include two types of reviews for lecturers; a third-year review for reappointment and a fifth-year review for consideration for reappointment/promotion to senior lecturer.

Reappointment of lecturers is determined on an annual basis.