Minutes  
Faculty Affairs Subcommittee of the University Senate Meeting  
March 18, 2004

Members present: Ben Baez, Pam Barr, Margo Brinton, Barb Carroll, Gayle Christian, Harry Dangel, Valerie Fennell, Emanuela Guano, Ralph LaRossa, Mona Matthews, Charlotte Petrek, Ted Poister, Wayne Reed, Jim Senn and Cherian Thachenkary

Members absent: Denise Donnelly, Nancy Floyd, Shelby Frost, Gerald Gay, Ron Henry, Charles Marvin, Dick Miller, Linda Nelson, Lloyd Nigro, Jerry Rackliffe, Debra Snell, Marta White, and Armenia Williams

Jim moved to approve the minutes of the February 19th meeting. Charlotte seconded the motion, and the group approved the minutes. Margo suggested that perhaps the minutes did not need to be so detailed and might possibly list only the significant actions. No one in the group felt strongly about changing the minutes format. Cherian suggested that we follow precedent and continue recording the detailed minutes.

Dene Sheheane was unable to attend the meeting, but he did send a list of items of interest taking place in the legislature. The legislature approved a new option for TRS members. Those retiring under TRS may receive a lump sum payment of thirty six months of benefits, with a compensating reduction in the remaining benefits. The Governor is expected to sign this bill.

Also, there is a bill floating to consider five year vesting in TRS, but this bill’s success is questionable. For members of ORP, the legislature has budgeted the amounts needed to fund the FY04 increase in the amount of the employer contribution from 10.02 percent to 10.03 percent.

Regarding salary increases, Barb reported that there may be 2% merit pool funding with a cap of $1600 on salaries over $80,000 with a January '05 effective date (not October '04). She also reported that the USG is looking at possibly adding additional employee-paid benefit programs, such as long-term care and cancer insurance. It is possible that such plans may be available as soon as the fall open enrollment period. Certain legislators are pushing to merge the State Merit health plan with the USG health plan. This might not be desirable for members of the USG plan, since our program is comparatively strong in design, cost and reserve stability.

The group then considered a definition of university faculty. When ORP was created, the plan was opened to faculty and principal administrators. Under BOR policy, each institution was to establish a list in its statutes of administrator positions that would qualify for membership in ORP. GSU has such a list, which HR believed was included in the University Statutes at one time, but which does not currently appear in the Statutes. To add this list to the Statutes or change it subsequently, would require submission to the BOR, since all Statute changes must go through the BOR.

Rather than amend the Statutes, the proposal is to:

1.) Amend the definition of University Faculty by asking the Statutes and Bylaws Committee to send the new definition to the Senate Executive Committee and then on to the full Senate for approval. The amended definition would add a statement that administrators who hold *ex officio* faculty status and are eligible to participate in ORP are detailed in the Faculty Handbook.

2.) Have the Faculty Affairs Committee approve the inclusion of the list of ORP eligible administrators into the Faculty Handbook. Such a modification does not require BOR approval.

Jim suggested that the definition of University Faculty should match the wording in the BOR policy. This would be a friendly amendment to change Amy Lederberg’s language of faculty-equivalent status to *ex officio* faculty status. Barb will discuss this with Amy. On a motion by Ben and a second by Mona, the group then agreed to approve including this list of ORP eligible administrators in the Faculty Handbook.
The group then went on to discuss the results of the brainstorming by the Benefits task force on the subject of faculty and staff access to the Rec Center. Previously, Jerry agreed to find out exactly how much money is being collected in fees. Between $250,000 and $300,000 annually are generated by faculty and staff rec center fees. Faculty and staff are also paying approximately $10,000 per year in health center fees.

Cherian suggested that there are two possible approaches to take on this issue:

1.) Come up with a motion to bring before the full Senate
2.) Take the results of the brainstorming to the Provost and let him tell us what is possible.

Gayle suggested pointing out that the brainstorming suggestions are not in rank order. It was agreed that the numbering should be changed to bullet points. Mona pointed out that having a free health clinic would be very critical for the quality of life at the University. Cherian mentioned that it would be difficult for Dr. Patton to explain to students why faculty and staff might be allowed to use the rec center at no charge, when the students are paying for it. Emanuela suggested that free rec center use could work to counterbalance the loss of raises. In conclusion, the group agreed to send the brainstorming ideas to Jerry to discuss with Dr. Henry.

The Senate has asked each of its subcommittees to submit a self-study. Cherian will be forming a self-study group to evaluate Faculty Affairs. Items to be considered are composition, structure, standing and ad hoc committees, membership and the like. The deadline for this self-study is mid April.

The Executive Committee of the Senate has set up a task force to look into non regular faculty (anyone who is not tenure-track or tenured). Each College has been asked to furnish the titles of such non regular faculty. The goal is to build definitions and commonalities.

Gayle distributed a leaflet seeking participation in the Faculty and Staff Authors Exhibit.

The group then reviewed the Staff Advisement Council’s memo to Dr. Patton regarding reduction in force of staff. BJ gave the response to the memo which had been delivered by Dr. Henry at this week’s SAC meeting.

The next Faculty Affairs meeting will be held on April 15, which is before the last Senate meeting on April 28th.