Minutes
Faculty Affairs Committee Meeting
September 1, 2004

Members present: Ben Baez, Cathy Brack, Conrad Ciccotello, Valerie Fennell, Nancy Floyd, Gerald Gay, Cecilia Grindel, Emanuela Guano, Amy Helling, Hugh Hudson, Ralph LaRossa, Charles Marvin, Mona Matthews, Dick Miller, Dave Pavesic, Jerry Rackliffe, Jim Senn, Debra Snell, Tammy Sugarman, Cherian Thachenkary, Marta White, Armenia Williams

Members absent: Glen Abney, Peggy Albers, Pam Barr, Shelby Frost, Ron Henry, Linda Nelson, Charlotte Petrek, and Wayne Reed.

Cherian began the meeting by stating that he had made the decision not to run for re-election to the chair’s position. He then opened the floor for nominations. Dick Miller was nominated and unanimously elected as chair for this academic year. Cherian was recognized by the group for his work as past chair.

Dick began by asking the chairs of last year’s committees if they would consider remaining on as chairs this year. The chairs who were present agreed to stay on. One item of business for this year is to approve the necessary changes to the Faculty Handbook to recognize the change from quarters to semesters and to detail the current student evaluation of faculty procedure.

Nancy reported that her committee had not been able to complete its work from last year, but that she would have a full report by the next meeting.

Cherian reported that Barb Carroll, AVP of Human Resources, is no longer employed at the University, and that her duties have been assumed, on an interim basis, by Roberta Byrum. Jerry volunteered to have a representative of Human Resources attend meetings of this group.

Cherian also reported that the employer contribution to ORP has dropped from 10.03 to 9.65%, effective July 1. 2004. Jerry explained that the legislature made this decision in order to keep the TRS and ORP plans equivalent.

Hugh reported that the decision had been made, albeit in a vacuum, to make the assessment of administrators an online process. His committee will be looking at
this mandate this year.

Ben Baez was nominated and unanimously elected as vice chair of Faculty Affairs.

Cherian announced that a snafu had been identified in the Spring 04 student online evaluation of faculty process. If a student filled out one evaluation for one class, the student could then see all of his or her grades. The student could then decide whether or not to fill out the evaluation forms for his or her other classes. Bill Fritz has been asked to get this corrected. Nancy expressed concern for faculty who are up for promotion/tenure, and she wondered if such faculty could be held blameless. Dick will contact Bill Fritz to see if he can determine the effect of this error.

Summary statistics and written comments on faculty evaluations are released to the chair or the head of an academic unit only. This information may be released to other parties only by majority faculty approval, however, Hugh pointed out that such evaluations are covered under open records statutes.

The question arose as to whether or not Faculty Affairs should take the policy to this level of detail and if there should be a technical aspect to the policy. The group felt that the we must make sure that the policy indicates that students must complete evaluations for each course taken before any grade can be viewed. Nancy suggested that the policy might detail a procedure for dealing with errors.

Dick suggested that a subcommittee be formed to look at reduction in force of faculty and staff. In light of the 7.3 million dollar shortfall in the State budget, layoffs are likely. Dick feels that we need to be positioned to react when reductions are announced.
Jim Senn volunteered to chair the subcommittee, and the following members agreed to serve on the subcommittee:
Mona Matthews
Armenia Williams
Marta White
Amy Helling
Ralph LaRossa
Charles Marvin
Charlotte Petrek (was volunteered in her absence to represent staff)

Dick will poll those members who were not at this meeting to see if alternating Wednesdays and Thursdays at 2:00 would work for them as a permanent meeting time.