Minutes
Meeting of Faculty Affairs Committee
December 8, 2005

Members present: Peggy Albers, Pam Barr, Cathy Brack, Julie Dangel, Cheryl Delk, Dabney Dixon, Lynda Goodfellow, Cece Grindel, Beth Jones, Ralph LaRossa, Charles Marvin, Dave Pavesic, Charlotte Petrek, Jerry Rackliffe, Wayne Reed, Tammy Sugarman, Cherian Thachenkary, and Marta White.

Guest: George Rainbolt

Policy Statement on Use of Faculty Annual Report Data: Cherian suggested that the group might wish to make a friendly amendment to the Draft Policy Statement on Faculty Annual Report Data, which was approved at the last meeting. The Policy Statement going before the Senate today will read:

Each faculty will have access to his/her own annual report data. Department chairs and College-level administrators will have access to their unit’s databases for purposes of annual reviews and/or to prepare reports on aggregate quantitative data. University-level administrators will have access to the database in order to prepare reports on aggregate quantitative data.

Cherian suggested that the Statement should read:

Each faculty will have access to his/her own annual report data. Department chairs, college deans and their designees will have access to their unit’s databases for purposes of annual reviews and/or to prepare reports on aggregate quantitative data. The University President, the Provost and their designees will have access to the database in order to prepare reports on aggregate quantitative data.

Cherian’s point was that the terms College-level and University-level administrators were too broad. Cherian moved that Faculty Affairs present the suggested revision to the Policy Statement as a friendly amendment to the Senate. Charles Marvin seconded the motion, and the group agreed.

Faculty Annual Report Template: Cherian also pointed out that the group might want to look at section I of the new faculty template:

I. Instruction

Insert (INT) to identify international (e.g., study abroad programs) and (EC) to identify e-commerce-related activities and accomplishments.

Cherian suggested that the codes for International and E-commerce might not be useful any longer. He moved, and Charlotte seconded, a motion to remove the codes INT and EC from the template. During the discussion, Charles felt that since there was such emphasis on international activities, perhaps the INT code should not be eliminated, even though there might be some confusion as to what constitutes international instruction. Cherian revised his motion to remove only the code of EC. Charles seconded the motion, and the group agreed.

Admissions and Standards Report on Retention: George Rainbolt discussed the issue of low student retention. Georgia State continues to lose ground in the effort to retain undergraduate students. Data of two years ago shows that of 226 research institutions, we are 223rd in retention. Of the Urban 13, which are really 21 schools, Georgia State ranks 20th. This low retention is really hurting us in the US News and World Report ranking. Georgia State is in the fourth tier overall, even though we are at or above the mean for tier 3 with the exception of retention. We keep raising the number of students we admit in order to replace those we lose, but this is not efficient. We need to address the fact that students who come to Georgia State are not getting the experience they want.

The subcommittee on retention studied 30 schools with graduation rates at least 5% above their expected graduation rates (based on a formula). We wanted to see what these schools were doing, and what cost-effective and easy strategies could be implemented here. One common characteristic of these institutions is that they have strong centralized control of the curriculum with rigid rules for structuring the curriculum. Because we are so decentralized, this could not be accomplished at Georgia State University without a significant culture change. What we do think might work, however, would be to make the departments develop their own retention plans. The University would furnish information which the departments could use to increase retention. Examples of information might be a list of majors not graduating and not enrolled for the upcoming semester, a list of students who are nine or less hours from
graduation who are not enrolled for the upcoming term etc. The departments could then develop their own retention action plans.

Georgia State University’s freshman to sophomore graduation rate is 80%, below the 86% predicted rate. But this is not the problem. Students leave once they enter their majors. The poor students fail, but the good students, who have other options, are also leaving, and we are keeping the middle students. Two major problems are mentioned for leaving: quality of advisement and lack of academic rigor. Dabney pointed out that we need to change the faculty culture, which, at present, does not value advising.

Kennesaw is a net importer of our students. This is understandable, in part, because Kennesaw is half the price of Georgia State University. Many different items were raised as stumbling blocks for raising retention, such as the projected high cost of the new dorms, the loss of half of our part-time students, the need for graduated fees, and the necessity of changing the funding formula used by the Board of Regents.

George asked everyone to read the retention material and to send him feedback.

**Minutes:** The minutes of the last meeting were approved as written.

**Non-Tenure Track Faculty Governance Subcommittee:** Cece asked for two additional tenure track faculty to serve on Shelby’s committee on Non-tenure Track Faculty Governance, which the Provost is interested in bringing to completion. Cece will send an email with the request for volunteers.

**Use of Swipe Cards on Doors:** Cece approached the Provost on the issue of swipe cards. The Provost said that implementing a swipe card system was not financially feasible at this time. Jerry said that it might be possible to implement a card swipe system on the approximately 50 external doors, at a cost of $6000 per door. Wayne will look into the card swipe in Urban Life, which Charles reported as working only about half the time.

**Adjournment:** The meeting concluded at 2:05.