Minutes
Meeting of Faculty Affairs Meeting
January 11, 2006

Members present: Cathy Brack, Harry Dangel, Cheryl Delk, Dabney Dixon, Valerie Fennel, Shelby Frost, Gerald Gay, Cece Grindel, Hugh Hudson, Beth Jones, Rick Lakes, Charlotte Petrek, Jerry Rackliffe, Wayne Reed, Christine Roch, and Tammy Sugarman

Guest: Dawn Davis from Human Resources

Approval of Minutes: The group approved the minutes of the December 8th meeting on a motion by Hugh and a second by Cathy.

Optional Retirement Plan: Dawn Davis then discussed the very confusing letter from the Board of Regents regarding the Optional Retirement Plan. The ORP plan document was originally adopted by the Board of Regents effective in 1990. The plan document has not been amended since then. In order to continue to offer the plan, the plan document is now required to be submitted to the Internal Revenue Service. In order to file with IRS, the plan had to be amended to add certain non substantive changes, such as the addition of assistant coaches and coaches to the plan. Other non substantive changes include updating the pension limits to match limits allowable under legislation that has passed since 1990. The proposed new plan contains only items which have changed due to recent legislation. There is no need for concern. The new plan document may be reviewed on the Human Resources website under Benefits.

Subcommittee on Teaching Issues: Harry petitioned the group to reconstitute a subcommittee on teaching related issues. For example, the faculty evaluation form is different between colleges, with the number of items ranging from 13 to 35. RCB uses a different rating scale from the scales used by the other colleges. Student opinion on one or two items carries inordinately high weight. The timeliness of evaluation results is also an issue, in that, currently, results are received too late to make changes for the upcoming semester, which is already in progress. Shelby, Cheryl and Rick volunteered to work on this committee with Harry.

Course and Room Scheduling: Discussion of restrictions on scheduling was tabled.

Salary Resolution: The Executive Committee of the Senate had some concern with the salary resolution which was recently passed by Faculty Affairs. The Executive Committee would like to place emphasis on the gross amount of raises and de-emphasize the step (or cost of living) increases. Perhaps looking at how K-12 is handling cost of living increases might be beneficial. The Executive Committee feels that we need to stress that our increases are based on merit. Gerry moved to strike the following statement from the salary resolution:

To consider changing current Board of Regents policy to allow instituting step increases or cost of living allowances in addition to and separate from merit or performance based increases.

Harry seconded the motion, which was approved by the group.
There is some discussion that a group may be formed to consider whether those who opted out of TRS might be allowed to rejoin the plan. Hugh suggested that if a representative from GSU were needed, perhaps Cherian would be a good choice. The group agreed.

In the past, ORP paid some percentage of its contributions to TRS in an administration fee. It would seem that the amount put in to ORP and TRS should be equal. Jerry will check to see if ORP is still paying TRS. If this is no longer correct, the faculty should be advised.