Georgia State University
Senate Research Committee
Minutes from October 2, 2000

Present: Mary Ann Romski, Charles Louis, Cynthia Martin, Sid Crow, Tom Netzel, Anne Emanuel, Paul Alberto, Susan Talburt, Shehab Hashim, Marsha Clarkson, Don Reitzes, P.C. Tai, Amy Lederberg, Dave Vanko, Robin Morris, Ron Henry, Steve Manson, Chuck Derby, Tom Whalen, Molly Weinburgh, Mary Lyn Thaxton, Larry Brown, Al Baumstark, Sally Wallace and Nichole Andrews

Meeting began at 3:10 P.M.

I. The Minutes from the August 28, 2000 meeting were approved without corrections.

II. Dr. Charles Louis introduced Dr. Charles Louis, our new Vice President for Research.

III. Dr. Charles Louis spoke on his agenda and vision for Research at GSU. Following an introduction of everyone present, he opened the meeting for a Q & A session. Remarks follow:

"I appreciate the opportunity to meet with you today - my first day at GSU. I have a few comments to make and would then be glad to answer any questions that you might have - though I'm really here today to just introduce myself and listen.

I know a number of you served on the search committee for my position and I hope to prove over the coming months and years that the trust you placed in me is indeed well founded. Clearly this is a critical time for GSU in terms of the development of its mission as a research university and I recognize the considerable faith that many at GSU have placed in my ability to lead this process - from the faculty through the President. However, I will only be able to succeed with your support and active participation in the many tasks that will have to be successfully accomplished down the road.

I intend to work closely with the many different groups that are critical for the growth of GSU's research programs including your committee and other appropriate senate committees, department and center heads, Deans, the Provost and President - and I am sure others that I will learn of as I become familiar with the many programs at GSU. I want to be as visible as possible on campus. I look forward to being the person that people will come to with ideas as to what new programs and initiatives can be developed. I look forward to attending collegiate and departmental meetings during my first year, at least, to get a sense as to what are the critical institutional issues, and learn of the different people and programs at GSU.

I believe that the VP for Research is one of the most exciting positions in a research university because in spite of being responsible for the institution's research programs, there are no faculty that report directly to the office. That is what I particularly like about the position because whatever influence I have, it has to be by moral persuasion. I will have to convince faculty such as yourselves that making certain investments and decisions makes sense for the institution - even though the decision may not benefit you personally. That requires excellent communication and a lot of listening on my part. My goal is to be as open as possible - I welcome suggestions as to what might work best. In my previous position as department head I developed a weekly department newsletter that proved an effective method of communicating to the 300 plus people in my department. However, as with much else, I come with no preconceived ideas as to what will work best for this institution or the many other challenges we will face. I will be looking to you for insight and advice as to what will work best at GSU. Nevertheless, as Vice President I will be ultimately responsible for the final decision and am a firm believer that "the buck stops here".

Part of the challenge is that GSU is a large university. A concern I have is how to ensure this communication and listening occurs. I have made the comment on more than one occasion that certain administrators at institutions I have been at are so distant from the faculty they have no idea what the real issues of concern to the faculty are! I promise that I will never become such a person! I do read my e-mail and want you to know that I am available if there are issues you need assistance with that none of my staff can solve - but I may not be able to solve all your problems - and I have a lot to learn. Don't be surprised if you discover me sticking my nose into your office unannounced as I attempt to discover where people live and work on campus and what they do. I've come from an institution where faculty are distributed over campuses four miles apart. So
in comparison, GSU should be very easy!

Certainly the attractiveness of the position for me at GSU has been the open agenda for the Research Office. It will be important to develop a plan with mission, vision and goals for the Research Office. I know the institution has done a considerable amount of planning and has clearly enunciated the vision that GSU will continue to develop and grow strong research programs. It will be important to develop an agenda for the Research Office and I look forward to working with faculty from both within and without the university in developing this plan.

The Research Office has two important agendas. It must provide excellent service in terms of both the submission and management of research grants. What is working well, what isn't, where do we have deficiencies, what is the best way to do things at GSU? What new programs need to be put in place to enhance both the success of faculty who submit applications for grants, and what is needed to ensure that grants are administered effectively? For example, it is clear that any graduate student supported on Public Health Service grants (i.e. not just those supported on training grants) will be required to participate in a program on the responsible conduct of research. How should this be done, at the department, graduate program, college or campus level? How will compliance be assessed? There are many models and we need to identify the model that would work best at GSU.

I have long ago learned that a successful administrator is only as good as their staff, which has meant that I am very attentive to the needs of my staff. It is important that they develop and grow their professional skills - I encourage them to take courses that enhance their capabilities to more effectively perform their tasks. I also recognize that quality performance requires reward - and the best reward is money. Conversely, I also expect a lot of those that work for me. One of the things I have always done is to have a clear job description for every employee that reports to me so that it is clear what the expectations of their position are. Sometimes these are quite different from what the individual was originally hired for. It is important to work with them on a regular basis so they know their current performance expectations. And I would add, I am not afraid to make hard decisions if they need to be made.

The second agenda item is that which I have already spoken of, namely working with faculty, department heads and deans to enhance and grow the university's research programs. This agenda is very dependent on external stakeholders and I look forward to developing relationships with these people and organizations that will in turn benefit GSU faculty. It is clear this is a time of great opportunity for GSU to establish additional nationally recognized research programs. I am very excited to have the opportunity to lead this initiative and am very confident that together we will succeed.

Thank you.

IV. Key Points from Q & A with Dr. Charles Louis

A. Larry Brown - Business School has a lack of external funding. The amount provided for Graduate students is not competitive with other institutions. There is a need to increase stipends as well as other infrastructure needs (i.e. database support, support staff).

Dr. Louis - Noted the lack of Graduate program at GSU during interview process. I firmly believe the development of Graduate programs is critical to the goals of the Research Office.

B. Steve Manson - Do you see yourself as the chief spokesman for Research?

Dr. Louis - Being an advocate and spokesperson for Research is an exciting part of this position. I have a reputation of being a strong representative for the Research community.

C. - The Research Initiation Program funding has remained flat while the Vice President of Research position was vacant.

Dr. Louis - Will review current program (including Cost Benefit Analysis) and meet with subcommittee on future development of the Internal Grants program.

D. Amy Lederberg - Do you plan to solicit feedback/input from Faculty regarding any issues with the Research Office?

Dr. Louis - I have an open door policy. Definitely let us know of any issues so they can be addressed.
E. What challenges do you see as an outsider/newcomer to GSU in terms of Research?

Dr. Louis - Noted three specific areas during interview process:
1. Multiple layers of University administration beyond President/Provost in decision-making process.
2. Possible opportunity for electronic Grants Management to clear up discrepancies (i.e. Budgets).
3. Administrative authority within individual departments (i.e. Purchasing Authorizations, training on policies/guidelines)

V. Announcements

A. Katherine Johnston, Vice President of Finance and Administration will be present at the Oct 23rd meeting.

B. The meeting was adjourned with no other issues.