Deans’ Group Minutes 10/10/01

In attendance: Ahmed Abdelal, Ron Colarusso, Bill Fritz, Janice Griffith, Sid Harris, Charlene Hurt, Susan Kelley, Mike Moore and Moore. Also in attendance: Barb Carroll, Dawn Davis. Chaired by Ron Henry.

I. Minutes of 09/26/01 were approved with corrections.

II. Graduate Assistantships
Barb Carroll asked that guidelines be established concerning graduate student assistantships, with particular emphasis on issues concerning international students. Ahmed Abdelal suggested that communications should appropriately be made through the office of the dean of college/school, rather than through individual departments. He stressed reinforcing the administrative structure already in place to ensure that deans’ offices are consulted concerning graduate assistantships. Dawn Davis indicated that they do not deal with paper work which has not been previously approved by the individual deans’ offices. Discussion indicated the Deans’ Group has a policy in place requiring graduate students to receive approval of the dean of the appropriate college/school to receive more than two assistantships, but that this policy is not always being followed. Mike Moore suggested a mechanism should be positioned to monitor such policies and procedures, including similiar faculty policies.

Barb Carroll asked if agreement could be reached on definitions of the amount of time students are asked to work in exchange for their appointments. Charlene Hurt suggested that a central location be devised to house such policies or documents. Ahmed Abdelal reminded the group that rather than assigning multiple GAs, a higher rate can be assigned by the office of the dean. Ron Henry agreed that this practice is unacceptable and that any current vacant faculty position that has a log number does not have to gain approval from OPB.

Related to the subject of hiring “slow-downs” directed by the Governor’s Office, Ron Henry noted that OPB approval for full-time faculty appointments is required to be done electronically. He also noted that rather than awaiting OPB approval before placing a national ad for a position, a caveat be included in the ad, indicating that the position will be filled subject to approval and availability of funds. He also called attention to the potential future of budgetary conditions. He could not eliminate the possibility that colleges may not be able to hire faculty for positions which searches are being conducted and OPB approval has been given.

III. Budget Cuts
A mid-year 2.5% ($4.13M) budget cut has been requested by the BOR. Ron Henry proposed a budget to meet these requirements. He suggested balancing the budget by cutting an amount of $2.5M from the current budget, assuming the University does not receive supplemental budget monies. He proposes utilizing the following sources to meet the $4.13M cut: Instructional Technology, QIF, $1.5M in salary savings due to the hiring freeze, and $0.5M from travel monies. Priorities will be established at a later time for the specific cuts. Ron Henry noted deans should consider rehiring priorities for faculty vacancies, given the current economic conditions. He could not eliminate the possibility that colleges may not be able to hire faculty for positions which searches are being conducted and OPB approval has been given.

Bill Fritz suggested efforts should be redoubled to boost credit hour generation for the spring term. Bob Moore cautioned “technological classrooms might not be available to assure to instruction quality. Bill Fritz noted that in the fall new classrooms will be available in Aderholt facility and therefore this may only be a short-term need. Ahmed Abdelal suggested different levels of technological need be defined more clearly, as some needs may be met outside of the use of the high technology rooms. Sid Harris asked that an analysis of room utilization be presented before such decisions are made. Ron Colarusso emphasized that the schedulers are doing an excellent job of dealing with conflicts over technology rooms for the spring term and that many rooms are not utilized fully in buildings such as Spa Hall.

Charlene Hurt stressed that distinction should be made in the difference in requests for classrooms requiring presentation technologies compared to those needing more comprehensive and interactive technologies such as work stations. Susan Kelley suggested a process established to reassign classrooms when instructors change classrooms. Sid Harris asked about the number of rooms that are reassigned to changes in expected enrollment. Ahmed Abdelal also suggested a protocol be established for changing rooms once classes begin the Office of the Registrar not change a room without first notifying the deans’ office. The group agreed to this practice and Bill Fritz so direct the Office of the Registrar. Ron Henry noted that he had noticed empty classrooms in Sparks Hall having been previously directed and that other courses be moved into them for this fall term. Ron Colarusso suggested classrooms be assigned based on his enrollment not on the basis of proscribed limits of the course. He also noted that classrooms could be shared to boost utilization. He suggested that these options be submitted through the individual deans’ office to the Office of the Registrar. Mike Moore noted that problems result because of rigid reporting procedures to BOR and rooms not defined as “instructional spaces.”

Next Meeting: Wednesday, October 31[a change from October 24], 9:00 – 11:00 am, Room 200, Golden Key Board Room, Student Center.