In Attendance: Lauren Adamson, JL Albert, Roy Bahl, Joan Carson, Ron Colarusso, Bill Fritz, Charlene Hurt, Fenwick Huss, Steve Kaminshine, Susan Kelley, Robin Morris. Ron Henry, Chair

The minutes of February 15, 2006 were approved.

Budget update
Ron Henry provided an update on the budget. The university made its budget presentation to the Regent's staff on February 24, 2006. The argument for the Hold Harmless funds may not have been successful. The enrollment decline the university has faced in past semesters may have impacted this decision. The university budget would be cut by $3 million which would result in a 2% budget cut for the university. Ron Henry stated that the Regent's staff thought the idea of Georgia State's plan to offer students a prorated fee for fewer than six credit hours was good. The university should receive the official budget around the third week in April. Ron Henry mentioned the Regents are considering offering students a fixed tuition rate for four years.

Bill Fritz commented that he attended a meeting of the Regent's Retention, Progression, and Graduation Workshop on February 28, 2006 in Macon. The Regent's Initiative will study the impact on the retention of students.

Enrollment Update
Bill Fritz provided a handout on enrollment. There are 288,000 credit hours for spring semester. The enrollment numbers look good and new students are up slightly.

Joan Carson mentioned that the Crystal Reports that show non-enrolled students in departments are available for access by department chairs. The reports are broken down by departments and majors.

Mandatory Graduate Insurance
Ron Henry reported that the university will be required to provide health insurance for graduate students who are on a full tuition waiver. The cost of the health plan will be $810 which will be billed to the university by the health provider. Any graduate student can prove they are covered on another health plan will not need coverage. Ron Henry mentioned that Georgia Tech pays 20% and UGA pays $287 of graduate student health benefits. Robin Morris added that some departments at Georgia Tech pay the health insurance to their graduate students. Ron Henry stated that covering the health insurance will cost the university $1.6-$2M dollars which will be another factor impacting the budget.

Ron Colarusso asked what percentage of graduate students would take advantage of the health insurance. Lauren Adamson commented that probably about 50% of students would need health insurance benefits unless they are covered under a spouse's or family plan.

Roy Bahl suggested that the university might consider offering higher stipends to graduate students and pass the cost of the health insurance on to the students. Robin Morris commented that our competitiveness with other institutions might suffer if we did not provide the health insurance.

Ron Henry commented that the System research universities came up with the idea of providing health insurance to graduate students in an effort to make us competitive. Roy Bahl stated that it would be a good idea to see what other universities around the country are doing on graduate health insurance. Bill Fritz commented that he is aware of Temple University's health insurance coverage and would provide that information to the deans.

Graduate Tuition Waivers
Ron Henry provided a draft handout on graduate tuition waivers. Ron Henry commented that a student should be full time in order to receive a full tuition waiver. The full time hours should be 9 hours each for fall and spring semesters. Ron Henry stated that more control needs to be given by the colleges on who gets full tuition waivers. The colleges should negotiate up front with students on the waiver they will receive. The definition of an appointment at 1.0 is 50% FTE working 20 hours per week. Ron Henry stated that he checked the web sites at Georgia Tech and UGA to review their policy on graduate waivers and would provide more information on findings to the deans.

The deans discussed and commented on the draft. Ron Henry will provide another draft for discussion, but pointed out that a decision on the waivers needs to be decided by March 15 as colleges begin to make offers to graduate students.

Retention/Progression/Graduate issues: Update; department retention plans
Ron Henry reported that the Subcommittee of the Admissions and Standards Committee is moving ahead with the department retention
plans. Joan Carson stated that the Admissions and Standards Committee does not plan to go forward with the recommendation that departments develop retention plans at the Senate meeting. Joan Carson added that faculty expressed concern over the added work of this initiative and their course work. Ron Henry commented that departments need to take responsibility for the success of their majors.

Lauren Adamson stated that departments already implement retention efforts in their self-study. Roy Bahl added that having data or retention for departments to review would be helpful. Joan Carson mentioned that data on student retention is available for department chairs to review. Joan Carson added that the NSSE data shows that we are not challenging our students. Joan Carson stated that academic advising in the departments would help students make better decisions on their course of study and assist departments in tracking student progress.

Any other business
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned.

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 15, 2006, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Golden Key Board Room, 2nd Floor Student Center.