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 March 1, 2006 were approved.

Mandatory Graduate Insurance
Beth Jones brought the group up to date on conversations with UGA and Ga. Tech. Both institutions are still in discussion about the amount of the health insurance costs for graduate students that the institutions would underwrite. Beth gave a handout on a summary of the mandatory plans offered by the selected vendor, Pearce & Pearce. She stated that there is a group of individuals from across various units on campus who are discussing implementation issues. It has been decided that a person will be added to Student Accounts to administer the mandatory health insurance. This requirement extends beyond graduate assistants on full tuition waivers to graduate and ESL international students holding F or J visas, and to all undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in programs that require proof of health insurance. She asked the deans to check if they had any programs that require proof of health insurance.

Graduate Tuition Waivers
The deans discussed the draft on graduate tuition waivers policy considerations and commented on the work that graduate students perform to earn their waivers. Robin Morris commented that students spend time outside the classroom. Fenwick Huss asked what master's level students are doing to cause them to earn 16-21 hours a semester. Robin Morris mentioned that some are teaching and doing thesis work for those hours. Bill Fritz commented that he thought we were trying to balance the books in terms of university resources. If a student is in a doctoral program with 72 hours, it would not matter whether that time is all research hours or class hours the student has to take those 72 hours. Bill Fritz added that many students take their 36 or 72 hours and they still have thesis work. The students use lab resources, talk with their thesis advisor on a regular basis, use library and departmental resources. The graduate students who are extending their stay should be registered for hours to capture workload for the resources they are consuming. The deans will continue discussion at the next meeting.

The discussion ended with a consensus that to be eligible for a part time tuition waiver, a student must meet a part-time enrollment minimum of 6 credit hours per academic term. The policy would go into effect in the fall semester.

Department Retention Plans
Ron Henry opened discussion for comments on the draft department retention plans. Lauren Adamson asked if our Carnegie classification had changed. Ron Henry commented that we are in the second level of research classification, highly intensive research institution. Ron Henry added that some departments may have some good things they are doing and might want to share with others. Ron Henry mentioned that the University System has asked what plans are being put into place at the university to improve retention and graduation rates.

Lauren Adamson asked if the departments could receive a template to follow to help guide the departments as they prepare their retention plans. Ron responded that the plans could probably be customized. The comments on the draft were brief.

Review of Retention Data
Ron Henry addressed the attachments on retention and graduation rates for fall 1999 by major. Ron Henry commented that this data can be provided to the departments to assist in tracking student success.

Ron Henry commented that the data is peculiar in that the first time freshmen after six years graduated at a rate of 39.4%, but transfer freshmen graduated at a rate of 48.6% which is 9% better. He speculated that a reason might be
that they had determined that Georgia State was the institution that wanted to graduate from, whereas some first-time freshmen enroll in Georgia State even though we do not offer the major they are interested in.

Bill Fritz mentioned that the university could reduce its workload because transfer freshmen have to be processed both as transfer students and as freshmen. However, the retention and graduation rates of these students appear to be our best students so the university wants to encourage more transfer freshmen because their graduation and retention rates are better. Lauren Adamson asked where most of these students transfer in. Bill Fritz responded that the students come from Georgia Perimeter College.

Ron Henry commented that the objective is to try and increase the retention and progression rates from sophomore to junior and junior to senior year. We are grasping at how to accomplish this goal. We know that we do reasonably well on our first to second year retention which is over 80%. We appear to be losing somewhere between 15-17% from second to third year. We need to find ways to intervene that will be effective.

Ron Henry emphasized that the department retention plans could look at major learning cohorts and linking some courses together that majors might start taking in Area F for example. The Freshmen Learning Communities is having a significant impact and we need to look at similar things we could be doing. Ron Henry added that making departments aware of the data findings will bring attention to what goal the university is trying to achieve with retention.

Bill Fritz mentioned a program called Sophomore Connection to try and address ways to assist students in transitioning to their sophomore year. Bill Fritz suggested breaking the tables down by Area F instead of by majors. Ron Henry asked if the tables could be broken down by Area F. Bill Fritz answered that he would discuss with his staff to see if the data could be broken down that way.

The deans discussed the various tables to get clarification on the numbers in their majors. Ron Henry mentioned that he would like to see how students flow through their majors and find what impediments they are encountering. There may be a certain set of courses in a major that students are having difficulty getting through. Ron Henry added that we need to ascertain if the course is too difficult in which case should more supplemental resources be provided or are students having difficulty getting the courses they need during registration. Ron Henry commented that these are questions that hopefully will be answered by having department retention plans.

Title of Coordinators of Undergraduate Studies
Ron Henry commented that one recommendation that came out of the Subcommittee of Admissions and Standards was that it would be less confusing to students if we used a common title across the departments as to who was the main person for the student to go to in the department. The suggestion was made to have the title of Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies for questions about advisement and other issues. Ron Henry mentioned that some departments have titles of directors or coordinators as the point person. The goal is to have consistency with the title.

Faculty Information Management System
Joan Carson mentioned a new Faculty Information Management System that will be in effect by annual report time next year. The data will be warehoused once a year and a snapshot will be taken by March 15. Once the snapshot is taken, the system will be open again for faculty to enter data up until the next annual review.

Joan Carson explained that locking the data allows the system to take a snapshot of the data that was entered by March 15. Once that date passes, the system is open again and faculty can continue entering data up until the next annual review. Ron Henry commented that the system could be locked from January 15 to March 15. The colleges would have a two month period and faculty would need to know that they can get data in before this date and cannot add after the following date.

Ron Henry commented that the system does not need to be locked because the colleges can take the information
from the system whenever it wants to and can ignore other data that has come in. Joan Carson mentioned that snapshot wants to capture the annual year information and only that information in the warehouse so that is why the lock down date is being requested.

Plus/Minus Grading System
Bill Fritz mentioned the grading system that will go into effect for fall 2006. The grading scale we have been given starts with A. We are not allowed to give an A+ so it starts with A, A-, B, B+, B-, C+, C, C-, D, and F. There are no plus/minus on grades of D and F which is standard.

Bill Fritz commented that it will be a communication issue to the faculty. Ron Henry mentioned that we need to make sure the programming issues are worked out before we promise the grading system will be in place for the fall. Bill Fritz added that from the initial meetings on the new grading system, there should not be any problem for use by fall semester.

Ron Henry mentioned that at the March Board meeting of the Board of Regents, UGA and Georgia State were given permission to run a three-year pilot of a plus/minus grading system. There were other campuses that wanted to participate in the pilot, but the Regents would not let them do it because the other ones are under the central Banner system and that would mean reprogramming the system. The Regents was not willing to spend the resources to reprogram.

Ron Henry added that faculty do not have to give a plus or minus grade. The faculty can give A, B, C, D, and F as they may have always done. The faculty will have flexibility with this grading system.

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

Next meeting: Wednesday, March 29, 2006, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Golden Key Board Room, 2nd Floor Student Center.