

President Halligan called the meeting to order with the following members present: Arquitt, Bays, Bear, Bilbeisi, Binegar, Comer, Damicone, Ebro, Gasem, Gelfand, Greiner, Henderson, Holcombe, Lamphere-Jordan, Lavery, Lawry, Lehenbauer, Masters, Moder, Mokhtari, Morgan, Mott, Murray, Peeper, Redwood, Van Delinder, Veenstra, and Weiser. Also present: L. Bird, D. Bosserman, J. Breazile, D. Buchanan, C. Edgley, M. Henderson, C. Hernandez, D. Hunt, L. Jones, C. Meador, E. Mitchell, V. Mitchell, M. Payton, Z. Quible, C. Robison, J. Vitek, N. Watkins, J. Weaver, J. Wheat, and C. Wright. Absent: Achemire and Wetzel.

HIGHLIGHTS

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Lawry moved acceptance of the June 11, 2002, Minutes. Moder seconded. The Minutes were approved. Moder moved acceptance of the September 10, 2002 Agenda. Lawry seconded the motion. The Agenda was approved.

SPECIAL REPORT: Report of the Ombuds– Carolyn Hernandez

Carolyn Hernandez from the Office of Affirmative Action provided a brief report on the number of contacts her office has received since 1998. The Policy & Procedures 2-0901, Ombuds policy for Faculty, became official in September 1999. The Policy & Procedures 3-0747, Ombuds policy for Staff, became official in November 2000. The number of contacts coming to the Office of Affirmative Action in the years 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002 ytd are the following. Total contacts to the office for those years were 45, 68, 72, 96 and 53 ytd in 2002. Ombuds contacts for staff only for those years were 13, 27, 29, 52, and 38 ytd in 2002. Faculty contacts during those years were 8, 9, 20, 16, and 6 ytd for 2002. The numbers of contacts to the Ombuds of staff with affirmative actions issues during those years were 24, 32, 23, 28, and 9 ytd for 2002. The types of issues brought forward by faculty included hiring practices,

concerns with grants, and salary equity. Other issues brought forward by faculty involved not being treated with respect by unit heads or other faculty. Notice that the staff contacts are increasing, while the number of faculty contacts increased for a while, but have decreased in the last two years.

SPECIAL REPORT: Ad Hoc Committee Report on Grade Assignment – David Buchanan

David Buchanan reported as the Chair of an Ad Hoc Committee on a grade assignment of a “W” made after the 12th week of classes by an administrator over the objections of the faculty member and without the approval of the Late Drop and Withdrawal Committee. No grade was changed; a “W” was assigned to a student prior to the end of the semester. President Halligan requested last January that the Ad Hoc Committee investigate the process to determine if it was an isolated event at the University or if such an occurrence represented a pattern. Buchanan and the other members of the Ad Hoc committee, James Breazile and Brenda Masters, reported on the findings of the committee. The following paragraphs are summaries of their comments, followed by the full text of the official written report.

Buchanan indicated that there are processes, not policies, involving the late drop committee that provide some open doors that contribute to the types of problems involved in this case. Part of the report deals with recommendations about these concerns to be discussed in the Academic Standards and Policy Committee of Faculty Council. Buchanan continued his comments by stating that there was a second event brought to the attention of the committee involving the same member of the administration. Initially, this event seemed exceedingly severe; upon closer examination it was clear that it was not severe. It was reported that the form (to be filled in by the student) for a late withdraw was filled in and submitted without committee approval to the Registrar’s Office by the same administrator. The evidence indicates that this is not the case. The second case points out clearly the confusion that exists relative to the late drop committee due to lack of broadly understood policy statements.

Buchanan described that in the process of studying these events the question of whether “W” is a grade or not was brought to the attention of the committee. The OSU catalog clearly lists it as a grade, but it is a grade that is never assigned by a faculty member. The State Regents also list “AW” or Administrative Withdraw as a grade. That grade is rarely, if ever, used at OSU. When a student files for a late withdraw past the twelfth week of the semester sometimes the faculty member is contacted and sometimes they are not contacted. The committee holds the opinion that anytime past the twelfth week when a student is assigned a late withdrawal that the faculty member should be contacted. This is not the case with the current process in place. The Academics Standards & Policy Committee will be asked to consider the case of the “W” grade.

Buchanan further commented that the committee received anecdotal information that there are some deans and associate deans who might believe that they have the authority to assign letter grades. No one was ever willing in writing to describe circumstances under which such a situation might occur. That is indeed not the case. The deans or associate deans do not have that authority except in the case where the faculty member is simply incapable of assigning the grades, such as with a catastrophic illness or totally absent from the University.

Buchanan proceeded to explain that the dispute resolution petition was prepared by the faculty member but was not formally filed with the Faculty Council, partly due to the fact that the administration stepped in to negotiate with the faculty member. In this particular case administrative negotiation to avoid a formal grievance was probably not particularly harmful, but that does represent a good precedent. Dispute resolution should be the responsibility of the Faculty Council. A grievance formally filed with Faculty Council would result in the convening of three past chairs of Faculty Council to study the issue.

The committees of three past chairs operate with very strict confidentiality and have the authority to negotiate to attempt to solve the problem before they go to formal dispute resolution. The process of the committee of three past chairs has served the University well in the past dealing with difficult issues in a manner that is not very public. In this particular case if the issue had gone to a committee of three past chairs the result might have well been the same as with the committee that has investigated the issue. The present and future chairs of Faculty Council should guard the responsibility settling dispute resolutions.

James Breazile described the interactive roles of the offices of the Associate Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs. Breazile reiterated that it was not individuals that the committee was charged to investigate but rather the processes involved that resulted in the situation. The interaction of the two offices of AVPAA did play a role in this situation. Their responsibilities overlap to some extent and thus produce some confusion and conflict in the handling of serious situations. A responsibility of one of the AVPAA was to chair the Late Drop and Withdraw Committee. It is the opinion of the Ad Hoc Committee that such a committee should not be headed by an administrator of such rank. One of the areas of overlapping responsibilities is the area of athletics. Responsibilities for two AVPAA should be clearly defined in order to avoid future conflict. Breazile emphasized that the administrator involved in the assignment of the "W" was acting in the best interest of the University. He summarized that the committee recommendations will include not placing such administrators in positions of chairing such committees as the Late Drop and Withdraw Committee.

Brenda Masters presented the last portion of the committee report that identified several items that need to be considered through the Academic Standards and Policy Committee of Faculty Council. She explained that the Late Drop and Withdraw Committee has evolved over the years completely without faculty input on membership or committee structure. Currently the forms being used by the Late Drop Committee do not even require the signature of the faculty member. The committee structure and processes need to be clarified through the appropriate Faculty Council committees.

Masters requested that the audience draw their attention to six bulleted items on the last page of the report. Several of these items will be forwarded to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee of FC for full discussion. The bulleted items summarize the concerns held by the Ad Hoc Committee about the Late Drop committee, but also include some of our ideas about how the situation can be addressed. The first bulleted item indicates that the structure and membership of the Late Drop Committee should be thoroughly addressed through the appropriate channels of Faculty Council and with faculty input. This is especially true since this is a very important committee that has the power to remove an "F" from a student's transcript and replace that with a "W" even after the end of the semester has passed by many months. Masters continued by explaining that the chair of the Late Drop Committee should not be one of the AVPAA. To have an associate vice president as the chair of a committee that changes letter grades after the semester is over places that person in a very difficult position. Furthermore, if the committee decision does not assist the student in obtaining the "W" there is no place for future discussion or appeal if the AVPAA is already involved in the initial decision. Perhaps the chair of the committee could be a rotating chair among the membership of the committee. The Ad Hoc Committee is also requesting that the Academic Standards and Policy Committee proceed immediately into discussions about whether the faculty member's signature must be required on any late drop form.

Masters reported that the Ad Hoc Committee was very concerned once they recognized that it is common practice in the Registrar's Office to backdate all late drops and late withdraws at the University. It is the case that the late drops or withdraws cannot be found in the database that is the grade record for the University, because they are all backdated to the Friday of the twelfth week which is the advertised last

day to drop a course at OSU. The Ad Hoc Committee thinks that must be changed. She stated that such an action is inappropriate and deceptive. Backdating decreases the validity of the information in the grade database and was identified by the Ad Hoc Committee as a critical issue. The committee was further concerned about the attitude of acceptance of backdating that was represented in the Registrar's Office. The committee wondered, but has no evidence, about backdating as a common practice in other offices on campus.

Masters indicated that an additional item to be presented to the Academic Standards and Policy Committee for discussion is the idea of requiring earnest money to be paid by students prior to the beginning of classes to indicate the earnest intention to take the courses in which they are enrolled. In many instances at the University a student's lack of attendance or misunderstanding that he/she is actually enrolled in a course results in cases to be considered in the Late Drop Committee.

Buchanan concluded the special presentation by reiterating that the ideas generated by the committee were not proposals, but rather topics offered for discussion and consideration by the Academic Standards and Policy Committee. He also indicated that probably the process of evaluating the organization of the Office of Vice President for Academic Affairs would need to be considered once a new administration is in place.

After the presentation President Halligan offered his thanks to the members of the Ad Hoc Committee for the extensive time and effort invested in the process. He stated that some interesting questions had arisen from the process. One that he had not considered before was, "Is 'W' a grade?" President Halligan also stated that backdating is something that the University should not do.

In the question period that followed, Lawry asked Buchanan, "Since the administrator in question is no longer operating in the University was there anything that the committee found out in their discussions and their fact-finding that suggested that this was a good reason to discharge this person or to ask this person to resign?" Buchanan stated that the committee understood that the administrator had been reprimanded for the initial event and that the committee saw no reason for further reprimand. Lavery commented that perhaps the gossip that surrounded this issue about this being a change of grade from a "D" to a "B" or an "F" to an "A" reflects a large culture of concern from faculty about where and how the grades are reported. There seems to be many intermediaries, including academic appeals and academic advisors, between the faculty member assigning the grades and the permanent grade record. There seem to be several parties who have a hand in assigning letter grades. When faculty hold these perceptions it is more likely that they believe stories of grade alterations that are rumored to be fact. Lavery expressed that perhaps processes of this type can help to combat those incorrectly held beliefs that reflect a larger culture. Lavery indicated that a portion of the report that he had confusion about was the earnest money system. Committee members indicated that the possible use and the details of such a system were yet to be discussed. Masters stated that the idea was indicated to the committee by senior personnel in the Registrar's Office. Registrar personnel indicated that some measure is needed as an indication from the students that they knew they were enrolled and earnestly planned to participate in the course. Buchanan indicated that at least one university in the Big Twelve required full payment of tuition prior to the beginning of classes. Lavery also asked if there was an indication of how many of the late drops were approved each semester. Masters responded that due to lack of transparency in the grade database caused by backdating that the late drops were impossible to distinguish from drops prior to the end of the twelfth week of classes. Craig Robison, a guest at Faculty Council and a member of the Late Drop Committee, verified that a reasonable estimate of the number of late drops was about thirty to forty per semester. A paper trail exists for each of the late drops so the exact number could be determined, but the clarity of that

information in the permanent grade record is lost through backdating. President Halligan stated firmly that the authority to assign the letter grades for students is held by the faculty. In a final question Moder wanted to verify that the student involved in this investigation was not an athlete. In neither case were the students involved athletes.

President Halligan offered his thanks to the Ad Hoc Committee for their work on the issue and indicated that he also agreed that backdating should not be done at the University.

The report in its entirety follows.

Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Grade Assignment

August 2002

Introduction: A Task Force was appointed by President Halligan and Faculty Council Chair Edgley to examine an event during which a member of the OSU central administration assigned a grade of “W” to a student over the objection of the faculty member who was responsible for the class. The Task Force consisted of Drs. David Buchanan (chair), James Breazile and Brenda Masters. It was charged with the responsibilities to review the specific grade assignment to determine if this was an isolated event or part of a pattern of administrative involvement in grade assignment and to examine OSU policies and procedures to ensure that there are not inconsistencies or opportunities for abuse. The Task Force, through interviews with several members of the OSU administration, has grown to understand more about the working of several administrative offices. Some of those observations will be described in the report. We interviewed the faculty member involved in the specific case, several members of the administration and some staff members in the Office of the Registrar. We wish to commend all who came to visit with us for their willingness to be candid. We realize the sensitive nature of such an interview, especially for a staff person, and wish to specifically commend the staff members in the Office of the Registrar for their willingness to be interviewed and the apparent devotion they have to their important task as the keepers of the students’ academic records.

The Event: An administrator arranged to have a “W” grade assigned after the 12th week, without seeking the approval of the Late Drop and Withdrawal Committee and over the objection of the faculty member who was preparing to assign a grade of “I” for Incomplete. Should it have happened? No. Did the assignment of the “W” make sense in the context of the situation? Possibly. Why did it happen? A series of good intentions and assumptions was allowed to create a problem because communication was not what it could have been and a member of the administration displayed a willingness, in this instance, to short-circuit established procedures. In the more detailed description that follows the three principal players in this story will be referred to as: the student, the faculty member and the administrator. The student was having a personal problem for which the university shared some responsibility. The student was sent to the administrator in question to receive some assistance in dealing with the fallout that the personal problem was causing in classes the student was taking during Fall 2001, particularly one class about which the student had considerable concern. The administrator contacted the Office of the Associate Dean for the college that was responsible for the class. The Associate Dean and Student Services Director visited with the student and the faculty member, separately, and it was agreed that a grade of “I” would be assigned even though the student had not really met the requirements for the “I” grade and had not yet visited directly with the faculty member. Was that the appropriate response on the part of the faculty member? Perhaps not, but it was a generous response. At this point, all seemed to be going well. The student continued to attend the class with some regularity but did not take exams. Everyone assumed that the student would visit with the faculty member and make arrangements for completing the assignments and exams which would cause the grade to be changed from “I” to a regular

letter grade at a later time. Indeed, the student received specific instructions to do so. However, the student did not visit with the faculty member, nor did the faculty member utilize several available opportunities to visit with the student. The student contacted the administrator after the 12th week (drop deadline) and expressed concern about developments. After the student and the faculty member had not made contact, the faculty member started to have second thoughts about the propriety of the “I” grade. The breakdown in communication started to become evident. The administrator decided that it would have been better if the student had decided to drop the class prior to the 12th week. Since there is a process in place for late drops and withdrawals the administrator decided that such a decision was possible but that circumstances were such that going through the Late Drop and Withdrawal Committee was not appropriate. The administrator instructed the Office of the Registrar to assign a grade of “W” even though grade assignment was, by now, open for faculty members to perform. This upset the faculty member who reasonably believed that the faculty should have complete authority to assign appropriate grades. The faculty member went through the proper channels to prepare to file a Dispute Resolution petition. The Dispute Resolution petition was subsequently withdrawn after the faculty member was given the opportunity to assign the “I” grade and it was agreed that this Task Force would be created. It seems apparent that none of these problems would have occurred if the student had decided at the beginning to drop the class prior to the end of 12th week. That, unfortunately, did not happen. Lacking that, it seemed reasonable to assume that the student would have contacted the faculty member about the requirements for removal of the “I” grade. It also seems reasonable to assume, since the importance of the situation had been indicated to the faculty member in several ways, that the faculty member would have taken actions to contact the student. Those assumptions lead to a communication void during a time when even one phone call or personal visit between any two of the principals could have averted much of this. Regrettably, such a phone call or visit never happened and the administrator did something which was improper but was done with at least considerable interest in the welfare of the student and the university.

Is this a recurring problem? An important question for the Task Force pertained to the possible regularity of such an action by any administrator. More than 170,000 grades are assigned every year by OSU Faculty and there are typically more than 3000 grade changes processed annually. It would be impossible to check for every possible problem that could arise with the assignment of grades. However, it appears that the assignment of any grade over the active objection of the responsible faculty member is exceptionally rare. This may be the only time it has happened in many years. What is less rare is the potential for inconsistency or abuse of use of the procedures designed to accommodate late drops or withdrawals. While there is a committee which looks at requests for late drops and withdrawals, it is nearly impossible to be completely consistent in how those procedures are applied. Students are probably not equally aware of the possibility of a late drop or withdrawal and the information required from faculty to make a decision about a late drop or withdrawal is not equally available since attendance policies vary so much among faculty. There has been one other instance in which the Office of the Registrar received some information which could have been interpreted as encouragement to assign the “W” grade in two classes after the 12th week. The same administrator that was described in the original issue outlined in this report was also involved in this second situation. In this instance, the faculty members in charge of the classes did not object to the assignment of “W” so there was not a conflict between a faculty member and a member of the administration. Incorrect information was presented which implied that the administrator had filled in the student form for late withdrawal himself. This incorrectly caused the situation to appear far more serious than it actually was. It did illustrate, again, the confusion that can result from the lack of clear and consistent policies concerning late drop and withdrawal.

Is a “W” a grade? An associated question pertains to the nature of the “W” grade. The OSU catalog lists “W” as a grade along with other grades like A, B etc. However, it is not a grade that is usually assigned by a faculty member. The student may freely cause assignment of a “W” prior to the end of the

12th week of the semester and, as previously mentioned, there are processes in place for the assignment of a “W” grade after the 12th week which do not always involve the faculty member in charge of the class. Clearly, no administrator should ever assign one of the regular letter grades (A, B, C, D, F, I or R) unless the faculty member in charge of the class is unable, through illness or absence, to complete the assignment. Current practices at OSU open up the question of whether the “W” grade is a responsibility of the administration or of the faculty. This question needs a clear answer. This Task Force is of the opinion that the assignment of the “W” grade should have the approval of the faculty member in charge of the class starting at the end of the 12th week. The State Regent’s policy includes an “AW” grade (identified as an administrative withdrawal). The “AW” does not appear in any OSU documentation. The possible use of the “AW” grade might also need to be considered. However, given the potential for abuse the circumstances in which an “AW” would be assigned must be clearly delineated before such including “AW” as a possible grade. In addition, we believe that, if the use of the “AW” is adopted, it should also be a requirement that the faculty member in charge of the class must be notified, and given an opportunity for input, before assignment of the AW.

The Dispute Resolution process. The faculty member in this situation prepared a Dispute Resolution petition to be filed with the Chair of the OSU Faculty Council and had discussed the petition with the Chair. It is common practice for a faculty member preparing a Dispute Resolution petition to engage in these types of discussion prior to the formal filing of the petition. In this situation, the administration stepped in and directly negotiated with the faculty member to determine if a solution could be reached without going forward with the Dispute Resolution process. One of the results of that negotiation was that this Task Force was appointed. The Faculty Handbook-Appendix D states that “Upon receipt of a faculty member’s petition for resolution of a dispute, the chairperson of Faculty Council shall refer the petition to a review committee composed of three past chairpersons of the Faculty Council”. This review committee has quite open-ended authority to look for possible remedies for a dispute. The net result may have been the same if this Dispute Resolution petition had been filed and sent to a review committee of three past chairs since the review committee may have served some of the same functions the Task Force is performing. However, this should not be considered as a precedent for administrative involvement at the beginning of the Dispute Resolution process. Dispute Resolution is established in Appendix D as a faculty responsibility and should remain as such. Direct involvement by members of the administration at the beginning of the Dispute Resolution process may have less benign results in other situations in the future. There may have been concern, on the part of the administration, as to whether the Dispute Resolution process would place these events in the public arena. Everyone should be reminded that the Review Committees of Three Past Chairs operate, not only with considerable latitude in their ability to seek remedy, but also in the strictest confidence.

Interactive roles of the Offices of the Associate Vice-Presidents for Academic Affairs. It is to be expected that when two administrators are assigned closely parallel tasks dealing with the complex nature of policies and procedures involving academic and student affairs, there will be some overlap of their responsibilities. This is clearly the case within the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, in which two associate vice presidents are give responsibilities that frequently engage common areas. To prevent an adversarial relationship between these offices and to assure consistency and accuracy in the application of policies and procedures it is imperative that the limits in areas of responsibility for each associate be recognized. It appears that there is a relatively clear definition of responsibility for these offices. For one of the offices the responsibilities seem best described as ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT. Enrollment management includes responsibility for:

a. The Registrar’s office. This includes graduation and commencement procedures, admission requirements, athletic eligibility verification, recording of student grades, late withdrawals (limited to catastrophic situations) and enrollment procedures.

- b. High school-college relations.
- c. Late drops committee.
- d. Admissions.
- e. Scholar Development and Recognition.
- f. Scholarships and Financial Aid.
- g. SIS/Data Management.

The responsibilities in the other office are best described as concerning ACADEMIC ISSUES and interaction with the State Regents office. Furthermore, the individual in this office would usually assume the responsibilities of the Executive Vice President when that individual was away from the office. Academic issues include responsibility for:

- a. Curriculum;
- b. Faculty;
- c. Grades and grading;
- d. Honors College;
- e. Athletics Council;
- f. Academic Services for Student-Athletes;
- g. Academic Appeals board;
- h. University Academic Services;
- i. University Assessment.

Since both offices have responsibilities that pertain to the assignment and management of grades, the possibility of conflict is high in that very sensitive area. Some lack of recognition of areas of responsibility, coupled with inadequate communication between the two offices, resulted in a situation in which students, staff and faculty could receive conflicting, incomplete and/or inaccurate information and guidance. It is recommended that each of these offices continually recognize the limits of their area of responsibility and that clearly transparent communication take place any time it is necessary to act outside the identified arenas. It is also recommended that neither of the occupants of these offices be members of faculty committees concerned with grades, grade appeals drops and withdrawals or other faculty issues. It should be emphasized that administrators of this level should not attend faculty committee meetings except through invitation for a specific purpose by the chair or a member of the committee. In no instance should an administrator consider themselves to be a permanent guest of a faculty committee.

Policies and Procedures for late drops and withdrawals. The committee known as the “Late Drop Appeals Committee” (an official name has never been recognized) reviews student petitions to drop a course or courses after the 12th week, which is the deadline to drop a course with the typical process. The committee membership is currently comprised of the eight Directors of Student Academic Services (DSAS) one from each of the six undergraduate colleges, one from UAS, and one from the Graduate College with an Associate Vice Presidents of Academic Affairs as the chair of the committee. The functions of the committee were based in the individual colleges until the Fall 1996. At that time a University level committee was formed due to concerns expressed over a period of time and culminating in a recommendation from the DSAS Council in Spring 1996. The P&P letter shows a revision in March 1997, but based on information from the OVPAA it seems the committee began to operate in Fall 1996.

The relevant policy statement for the late drop policy is OSU P&P Letter 2-0206 which was last revised in May 1998 to implement the change in the drop deadline (to the end of the 12th week of classes) approved through the Faculty Council. The "petition" process for approval of drops after the deadline existed prior to the change in the deadline but was applied at the end of the 6th week of classes (which was the previous deadline). The specific policy statement about the petition for approval of drops after the deadline makes no mention of a committee and the petition only refers to the "review panel." The current structure of the committee was formed by Becky Johnson (when she was in the OVPAA) as a response to the discussion in the DSAS Council. Apparently there were significant concerns (legitimate and warranted according to people who were involved) about very uneven treatment of student requests by the individual colleges and the committee approach was seen as a way to provide consistent and equitable application of the late drop policy. The original recommendation approved by the Dean's Council was for a 3-member committee with rotating DSAS membership chaired by Becky Johnson's position. When the DSAS Council met to draw up guidelines, they decided that the rotating membership would not address some key concerns and that each college needed "a voice" on the committee, and so decided to include all DSASs. However, for unknown reasons, the specific structure and functions of the committee were not included in the revisions to the P&P Letter approved in March 1997. From the March 1996 DSAS Council meeting, the committee started in the basic mold of the Academic Reprieve Review Panel. It started meeting weekly 3/27/96 and continued through 5/1/96 setting the basic pattern for succeeding semesters. The late drop appeals committee needs to be officially recognized, named, and the organizational structure clearly defined. The persons involved with the committee feel that the current membership and the function serve the University well. None of the involved parties who provided input indicated that the committee could function more effectively with different membership. Substantial reasons, including consistent treatment of students across colleges and a degree of autonomy for the committee, were provided to indicate the current University structure is advantageous to the process occurring separately in the colleges. Concerns were voiced that there was considerable potential for functions of the committee to be performed without the knowledge and approval of the committee. The potential for abuse of power from the chairperson of the committee certainly exists. Although a centralized point of contact for students to file the petitions to appeal for a late drop is needed, and perhaps the OVPAA is appropriate for that, neither of the AVPAA should function as the chair of the committee. It has been suggested that the chair position of the committee should be assigned on a rotational basis to the DSASs. The form for the petition in that circumstance would include the approval signatures of two DSASs, the one from the student's college and the one who is chair. A rotational chair could result in the petition requiring the signature twice of the same DSAS. A vice chair could be named for the committee who would be the next year's chair and who would sign to indicate the committee's approval of the petition for a late drop in the event that the chair and the DSAS from the student's college are the same person. An appeal for a late drop needs to include the signature of the instructor of signature for the class from which the student is dropping after the deadline. Furthermore, a place to indicate the grade of "W" or "F" needs to be provided since the decision is past the 12th week of the semester since P&P 2-0206 2.02 indicates that "W" or "F" must be recorded for a student who is withdrawing from the University; that grade assignment should also be indicated for students who are dropping past the 12th week deadline. If it is determined that assignment of a "W" or "F" in these situations is not appropriate then P&P 2-0206 must also be revised. It should be noted that in P&P 2-0206 2.03 that it is stated that after the beginning of pre-finals week a student may not withdraw from the University and shall be assigned only the grades of A, B, C, D, or F (or when appropriate I, NP, P, S, U or X). In P&P 2-0206 4.04 the time period for requesting a late drop is within the next semester of enrollment or within one year, whichever is first. The deadlines for late withdraw and late drop should be more closely aligned. After an appeal for a late drop is approved a "W" is applied to the student's transcript. It is common practice for the "W" assigned in this manner to be backdated to the last day of the 12th week, which is the

actual deadline for dropping courses. The “W” assigned by the Late Drop Committee should be dated with the actual date of when the “W” is applied to the transcript. Clearly, if the actual date of the “W” assignment was listed with the “W” the University would have accurate data concerning the numbers of late drops approved by the committee. The current process of backdating provides deceptive data that indicate that no drops were assigned after the 12th week deadline which is, of course, not the case. Backdating has become common practice with certain circumstances at the University and its use should be seriously questioned. Often the students involved in late drops, late withdrawals, and with the enrollment adjustment process are enrolled in classes that they intended to drop or that they do not realize that they are enrolled in. To increase student awareness at the first of the semester about enrollment status a payment of enrollment earnest money should be required prior to the semester or during the first week of the semester. If the earnest money is left unpaid by the deadline then a student’s enrollment would be dropped. Even a small amount of required payment prior to the semester would be very effective in decreasing the number of students who apply for enrollment adjustment after the semester is over.

In summary, the paragraphs above indicate that consideration should be given to the following:

- The late drop appeals committee needs to be officially recognized, named, and the organizational structure clearly defined through the typical University processes.
- The chair of the late drop appeals committee should not be one of the AVPAA. A rotational chair assignment to the DSASs would perhaps be effective.
- The instructor’s signature should be required on the petition for late drop to indicate support.
- Deadlines for late drops and late withdrawals should be similar in policy statements.
- Backdating should be stopped at the University.
- Enrollment earnest money should be paid by all students enrolled at the University at the first of the semester and enrollments should be cancelled for students who do not pay.

Resolution of the issues described in this report. Issues pertaining to the specific incident described in this report must be addressed by the President and/or the Executive Vice-President. Since there have been personnel changes in the Office of Academic Affairs, the issues relative to the relationship between the Associate Vice-Presidents must be addressed by those Associate Vice-Presidents and the Executive Vice-President when the “Interim” situation is completed. The issue concerning the process for Dispute Resolution is the ongoing responsibility of the Chair of Faculty Council. Suggestions for cleaning up the policies for late drops and withdrawals should be given to the Academic Standards and Policies Committee of Faculty Council. Specific recommendations should be made by that committee for establishing new policies and/or altering existing policies. The members of this Task Force stand ready to assist with any of these deliberations, if appropriate.

REPORT OF STATUS OF FACULTY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:

President Halligan and Vice Presidents

- 01-04-01-BUDG ***Market-Driven Salary Increase to Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty:*** Funds not available at this time. Recommendation referred to University Budget Committee for consideration. (As reported at the Sept. 11, 2001, Faculty Council meeting).
- 01-05-01-CFSS ***Parking Policy:*** Pending survey evaluation. Survey results from Bureau of Social Research (HES) will be presented to the Faculty Council’s Campus Facilities, Safety, and Security Committee later this fall.
- 01-05-05-RES ***Copyrightable Intellectual Property Policy:*** Pending Legal Counsel review. Legal Counsel reviewed the draft document and raised a number of issues. Joe Alexander met with members of the Copyright Committee, Legal Counsel, and others to

discuss relevant issues. A revised draft is being developed. Approval by the OSU Board is required.

01-09-01-BUDG **Formalization of the University Raise Program:** Acknowledged. Dr. Keener reviewed the budget implications of this recommendation with Pres. Halligan, Harry Birdwell, and Joe Weaver. Raises for faculty and staff remain a high priority for the administration; however, other mandatory increases must also be considered. (As reported at the Nov. 13, 2001, Faculty Council Meeting.)

02-02-01-BUDG **Athletic Department Deficit Reduction:** To Dr. Birdwell for review. President Halligan met with the Athletic Council regarding the Athletic Department's plan for deficit reduction and Athletic Council is studying this issue. Included as part of Dr. Birdwell's annual goals.

02-04-01-LRPIT **Information Technology Policy:** Pending FC and CIS discussions. Dr. Vitek is reviewing the proposed policy and has asked CIS representatives and others to provide input on the recommendation. Discussions with CIS and FC representatives are planned.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

ACADEMIC STANDARDS & POLICIES — Andrea Arquitt

Regular committee meetings are set of the 4th Tuesday of the month at 3:30pm in PIO 309. The AS&P committee has met and has begun the process for the following:

1. Determining the need for and developing a policy recommendation for final exams for distance education courses.
2. Examining the extent of the problem of on-line grade submission and formulating recommendations for addressing those problems.

In addition, per earlier instructions from the Faculty Council Chair, the committee will also be looking into suggestions for clarifying the policies for late drops and withdrawals with specific recommendations for establishing new policies and/or altering existing policies.

ATHLETICS — Carol Moder

The Athletics Committee met on August 30. The committee discussed and will continue to discuss its goal and mission. Among the issues the committee will consider this year are:

1. A comparison of the services available to athletes and those available to other students.
2. Tracking athletes to determine what happens to them after they leave OSU.
It was suggested that we begin by tracking what happened to athletes who left OSU in 1992 and 1997. Moder and Allen will investigate what information may be already available.
3. Interviews with various students to determine their views on issues or problems with intramural and intercollegiate athletics. Scholarship athletes from football and basketball and from smaller sports would be invited, as well as students not involved in intercollegiate athletics.

At the request of a committee member the chair consulted Harry Birdwell about the recent events involving athletes. He provided information on two main incidents:

1. A shouting and shoving match at Whataburger involving 300 people, including OSU & Langston athletes. Two OSU basketball players were charged. After this incident Harry Birdwell asked the DA and Chief of Police to contact him if there were further occurrences.
2. A brawl over a softball player who was dating a football player and a baseball player. Birdwell went to the scene with Coaches Miles and Holliday and took the names of those involved.

On the following Tuesday, Harry Birdwell met with all the coaches and made it clear to them that would be held accountable for the department of their student-athletes and that he expected the coaches to make their players aware of the rules, expectations, and level of accountability to which they would be held. Since that meeting, every coach has met with his or her respective athletes to convey this information. The coaches have disciplined all of the specific individuals who were charged and/or who were major players in the incidents. These steps have included: disciplinary actions, community service, suspension, and a removal from a team.

The Athletics Committee will continue to keep itself informed on these events in the future. If any member of the faculty has an issue that they would like the committee to consider, they should contact Carol Moder.

BUDGET — Scott Gelfand

The Budget Committee met on August 28, and will meet regularly on the Monday prior to the FC Executive meeting. One issue that the committee discussed is decoupling the annual raise program from the fall enrollment statistics. A second issue being discussed is the use of fee waivers for tuition. There are about 13 million dollars in fee waivers every year. The committee will be investigating who receives these fee waivers, how much tuition is lost and what are the academic standards required to obtain fee waivers. In addition the committee is questioning whether a student who repeats a course should receive a fee waiver for the course multiple times. Another issue deals with neighboring states which also have budget cuts, but still have faculty salary increases. Finally, between last year and this year the state appropriations for the University went down by approximately 2.3 million dollars. The total budget increased by approximately a million dollars, which is partly due to a net tuition increase of 5.2 million dollars. In terms of additional costs, fringe benefits have increased by about \$800,000 and annualizing the raise plan cost about a million dollars.

Joe Weaver commented that the University was notified by the Office of State Finance right before the meeting today that their estimate of the shortfall is 4.75% for all state agencies and they are asking that all agencies prepare that this. President Halligan asked members of the administration several months ago to prepare for a 5% shortfall plan. The deans were asked to cut 2% immediately and prepare for more cuts.

CAMPUS FACILITIES, SAFETY & SECURITY — Khaled Gasem

The next two meeting dates of the committee are September 25 and October 20. They will provide summary information from the parking survey when it ready.

RESEARCH — John Damicone

Research Compliance: Research compliance issues are increasing in complexity, particularly in light of recent Patriot Act/Homeland Security legislation. Violation of new law(s) can result in substantial fines and or imprisonment. Ed Lawry has asked the Research Committee to represent faculty interests in how the university handles such matters. The committee is looking into ways to best do that. **Copyright Policy:** Committee discussed the dilemma surrounding Legal Counsel's lack of action on its objections to copyright policy recommendation approved one year ago. However, suggested changes to the copyright policy recommendation have just been returned to Joe Alexander. Changes focus on: Excluding OKC and Okmulgee campuses; excluding non-faculty staff; language surrounding copyright of University works; changing "non-centralized" approval through unit administrators to "centralized" one using deans and tech transfer office; and division of royalties – University should recoup all direct costs first. The committee strongly supported the idea to reconvene the original committee chaired by Rick Bost to make

revisions deemed appropriate by faculty. However, Ed Lawry's position is that Halligan needs to respond to FC on the original recommendation. The committee will meet with Alexander and FC Chair shortly.

Research Productivity: After cursory review, the committee felt that many of the issues that limit research productivity at OSU were addressed in "The Final Report of the Ad Hoc Committee and Sub-Committees on Research Initiatives at Oklahoma State University" released in 2001. It was noted that the Ad Hoc Committee had substantial faculty representation. The committee will be requesting more information on the current status of recommendations made in the report and plans for implementation. The committee decided to review the report more closely to assess their support for the document as a whole, identify priorities among the recommendations, and possibly make recommendations to administration on their implementation.

REPORTS OF LIAISON REPRESENTATIVES:

Athletic Council — Carol Moder

The Athletics Council met on August 15, 2002. The first item of business was the review of the academic standing of the athletes in various programs. A small proportion of athletes earned GPAs below 2.0 in the Spring 2002 semester, but most had overall GPAs above 2.0. The Academic Integrity Committee reported that in future it would like to examine the records of athletes in more detail. It proposes to look at the proportion of athletes in various majors and to consider statistics comparing the GPAs of the athletes within a given major to those of the non-athletes in that major. The second item of business was the consideration of the proposed team schedules. All of the Fall 2002 schedules were approved. However, there was extensive discussion of the spring schedules, many of which violated the OSU rule that team schedules require no more than 10 missed days of class per semester. Some Council members expressed concern that schedules which violated this attendance rule have been repeatedly approved over the years. Representatives of the Athletics Department suggested that the number of missed days on the schedule might not reflect the actual number of classes an individual athlete might miss. For example, if the team leaves early on Friday, that would be counted as one missed class day for the team, but athletes with no Friday classes might not miss anything. Members of the Council suggested that we examine the actual schedule of athletes from the Spring 2002 semester to see how many class days were actually missed because of team schedules. The Council delayed decisions on the Spring 2003 schedules pending the review of that information. However, the Council did approve the spring men's basketball schedule, which included 15 and a half missed class days, in order to allow that schedule to go to press. One member of the Council raised questions about the funding and use policies at the Karsten Creek Golf Course. The Council will discuss this at a later meeting.

Emeriti Association — Larry Jones

The Emeriti Association had their first officers meeting and First Friday Dinner meeting for the 2002-2003 school year last week. At the First Friday Dinner meeting, with 75 in attendance, an update was received on the planned Alumni Association building. Their first General Membership meeting is Sept. 11 at Gallagher/Iba and their speaker will be Dr. Harry Birdwell. Discussions on a Creative Retirement Center are moving forward but have moved away from a working relationship with the Stillwater Medical Center and Greystone Corp. out of Dallas. More specific information on the direction the project appears to be going will be presented at a later meeting. They had their First Friday Dinner meetings through the summer, but no business meetings, so there were not many activities to report on at the present time. Dr. Jones added that on behalf of the 500 plus members of the OSU Emeriti Association, he wanted to wish Dr. and Mrs. Halligan the very best as they look toward retirement and he just happened to have an application form for membership in the Emeriti Association with him.

Staff Advisory Council — Duane Hunt

The Staff Advisory Council has put together the Distinguished Service Award Selection Committee and nominations are being accepted until October 3, 2002. Faculty members are encouraged to participate in the nomination process. The recipients of the award will be recognized in the SU Little Theater on November 7, 2002 at 10:00 a.m. Call Duane Hunt at x45371 for forms. SAC has decided to separate the Staff Appreciation Day and the Awards Program. The Appreciation Day will be held in April.

OLD BUSINESS:**Update Regarding Retirement Lawsuit — Chuck Edgley**

Edgley reported that after a meeting with the administration about the retirement issue on July the 25th the regents contacted FC to indicate that the faculty should begin to communicate information about the situation to the regents directly rather than the faculty communicating with the administration about the issue. On July 29th the officers of FC met with Judge Joseph Morris, who is a distinguished former dean of the Tulsa University Law School. Edgley, Moder and Lawry have also since met with Judge Morris to convey further information. The lawyers for the class have requested a time on the court docket in order to certify the class. Henderson asked if all the members of the class must be identified at this time in the court documents. Edgley responded that the class is to be certified with as complete a membership list as possible, then once the certification occurs other members of the class can be identified and added to the set. Lionel Raff will continue to update the faculty on this issue through his listserv messages. President Halligan added that Tommy Beavers has been back to campus to visit about the OTRS issues associated with the situation.

Update on Presidential Search Committee — Ed Lawry

Lawry reported that the search committee and the steering committee of the search committee have not been highly communicative with the faculty. Lawry indicated to the regents several weeks ago that he would like to have open forums and other events to provide situations to ask good questions of the candidates in order to provide an in-depth response to the regents on their candidate choices. He suggested to Doug Wilson that we were interested in these activities and we want some response to indicate the regents' willingness for us to participate in this way. Thus far the regents have not responded. Lawry has indicated in his listserv messages that he was worried about the speed at which this search is going forward. He noted that after having nominated someone and having received the letter sent to nominees that the September 30 date is quite firm to receive credentials back from nominees. Lawry has sent nomination forms to all faculty and encourages them to nominate high-quality candidates immediately. Lawry noted that it is imperative that we have a good pool of candidates to be able to produce three to five truly worthwhile candidates. Lawry concluded by saying that even though he had not had direct verification from the regents about the open forums and other faculty involved events with the presidential candidates it was his understanding at this time that such events were likely to occur. Lawry indicated that everyone was interested in the process proceeding at a rapid rate if in fact the end result was an excellent president. Natalie Watkins indicated that the nomination form and the criteria were on the main page website for the University available at PIO.okstate.edu. Chuck Edgley, who is a member of the presidential search committee, reiterated that it was essential that people nominate good candidates immediately. Lawry stated that it was his understanding that an important function of the search committee was to solicit the nominations of good candidates from the various groups involved. To date there has been no public solicitation of candidates from the search committee process.

NEW BUSINESS:**Faculty Awards — Ed Lawry**

Dr. Lawry congratulated the following faculty members who were honored with Faculty Awards that were presented at the August 22, 2002, Fall Convocation. The award recipients are as follows:

Residence Hall Faculty Associate of the Year

C. Robert Davis, Associate Professor, School of Curriculum & Educational Leadership

Phoenix Award for Teaching

Doren A. Recker, Associate Professor, Graduate Advisor & Department Head, Philosophy

Regents Distinguished Teaching Awards

Louis B. Anella, Professor, Horticulture & Landscape Architecture

Rick L. Bartholomew, Associate Professor, Design, Housing & Merchandising

Jean M. d'Offay, Associate Professor, Veterinary Pathobiology

Mary N. Gade, Associate Professor, Economics & Legal Studies in Business

Lisa Lewis, Associate Professor, English

Kouider Mokhtari, Associate Professor, Curriculum & Educational Leadership

Doren A. Recker, Associate Professor, Philosophy

Marvin L. Stone, Professor, Biosystems & Agricultural Engineering

Merrick Award

David A. Carter, Assistant Professor, Finance

Sigma Xi Lectureship Award

Stephen McKeever, Associate Dean, Research, College of Arts & Sciences

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Outstanding Faculty Award

G. E. Selk, Professor, Animal Science

University Extension Faculty Excellence Award

Mark Rockley Professor, Chemistry

Newly Appointed Regents Professors

Brett Carver, Plant & Soil Sciences

Stanley Fox, Zoology

Barbara Stoecker, Nutritional Sciences

Advancia Corp. Award for Excellence in Distance Education

Camille DeYong, Assistant Professor, Industrial Engineering & Management

OSU Award of Excellence for Advisement

Jeff Beck, Assistant Professor, College of Human Environmental Sciences

Lynda Martin, Assistant Professor, College of Human Environmental Sciences

Eldon C. Nelson, Professor, College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources

Allen Schuermann, Professor, College of Engineering, Architecture & Technology

Vernon Scott, Associate Professor, College of Arts & Sciences

President's Service Award

David Buchanan, Professor, College of Agricultural Sciences & Natural Resources

Eminent Faculty Award

John Mowan, Regents Professor, College of Business Administration

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Faculty Council is October 8, 2002.

Brenda Masters, Secretary