

FACULTY COUNCIL MINUTES  
250 Student Union  
October 14, 2003

President Schmidly called the meeting to order with the following members present: Arquitt, Austin, Bays, Bilbeisi, Binegar, Chaney, Damicone, Ebro, Fullerton, Gasem, Greiner, Henderson, Johannes, Lehenbauer, Martin, Moder, Mokhtari, Mott, Phillips, Raff, Redwood, Sirhandi, te Velde, Terry, and Weiser. Also present: T. Agnew, R. Beer, L. Bird, D. Bosserman, D. Buchanan, S. Buxton, C. Carter, G. Gates, S. Harp, B. Henley, H. Le, M. McCrory, E. Mitchell, E. Skaggs, J. St. John, M. Strathe, M. White, T. Wikle, B. Wyant. Absent: Gelfand, Lamphere-Jordan, Morgan, Murray, and Van Delinder.

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Moder moved acceptance of the September 9, 2003 Minutes. Mott seconded. The Minutes were approved. Moder moved the October 14, 2003 Agenda be amended to add a report from the Strategic Planning Committee Co-Chair, David Buchanan. Lehenbauer seconded. The Agenda was approved as amended.

**Introduction of New Faculty Secretary to Faculty Council — Carol Moder**

Moder introduced Birne Binegar as having won the recent Faculty Council election for faculty secretary. Council welcomed him with a round of applause.

**SPECIAL REPORT: Academic Appeals Board — Tom Wikle**

Background Information: The Academic Appeals Board (AAB) was created in January 1970 by the President of Oklahoma State University upon the recommendations of the Faculty Council and the Administrator's Council. The purpose of the AAB is to mediate between student and instructor without creating an air of judicial inequity. The AAB provides a forum in which honest differences of opinion can be discussed rationally and peacefully.<sup>1</sup>

- The AAB bases its decisions solely upon whether the grade was assigned fairly within the grading system adopted by the faculty member.
- The AAB does not grade papers or examinations or challenge the instructor's evaluation of oral participation in class.
- The AAB does not hear cases involving graduate oral examinations or theses.
- Decisions are not made on the basis of the academic soundness of the instructor's teaching methods or grading system.
- Decisions are not based on a general consideration of "good" or "bad" instruction. The Board does not have the academic competency in the various fields that are involved to do this; nor can the Board overcome the differences of opinion over soundness of teaching methods.

Two types of cases are heard:

1. grade appeal (student and instructor meet separately with the Board), and
2. appeal of academic dishonesty charge (student and instructor meet together with the Board).

**Academic misconduct:** an unintentional violation of rules or standards such as failure to observe proper conduct during examinations through ignorance, carelessness, etc. or not adhering to strict procedures for identification of sources in reports or essays. The burden of proof for charges of academic misconduct rests on the student.<sup>2</sup>

**Academic dishonesty:** an intentional misrepresentation or attempt to gain undeserved intellectual advantage such as by cheating, plagiarism, and unauthorized possession of exams. The instructor of record (i.e., the individual responsible for grade assignment) who has clear and convincing evidence that a student has engaged in academic misconduct or dishonesty has the authority to take appropriate action(s) according to the significance of the behavior. The burden of proof for charges of academic dishonesty is on the faculty member.

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.okstate.edu/acadaffr/general/academic\\_appeals\\_board.htm](http://www.okstate.edu/acadaffr/general/academic_appeals_board.htm)

<sup>2</sup> see OSU policies governing grade appeals (2-0821) and allegations of academic misconduct/dishonesty (2-0822).

Academic Appeals Board  
2002-03

Board Composition: 32 members: 20 faculty; 12 students (8 UG, 4G); Members serving at a board meeting: 5-7 (chair votes only in a tie)

Number of appeal cases heard by board: 32

Number of times a grade was changed: 8 (25% of cases)

Number of cases involving academic dishonesty: 12 (38% of cases)

Number of dishonesty charges reduced to misconduct: 2 (25% of dishonesty cases)

## Basis of Appeal:

	<u>Cases</u>	<u>Grade Changes</u>
Alleged bias against student	3	0
Accusation of plagiarism	11	1
Syllabus interpretation	11	6
other*	7	1

\* information withheld to maintain confidentiality

Wikle added that in 2001-2002 the Board heard 20 cases with 7 grades changed. He mentioned two specific cases. One concerned several students that were charged with plagiarism in one course who claimed dishonesty was too harsh a charge and the assignment they had plagiarized was only worth five percent of their course grade. The Board sustained the charge of academic dishonesty in that case. The second one was based on a grade that was assigned in the spring of 2002 where a student filed a grade appeal saying that he had held his term paper due to his instructor. The student was given the benefit of the doubt. The paper was submitted after the second deadline. Because the grade was being appealed, the student was allowed to retain athletic eligibility for the subsequent playing season which was the fall of 2002. The grade was sustained. The largest number of grade changes happened as a result of syllabi problems. In many instances the syllabi had been designed by graduate student instructors and by junior faculty. Johannes asked what was the penalty for a student lying to the Board. Wikle felt that if it could be proven then it should be given to the Student Conduct Office. Moder asked if the AAB was backlogged with cases and, if so, with how many. Wikle replied they usually run a semester to a year behind due to the fact that a faculty secretary has to meet and interview all parties, gather evidence and information, and meeting times are usually very hard to schedule. Johannes suggested emeriti faculty help with this procedure and Raff asked if they would be compensated. Wikle replied emeriti faculty were utilized and were compensated with a very small amount. Arquitt asked what happened if a senior appealed. Wikle said they were usually moved to the front. An example he gave was Veterinary Medicine where grades have to be turned in for students to move on to the next year and those are accelerated. Johannes asked if that also applied to student athletes. Wikle replied he did not have an answer to that.

**SPECIAL REPORT: Strategic Planning — David Buchanan**

Strategic Planning appears to be progressing. We will know more tomorrow when the agency, area and unit Mission, Vision, Core Values and Goals are due. However, I have received quite a bit of input suggesting that many of the plans will be submitted on schedule. The Strategic Planning Committee is meeting on Friday to review the plans and Raj Basu, Mary Chicoine and I will continue the review next Tuesday. The intent is for the plans to be returned to the various sources soon after that review. The web site for the Strategic Planning process is in place. A link to it can be found at <http://system.okstate.edu/>. I hope that all members of the Council took the opportunity to read the letter prepared by John Mowen, Tony Confer and Brenda Masters which was published in the student newspaper. The committee asked them to write such a letter in order to answer some of the questions and concerns which were being expressed to members of the committee. The next published deadline of interest is November 28 (since during Thanksgiving break, try to target Nov 26 or Dec 1). This is when the agencies, areas and units should submit the plans with Objectives and Critical Success Factors included. Numerous

members of the administration, faculty and staff will also be asked to serve on the Task Forces. The Task Forces will examine the plans with one specific component (e.g., research, undergraduate teaching etc) in mind in order to assure that all plans provide sufficient attention to several cross-cutting issues. Moder asked if the plans being turned in on Oct. 15 would be returned with feedback before the next phase and Buchanan replied, "yes." Damicone mentioned the proposed reorganization in Agriculture. They had worked on vision and mission statements and then were told their department would be dissolved. He asked Buchanan if their strategic planning would be viewed as not essential or unimportant. Buchanan replied that he did not have an answer to that and it would have to come from the division administration. Schmidly added that he felt the Provost and Dean should provide some guidance as to whether the groups should go back now or wait until they are further along in that reorganization. It is the President's understanding that input is still being taken and the process should proceed as they are currently structured. The very earliest anything could be taken to the Board would be in December. Moder said this issue had been raised to her by a number of faculty members as a serious concern about faculty governance where initially people were being told their departments were being eliminated and there was no faculty input at all and since we are in the middle of a strategic plan it seems it is a very bad precedent if we are going to place any importance on faculty governance and she hopes that if the College of Agriculture is accepting input that it would be meaningful input and this would not be a negative case study of how not to reorganize your unit and how to ignore the input of faculty. President Schmidly said it had been explained to him that faculty input is being sought and would be listened to carefully and considerably. He continued that changes have been approved by the Board for Extension and the Experiment Station, i.e., early retirement programs have dealt with the necessity to reduce the budget, a number of county positions have been reduced to one-and-a-half and one of the district offices was closed. The last part of this is to look at the academic programs and that has not been presented fully to the Board yet. Henley asked Buchanan for a clarification on objectives and goals. Buchanan said a department might say they desire to increase their graduate enrollment by 10 percent and that would be an objective and then you would construct critical success factors around that as to what would need to happen in order for that to be achieved. Gasem asked Buchanan to give some feedback on the SWOT analyses of the system-wide agencies and the various colleges, or would they take the SWOT analyses at face value and just accept them? Buchanan replied if there are important elements from the various SWOT analyses which can inform other levels, they would be considered. On the other hand, the system committee probably should limit its commentary on specific SWOT analyses done by the various agencies, areas and units since they would be more aware of the specific nature of their situation. Moder was curious in regard to the nine cross-cutting issues in the task force and she was wondering if there was any thought on the part of the committee of trying to come up with a consistent set of goals across the Stillwater campus, for example, and then have people put their specific objectives under those broader goals and was the committee looking at something like that. Buchanan said those were being worked on at the meeting that they had to stop because of a tornado warning and there will be a group meeting Oct. 16 to try and complete that task. Those goals would be revised as the year goes along in order for units and department and college goals to be further refined and allow for corrections. Moder said she expected if you looked at the broader goals on a level of generality, most of the goals would be shared and if that is the case why aren't the goals general goals and the objectives specific to the college, programs, etc. Buchanan said this would be looked at. Raff asked in this first round would they evaluate or

tabulate. What criteria or standards will be used? Buchanan replied the first round would not have that level of specificity and the primary task of reviewing the goals is to examine as to whether everyone is "on the same page" so to speak and see if there are some of the same values that are coming out of a department or college that should be incorporated into the campus or system. In terms of the more specific objectives, he thinks the task force reviews will examine those closer.

**REPORT OF STATUS OF FACULTY COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS:  
President Schmidly, Provost, and Vice Presidents**

01-04-01-BUDG      ***Market-Driven Salary Increase to Tenured and Tenure-Track Faculty:***  
Administration will continue to look at faculty salary issues. Considering special award program in Fall 2003, and funding for salaries will be a legislative priority for next year.

[The President said a salary consultant would be on campus October 30 and this recommendation would be shown to that individual and they would have him run some analysis on what this recommendation means]

[The President also said an announcement would be sent via e-mail to all faculty and staff regarding a proposed \$500 one-time payment for full-time continuous regular faculty and staff that he will be asking the OSU/A&M Board of Regents to approve. Dr. Bosserman added these checks would be in a separate check distributed in late November sometime before Thanksgiving. President Schmidly stressed again this was pending Board approval. Raff asked if the \$500 would automatically be included in the W-2 forms and Bosserman replied it would be and mandatory taxes will come out of the initial \$500. The President also said a special \$300,000 faculty salary award program will be taken to the Board in October from a \$400,000 fund. The remaining \$100,000 left in the fund will be to deal with potential equity issues that might be uncovered as a result of the work of the salary consultant. Fullerton asked when decisions would be made on the \$300,000 merit increases and Schmidly replied they had already been made. Strathe added the criteria developed were distributed and input was received from department heads through their dean's and those awards have been made to 110 individuals that were identified. A portion of those were in the College of Veterinary Medicine which is a separate agency and those monies were found within the College itself and were over and above the \$300,000. The faculty receiving those awards were notified by their dean's that they were recommended and are contingent upon approval of the Board.]

02-12-04-RFB      ***Maternity/Family Leave Recommendation:*** Pending. A Big XII survey on leave policies was coordinated by Human Resources. The results of that survey have been received. This has been referred to the Flexible Benefits committee.

[Bosserman added that they are looking at OSU permitting up to five days of sick leave to be used as parental leave for the adoption of a child and also that these five days be made available to the fathers of new born

children. For the mother this leave falls under the Family Medical Leave Act and if the father requires additional time, a doctor's verification would be needed. They hope this recommendation will be finalized by the next Council meeting.]

03-02-04-RFB

***Change to the Employee Sick Leave Cap:*** Not accepted. A policy has been developed to track sick leave above the maximum. Possibility of a sick leave pool has been referred to the Flexible Benefits committee for review.

[Henderson asked what the harm was in letting sick leave accumulate past the 1600 hour cap. Bosserman replied the impact would be too great. The institution needs to be protected too and 1600 hours of sick leave plus maximum annual leave would take a person through a year. Henderson asked about the employee that uses all their sick leave by taking it a small amount at a time. They could possibility use a year's worth of leave unlike the employee that hardly ever uses sick leave and lets it accrue. Bosserman said if sick leave was being abused the supervisor needs to handle that situation and OSU has a policy regarding that. Lehenbauer wanted to confirm that records are still being maintained for the OTR retirement benefit and Bosserman said that was correct.]

03-02-06-EXEC

***Tulsa Bus Policy:*** Pending. An interim procedure on commuting to/from Tulsa on a "walk-up" and "space available" basis has been implemented. Consideration is also being given to providing a shuttle bus to OKC with possible Jan. 1 start up date.

[Bosserman added most buses were "maxed" out. Binegar asked if they were "maxed" out to the extent that they could no longer cover the people that have to go at certain times and Bosserman replied it is on a first-come first-served reservation basis. Johannes asked why this policy was still pending. Moder stated this recommendation was still pending because the original FC recommendation stated that faculty and staff who ride the busses from Stillwater to Tulsa or from Tulsa to Stillwater, in order to conduct University business, not be charged a fee for such transportation regardless of where you live. Bosserman asked Moder to give him the name of someone that could meet with him and Dr. Hess to go over specifically what the issue is.]

03-09-01-EXEC

***2003 Christmas Holiday Mandatory Leave Recommendation:*** Not accepted. University offices will be closed on December 22 and 23, and January 2, except for central services.

[Bosserman clarified this was an opportunity for employees to take three days of Annual Leave (mentioned above) so they will be able to have a full two weeks of time off. He emphasized again this decision had nothing to do with utilities. Critical university offices will be staffed as needed and some offices will be open. Voice Mail will also instruct people where they can go to a specific web site and pay on-line if need be. Or, if they have a specific question they can leave that question and a reply will be returned within 24 hours. They are working on a policy that addresses the holiday schedule for the next three years. Binegar asked if the Library

would be closed for the two week period and Bosserman replied he thought they have had some holiday hours in the past. Weiser said the Sept. FC Minutes reflected that the President had accepted this recommendation and Moder said the original recommendation stated “if the administration wishes to save utility costs by shutting down the university for two full weeks during the December/January break, the university should allow faculty and staff to take these days off as administrative leave rather than as mandatory annual leave” and the President said he would accept that. Bosserman stated this had changed and there will be three days of mandatory annual leave this holiday season.]

03-10-02-RFB

*Long Term Disability Policy (3-07500):* To President Schmidly

03-10-03-EXEC

*Program Curricular Requirements:* To President Schmidly

In another matter Johannes asked Bosserman why faculty started in August and were not paid until the end of September. Bosserman replied that if you are in the system and that is an issue they will pay you. Moder told Johannes this issue would be referred to a committee to be brought forward at a later time.

## **REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:**

### **ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICIES — Andrea Arquitt**

Arquitt reported the AS&P committee is continuing their work from last year examining Academic Dishonesty policies from the Big 12 schools and will revise the current document last officially approved in 1985. They are working on a Posthumous Degree Awarding Policy and should bring that to FC next month for recommendation to the President. They continue to be concerned with transfer GPA standards and are considering recommending changes closer to other Big 12 schools. They are also working on clarifications to the Academic Reprieve Policy as well as Academic Retention Standards. They will be bringing a new policy on Retention of Grade Records to FC. This policy will address concerns uncovered during the recent audit of the Registrar’s Office.

### **ATHLETICS**

Moder distributed a report from Don Murray, Athletics Committee Chair, who was not able to be in attendance. This report said that Kent Bunker, Director, Campus Recreation stated that the wheelchair basketball program which was organized about four years ago and coached by Ken Lee (deceased) is scheduled to play its Collegiate Conference games this year with two volunteer coaches. A search process was started to hire a new coach; however, budget constraints resulted in the search process being stopped. There are no plans to begin the search process again. Currently, the team is being funded through campus recreational funding and this is not a sufficient funding level. Other sources of funding are being sought including working with the OSU Foundation and through some fund raising events. There was also a detailed list of all of the OSU intramural sports. Approximately 70 to 80% of the male students and 40 to 45% of the female students are involved with intramural sports.

**BUDGET**

Due to Scott Gelfand's (committee chair) absence, Jami Fullerton (committee member) reported the committee had meet the week before and discussed the University Budget Committee; however, the thrust of their discussion was the \$500 stipend and the faculty salary increases mentioned earlier by the President. Moder added Gelfand had mentioned the committee is planning to develop a survey (examples – salary increases, benefits, retirement, graduate student stipends, etc.) to send to faculty concerning priorities for future budgeting to be used when/if there is money available.

**LONG-RANGE PLANNING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY — Mark Weiser**

Weiser said the Academic Computing Advisory Committee was dissolved when the Long-Range Planning and Information Technology Committee was formed as a part of Faculty Council as this raised the level of input into the process. In the last six months several committees have been formed within the Information Technology Division and those include an IT Advisory Committee, the System Security Committee and the IT Executive Steering Committee. The Faculty Council LRP&IT has discussed some concern as to whether they have lost some of their input into the process. ACAC and the LRP&IT committees dealt with many of the issues that the objectives of these new committees now deal with. They will be meeting with Dr. Wiggins in the next two weeks and address this issue and find out how Faculty Council and specifically the LRP&IT committee play into this process before these documents are put into policy. Moder commented that Wiggins is to talk to Faculty Council in November about the reorganization of the IT unit and she suggested questions be posed to him at that time.

**RETIREMENT AND FRINGE BENEFITS — Sally Henderson**

Henderson presented the following recommendation:

**Long Term Disability Policy (3-0750) Recommendation**

**The Faculty Council Recommends to President Schmidly that:** the interim long term disability policy currently in use (3-0750), be accepted for adoption.

**Rationale:**

- The interim policy has been in use since January 1, 2002.
- This policy is the result of the combination of applicable portions of Policy and Procedures (3-0705) and (3-0725): Attendance and Leave for Classified Staff and Administrative/Professional Staff, respectively.

Henderson explained these two portions of the original policies were brought together to form a third policy which is the current disability policy now in use; however, it is considered interim because it has been in use since January 1, 2002 and she assumes one of the reasons is because it has not been accepted by Faculty Council. Martin asked if this was a System policy and, if so, would this include OSU/Okmulgee, OSU/OKC, etc., and Henderson replied, "yes." Johannes asked if FC approved the recommendation and administration approved it what would happen after that. Bosserman replied it would become policy. Schmidly asked for a vote and the recommendation passed unanimously.

The second recommendation presented by Henderson was titled **Flexible Compensation Benefits Committee: Cafeteria Plan Recommendations (Spring 2002)**

After a lengthy discussion this recommendation was "Tabled."



**REPORTS OF LIAISON REPRESENTATIVES:****Student Government Association — Huy Le and Joe St. John**

Huy thanked Dr. Wiggins for bringing the Microsoft campus agreement to students on-line. There have been over 9,000 downloads and all the students are benefiting from it. Huy announced SGA is helping raise money for Ashley Guthrie, an OSU student in need of a double lung transplant. The cost of the transplant will amount to over \$150,000. An event will be held Saturday afternoon, after Homecoming, at IHOP restaurant and their goal is to raise \$10,000. The SGA Freshman's Representative Council is well underway and doing some great things. They are working very hard on Homecoming and are planning many events. Joe said SGA is working on two items that were raised by faculty and staff. One is the discrimination policy. They are still doing research on the actual policy and will provide input as they feel there should be a sexual orientation clause in the policy. Another matter is the "Whistle Blower" protection clause. Although they feel there is an "umbrella of protection" in most State agencies they feel there should be an actual policy in writing. Joe said for Faculty Council to be sure and notify SGA if there is anything they should know regarding these two issues. Both issues should be brought to SGA this week.

**Staff Advisory Council — Brenda Wyant**

The Staff Advisory Council has been very busy. One of the events they are involved in is Can OU. You should be seeing orange flyers in your areas any time. This goes along with the Harvest II Food Drive and can be a very fun event and very challenging between colleges or departments. The traveling trophy this year will be a football signed by Les Miles that will stay in the winning area for a year of bragging rights. The food that is collected from OSU will benefit the community and be made available at the storehouse. The storehouse is a small house on Washington Street that warehouses large quantities of food to feed the hungry of our community. It is known to feed many people including OSU students and staff. Wyant encouraged the OSU community to get the word out so all could be involved in the food drive. Working together a real difference can be made in our community. If your department gets a lot of food gathered, call SAC and they will have it picked up. The food drive ends Oct. 31 at the Chi-O Clock. All food will be weighed to establish the winners. Another event planned is a fund-raiser to benefit the SAC Scholarship Fund. They will be selling hot chocolate and baked goods at the Homecoming Walkaround. Wyant again urged all to spread the word to go to the Walkaround and warm up with hot chocolate and homemade baked goods. Funds can be donated to the SAC Scholarship Fund through the secretary of Staff Advisory Council or through the OSU Foundation. SAC is also preparing for Staff Award's Day. It is November 6th in the Student Union Little Theatre at 10:00. They are pleased to announce that the Distinguished Service Award winners will each be receiving a \$750 check this year, which has been raised from \$500 in past years. Those winners and others will be recognized. Service pins will also be available for pickup. The Council would ask that you take the time to visit the SAC website, find your employees who are receiving their pins and encourage them to be there to receive them. The pins are given out to employees completing 5 year increments by July 1. SAC would also ask that you encourage your staff (whether they are pin recipients or not) to attend the ceremony to celebrate that day. Everyone is invited. Numerous recommendations have gone forth from the Council, such as Christmas Leave, Sexual Orientation and the "Whistleblower" Policy. The Policies, Benefit and Budget Committee is continuing to draft a new plan for the

Performance Evaluation Process and the Rules and Procedures Committee is looking at restructuring the committee to go along with the restructuring of the OSU divisions.

### **Emeriti Association — Ron Beer**

The OSU Emeriti Association has taken a big step forward toward the creation of the “White Woods Retirement Campus”. The Emeriti Council has authorized a request of the OSU Foundation to release up to \$18,000.00 from the Emeriti account to enter into a “letter of engagement” with Greystone, Inc. of Irving, TX. Greystone, Inc. will complete the first two phases (in the course of the next three months) of a four phase process in creating a development plan. The “point of no return” will be at the completion of phase four, probably six to nine months from now. It is suggested they can support 69 independent living units, 52 assisted living units and 30 full-care nursing beds. The first of four Emeriti Newsletters has been mailed and the Emeriti Directory should be published within the next two weeks. Beer thanked Strathe and Wiggins for their efforts in helping the members of the Emeriti Association in obtaining University ID cards with the words “Emeriti Association” imprinted on the front in order to confirm their eligibility for various benefits. Beer added someone had suggested Emeriti could help in collecting information and mentioned to Strathe this might be added to the survey to department heads and deans on how Emeriti could provide services to various elements of the campus. Beer, on behalf of the Emeriti Association, wanted to express high commendations to the students for collecting 33,000 plus cans of foods to distribute to some 10 pantries.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

#### **Retirement Lawsuit Update — Lionel Raff**

Raff said most faculty knew from what he reported last month, and read in Retirement Newsletter #11, that the problem of the going forward portion of the class action lawsuit had been fixed by the action of President Schmidly and his administration. And, as of July 1, 2003, all faculty and staff who were employed by OSU prior to the change to the 7-11 program in 1993 are now given the option of returning to the prior retirement program or taking the straight 11% of the maximum possible retirement benefit and that only leaves the recompense portion of the lawsuit to be negotiated or settled in court. On Oct. 10 the President met with the faculty in Arts & Sciences, gave a short presentation, and the rest of the meeting was open to questions from the audience. One faculty member inquired regarding the attitude of the administration toward providing compensation for the 10 years under the 7-11 program and the President said it had been characterized in the literature as this situation being one in which the Campbell administration confiscated the TIAA-CREF program, forced everyone into a 7-11 program that was detrimental to their retirement health, covered it up with a fraudulent retirement benefits formula and then the Halligan and now the Schmidly administration retains those benefits and his comment was, “I don’t want them – you can have them back if somebody can just tell me where I can get \$19.3 million dollars.” Raff felt that was a very important statement because the President acknowledges the fact that if the money can be found the present administration would like it returned. Raff continued that earlier in the day he, the FC Chair, Carol Moder, Past Chair, Chuck Edgley, and Secretary, Birne Binegar, had met with Vice President Bosserman to discuss this issue and the result of that meeting, according to Bosserman, is that the administration has a very deep interest in settling this problem and it is just a matter of how it can be done without destroying the financial integrity of the university and what can be provided in the way of

compensation. Another meeting will be held in about one month where further discussions will take place. Raff distributed a chart titled "Difference in OSU Retirements Contributions" and "Dollars Lost by OSU Employees per Year." If you would like to receive a copy of this chart contact Raff at [lionelraff@hotmail.com](mailto:lionelraff@hotmail.com). Raff stated that the damage done to the staff far exceeded the damages to the faculty when you take into account the fact that they make far lower salaries than faculty. He placed the chart on an overhead and showed the break-even line and said if you made over \$141,000 you were not hurt and the less you made the more you were hurt. Example – if you were a secretary and made approximately \$20,000 you might have lost approximately \$1200-\$1300 per year. Raff called TIAA-CREF and asked what the average appreciation rate was for all the funds from 1993 to 2003 and since they keep a running 10-year average they gave him the answer immediately and it was 7.36 percent. The table took the \$1200 loss each year, compounded it at 7.36% for a total loss of around \$19,000. He continued they are hoping an amortization schedule might be worked out where payments could be made and said he had received e-mails from retired faculty that said they would be dead before they could be compensated and Raff has told them that retired faculty and staff would be a priority to receive any compensation first since they had already been damaged and feels this is the morally right thing to do and hopes some kind of agreement can be reached in the next few months. Schmidly ended by saying he hoped a way could be found to put this matter behind everyone so this issue could be solved once and for all. He added they will work with faculty and staff, to the extent the Board allows them, to work in that direction.

In another matter of Old Business, Moder said the NOC Task Force had meet one final time with Provost Strathe and a number of other administrators and came to an agreement in regard to a revised Memorandum of Understanding that everyone was comfortable with at the present time, and it will be taken to the Board as an information item next month. Moder thanked administration for their cooperation on this issue.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

Moder presented a recommendation from the Faculty Council Executive Committee. Binengar moved and Damicone seconded.

This recommendation comes in response to a request from administration that programs look at bringing down their degree programs to 120-121 hours. A number of faculty members have suggested that the criteria passed down to them by their administrators or deans has suggested that it would be very difficult for faculty to justify anything above 120 or 121 hours so there is a sense in which the administration is dictating the requirements of a curriculum.

#### **Title — Program Curricular Requirements**

**The Faculty Council Recommends to President Schmidly that:** no arbitrary maximum number of credit hours be set for undergraduate degree programs. Such curricular matters are the province of the faculty, not the administration. The credit hours and courses required in any degree program will be set by the faculty of that program.

St. John (SGA) asked what the maximum number of credit hours was and Moder replied it varied quite a lot. Some programs have as many as the upper 30s and 40s in many cases because

of different accrediting agencies. Johannes said in Engineering they were coerced to go down to 128 from 136 and added they had documented evidence their students have done worse on the licensing exams since that change has been made. They were comfortable with the 128 because that is pretty much standard across the United States. They will not go down to 120 because they will run into accreditation problems and also take away all flexibility of the students. Fullerton added the same thing would happen in Journalism. Raff said a lot of accreditation agencies are in the business of setting minimums. That is, if you fall below a certain number of credit hours your program is so pathetic you flunk. It doesn't qualify. It does not say if you meet our minimum standards and we give you accreditation then you have a good program. They are in the business of setting lower-limit standards below which you do not get accredited. They have to rely on the faculty of various universities to build on that to produce a quality program. Moder said it had also been suggested in a lot of programs the way that they would get to this number would be to eliminate virtually all electives which is particular not a good idea and might also affect transfer students. Strathe said there had been no administrative mandate to lower the number of hours from higher to lower and there is certainly not an arbitrary maximum. They have been trying to look at four, five and six year graduation rates and they are all substantially lower than they believe they should be and are looking at a whole array of factors about why that happens. How many students have to work, how many hours they are taking, how many on-line courses are being offered, what does the class schedule look like in regard to classes given at unusual times, etc. One of the things that impacts graduation rates is the number of hours required in a particular degree program. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education define a baccalaureate degree as a minimum of 120 hours excluding physical education. They also have a whole set of other things, of which we agree with, about upper division work, i.e., how much of it is taken on the campus, how much is general education, etc. As part of this whole array of initiatives to look at can we improve our graduation rate Strathe had simply ask the departments and the deans to look at their degree programs and to look at them particularly with regard to prerequisites and what are we doing. Arquitt begged to differ with Strathe on this issue and said it might not be a written policy but what has come down to the department is, "thou shalt not go beyond 120 hours." She said it may not be in writing but she had heard it verbally stated and it is a mandate. Johannes said they had been told the same thing in Engineering. St. John said one of the concerns the students have is that most scholarships run out after four years. Johannes said it is required by the State Regents that all programs be designed so students will be able to graduate in four years but it does not say how many hours they must take a semester. The average OSU student takes 14 hours per semester and they can not graduate in four years that way. Raff felt a meeting between Strathe and the deans would be appropriate because there seemed to be a lack of communication between what the deans think the objective is and what the Provost said her objective is. He felt the Drop Policy should be changed and then the graduation rates would go up. Right now, students take courses, wait 8 or 9 weeks, look at their grade, say "I'm making a 'C', I think I'll just drop the course", and then all that time and all that tuition is just gone away. Mitchell said one of the things the Diversity Board has been looking for the last several years are grades in regard to diversity and curriculum and what they have found is that electives are not truly electives but controlled electives. What do we want in terms of an educated student. Things have changed in 150 years in terms of education. If you work in a global society students are going out and they have this general education and if you cut back this is where you are going to cut. Mitchell added he is very concerned in regard to dropping hours because of that one point. Gasem said he appreciated

what the Provost had said. He reminded all that as parents paying tuition or students who are anxious to get into the marketplace, for an engineer to be delayed a year is a \$50,000 opportunity cost. As such, we should not be an impediment for them finishing in due time; however, when they finish and go into the market, faculty would like for them to be well prepared and capable of fending for themselves. So, it is both sides that have to battle the issues, and they should study how to enhance the graduation rates so long as faculty privileges are retained in setting the appropriate curriculum. Gasem continued that all are cognizant of the fact that time is an issue. He feels it is a balancing act and the dialogue must be continued, and it can not be said it is going to be 120 or 130 hours. Every program has its own attributes and has to be respected. Moder asked for a vote and the recommendation passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:20 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Faculty Council is November 11, 2003 and mark your calendars for the Fall General Meeting to be held November 18, 3:00 p.m., Student Union Theatre.

Respectfully submitted,  
Birne Binigar, Secretary