Commission on Classified Staff Affairs
April 28, 2005
10:30 am – 12:00 noon
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Present: Judy Alford, Jean Brickey, Katherine Cachaper, Walter Hartman, Rachel Holloway, Teresa Lyons, Phyllis Olinger, Diane Reaver, Becky Sайлors, Charles Stott, Linda Woodard

Absent: Brandon Bull, Trudy Epperly, Ken Miller, Kellie Morris, Shelly Nichols-Richardson, Gerhardt Schurig, Jon Wooge

Guests: Eileen Hitchingham, Dean of Libraries; Doug Martin, Personnel Services

Chair Jean Brickey called the meeting to order at 10:30 AM. The agenda was approved as presented.

1. Appointments to Employee Benefits Committee and CEOD for 2005-2006

The individuals appointed at the last meeting are not eligible to serve for the coming year. Phyllis Olinger volunteered to serve on the Employee Benefits Committee, subject to the approval of her supervisor. An appointee to the Commission on Equal Opportunity and Diversity will be selected in the fall.

2. University Libraries Reports – Eileen Hitchingham

Dean Hitchingham gave an overview of library operations and plans for the future to assist the university with its goal of becoming a top 30 research institution. This summer the library will implement a new cataloging system for Addison. This new cataloging system will have many enhancements. The Library will no longer use VTLS as its cataloging system. Renovations are in progress in Newman Library. Plans include: centralizing Special Collections on the first floor; new study rooms have been added to the 4th floor and there will be a study room at the entry of the bridge from Torgersen to Newman Library; reopening the old entries facing the Drill Field and the Mall and consolidating services in that area; covering the center open area between the original building and the addition to create a center court; adding a coffee shop outside of the renovated Special Collections; and, building a storage facility beside Newman for quicker access to stored materials. The library has many challenges due to limited funding and the ever increasing costs of publications, both hard copy and electronic. Approximately 49 percent of the library’s budget goes to collections, which is higher than average, while the library staff is smaller than average. In order to meet the vision of major research university, the library must build and sustain collections, preserve research for future generations, and provide up-to-date technologies.

3. Computer Access for All Employees Update – Linda Woodard

Personnel Services is continuing to work with Facilities and Student Affairs on providing locations for computers. The project is going very well with the colleges and those
hosting computer stations. Hopefully, additional employee training will begin in the summer. A progress update will be provided in the fall.

4. Reports

- **Benefits Committee – Becky Saylors**
  A proposal for retirement benefits for part-time faculty has been completed and will be presented to the Board of Visitors. This year’s legislative session produced no changes in retirement benefits. However, the state will increase health care premiums. The Higher Education Restructuring Act provides that the University would remain under the state’s health insurance plan. Topics also considered by the Benefits Committee included options for providing short-term disability for grant-funded employees and feasibility of including summer pay in employee compensation when calculating retirement benefits.

- **Staff Senate – Jean Brickey**
  Elections have been completed. Jean Brickey will serve as President. Judy Alford will serve as Vice President and will chair this commission. Sue Ellen Crocker, Carolyne Dudding, Wyatt Sasser, and Walter Hartman were appointed to serve on this commission in the coming year.

- **CEOD – Jean Brickey**
  The commission discussed the anti-harassment policy, and recommended that the term “sex” be changed to “gender.” The legal perspective is the same; however, the trend in recent years has been toward using “gender.” The policy will cover all persons teaching courses, including graduate students and classified staff. David Travis is working on developing university training.


The final restructuring bill has significant changes from the bill as originally presented to the legislature. The university will continue to work with UVA and William & Mary on management agreements to be presented to the General Assembly next year. The final version of the bill eliminated any flexibility in certain benefits; the University would continue to participate in the state’s health insurance plan and workers’ compensation program, and would not currently have the ability to offer the defined contribution plan to classified employees. The bill also stipulated that current classified employees will have the option to remain in the state’s personnel system or convert to a university human resource system. The decision to change to the new system is irrevocable, but employees will be given the option at a minimum of every two years, but possibly more frequently. This will prove challenging to supervisors who may have employees working under different systems. No changes will be implemented until July 1, 2006, after the management agreements have been approved. Comparisons of a university human resources system with the state’s classified personnel system would be provided to ensure that employees were well informed of the changes and impacts before having the opportunity to move to a different personnel system. Restructuring updates will
continue to be posted on the university’s restructuring web site, http://www.vt.edu/restructuring/.

6. Benefits Updates – Doug Martin

Open enrollment for health care is in progress. The deadline for employees to make changes to their health care plans, and begin or renew flexible spending plans is May 16.

The management and oversight of optional retirement plans (ORPs) will begin July 1, 2005. Virginia Tech and some other universities opted out from VRS oversight of the faculty defined contribution retirement plans. As of July 1, 2005, the university will have the responsibility for managing the plans, making prudent investments, and contracting with approved vendors. The authorized vendors will be TIAA-CREF, Valic, and Fidelity. Faculty who are currently enrolled in other plans will be required to put any new funds into one of these three plans. However, employees will not be required to move any contributions already invested with other vendors prior to July 1, 2005. Personnel Services will work with employees to make any necessary changes. Information sessions will be held in May and June.

7. Other Business

- There is no new information as yet on the raises scheduled for November. It will probably be late May or June before Personnel Services receives any information from the Department of Human Resource Management.
- The next meeting will be May 26. Jean Brickey will contact Randy Marchany about doing a presentation on computer security.
- The McComas Leadership Seminar is scheduled for May 5. The speaker will be Kyle Hauth, and this year’s theme is “Dancing with Jellyfish.”

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:55 AM.