

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
STAFF SENATE
1810 Litton Reaves
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
Thursday, January 21, 1999

Senators Present: Jack Davis, Judy Fielder, Janet Francis, Cindy Harrison, Delbert Jones, Terry Lawrence, Bruce Lytton, Milko Maykowskyj, Ben Poe, Tina Shanklin, Joy Thorn, Janet Town, Virginia Viers, Debbie Wilson, Jon Wooge.

Alternates: Linda Haney

Excused: Spencer Allen, Reba Crawford, Mary Pennington, Nancy Phillips, Peggy Rasnick, Kathryn Young.

Visitors: Tom McAvoy, Cathy Hansen, Aaron Hill, Susan Pivano, Teresa Quesinberry, Melissa Vidmar.

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 Noon

Minutes of the November 19, 1998 meeting were approved.

Staff Senate Standing Committee Reports –

Communications Committee - Cindy Harrison asked Terry Lawrence to report on the Staff Senate brochure. Terry reported that a brochure has been designed but it is still in rough form. He shared a copy with those present. The Committee will continue working on it. Cindy also submitted a written report showing that the Communications Committee was also working on a Staff Senate Logo, Staff Senate Web Page, getting a trademark for the Staff Senate Logo, and designing a Staff Senate newsletter. She also requested and received a copy of President Torgersen's letter of support for Staff Senate on the official President's letterhead. It was originally distributed via email.

Elections and Nominations Committee – Chairman Jon Wooge reported the mailing to all classified staff to submit their names if interested in a vacancy on the University Council, Commissions or Committees has been mailed. He explained those names submitted would go into a database to draw upon in case of a vacancy in one of those seats for elections in May. The Committee's goal was to reach every classified staff member on campus. There was an article in Spectrum with information on this. Cindy Harrison asked what a Senator should do about his/her slot if he/she is not sure that he/she is going to be re-elected. Jon instructed the Senators to go ahead and submit their names to the Elections and Nominations Committee. He also stated that Alternates cannot fill "Senator" slots on the C/C/C's but can fill the "Classified Staff" appointed seats.

McComas Committee - Judy Fielder, past Chairman, reported the committee will organize soon. They need to decide on the theme for this year's program. The committee will need to meet several times in the next few months.

VGEA - Cindy Harrison reported on three pending bills in General Assembly affecting staff.

1. An 8% increase in health insurance rates effective 7/1/99.
2. A 2.25% pay increase for all classified staff effective 7/1/99, and 4% pay increase effective 11/25/99.
3. "30 Years and Out" - State employees reaches 30 years of full-time participation in the Virginia Retirement System may retire with full benefits no matter what age.

Cindy instructed everyone to write his/her representative to let him/her know how he/she feel about these bills.

University Council/Committee/Commission Reports –

Commission on Classified Staff Affairs – Cindy Harrison, Chairman, reported on the status of the proposed reduced tuition for spouses and dependents of Virginia Tech full time faculty and staff. Cindy introduced Terry Lawrence and asked him to report on this proposal. Terry reported that four or five years ago an ad hoc committee under CCSA was organized with Tom McAvoy heading the group. The initial step taken was to gather information from peer institutions, and meeting with

strategic groups and individuals across the campus. At that time Va. Tech. administrators questioned the amount of interest there would be in the program. Faculty Senate gave their word of support, but it was obvious that more faculty members had to be involved. Through the persistence of some of the committee members, this proposal is moving forward. The route taken to set up a reduced tuition for spouses and dependents program is through private funding. This Committee met with the University Development Office in November to develop a plan of action to organize this program and become a part of their list of potential recipients from next years fund drive. Dr. Jim Claus, President of CALS sent out a survey to their faculty and staff to get a feeling about the amount of interest. The survey showed 90% in favor of the initiative. The survey showed 64% said they would be willing to donate to a fund such as this. Cindy, along with other commission chairs, met with President Torgersen to present their agendas. Dr. Torgersen upon learning of the work of the committee encouraged them to proceed. The committee met with Carol Nickerson and Linda Woodard. Carol pointed out a number of potential hurdles that would have to be considered to make the program a long- term success. The Committee will continue working on this issue.

The Minutes of this Commission will be sent out electronically.

Employee Benefits Committee – Chairman Virginia Viers reported there is a 15 state alliance program in which the state of Virginia employees or dependents that cannot get a program of study offered in the state of Virginia may go to one of these 15 states that should offer it and pay “in-state” tuition. She also encouraged all employees to attend one of Doug Martin’s sessions on the new sick leave program.

Old Business:

Judy Fielder told Senate that if anyone wants a Staff Senate T-shirt to contact her.

New Business:

Cindy Harrison spoke about CPS. She encouraged Staff Senate to have Brenda Husser to attend a Staff Senate meeting and report on this program.

Meeting Adjourned at 12:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted:

Joy Thorn, Secretary