Present:  Beeler, Blackburn, Brooks, Collins, Condit, Ford, Gedon, Hunt, Livsey, Miller, Peters, Phelan, Rogers, Sanmann, Tanner, Thomason, Welliver, Whitmore, Wyant

Absent:  Barber, Bunney, Carpenter, Dark, DeBock, Estus, Garner, Hoffman, West

Sheryl called the meeting to order and Lisa Collins called roll.

Sheryl asked for the approval of the November minutes. There were corrections to the minutes, Whitmore attended and Brooks was absent last meeting. The minutes were then approved by a voice vote.

There were two changes to the Agenda. Under New Business, Faculty Awards clarification was deleted and constituent concern was added. The agenda was voted on and approved by voice vote.

E-Group Update – Dr. Marlene Strathe-Provost and Senior Vice President

Planning units have continued to finish their strategic plans. March 2004 is the deadline for strategies to be compiled and the end of May is the deadline for administration to have a final document.

NOC was initiated this fall and has been very successful. Remodeling of additional space for more classes has been started. 550 students enrolled, 500 were OSU students taking remedial classes in mathematics and science. About 50 of those
students were NOC only, non traditional and Stillwater residents. 29 students dropped out and about half of those 29 had never attended classes. More classes are being offered in the spring. Currently there are 500 students enrolled for Spring 2004. The hope is to have these students succeed at NOC and then transfer to OSU. Admission standards are being reviewed for freshman and transfer students to ensure academic success.

    Searches for Deans in some academic units has begun, the hope is to have these positions filled my March 15, 2004.
    The budget development process has begun. Faculty and staff raises are of the highest priority for the president. 82 faculty positions are still vacant and filling those positions is also important.
    Dr. Strathe mentioned the retirement lawsuit. The Board of Regents voted against negotiations stating that it is not a valid legal claim and have asked the Assistant Attorney General to dismiss the case. Retirement benefits are still a priority to President Schmidly. The plaintiffs may still pursue their claim in the courts.

Report of University Committees

Meet and Greet – Mary Chicoine

    As of December 1, strategic plans were due from the departments. 283 integrated strategic plans were received. As a part of the planning process, the Stillwater Steering Committee members had taken all the area plans to make a Stillwater plan. This is just a framework. The final deadline is not until May. One of the next steps in the process is to organize 11 task forces to review every plan based on what the assignment is for that task force. The task force will consist of 15-20 people. The idea is to have peers reviewing these plans to ensure they are meeting that plans criteria. This also helps everyone learn what is going on across the campuses and ideas can be shared.
    Mary’s role here at OSU is to facilitate the planning process. Keeping everyone on task and ensuring those deadlines are met. The task forces will meet in January, the plans returned to the units in February with suggestions or corrections. The idea is to have the plans represent very clearly the institution.
    The strategic plan is a 5-year plan and Mary does not see the strategic plans as a determination for departmental reorganization.

Flexible Compensation Benefits Committee – No report

Faculty Council Report – Duane Hunt

    The Faculty Council convened on December 9, 2003 for their monthly meeting. Following roll call, the Council received a strategic planning update from Dr. Dave Buchanan similar to the update he provided to SAC in November. Marilyn Middlebrook gave a presentation on Academic Services for Student Athletes and Recent Academic Performance.
    Recommendations on the following topics were presented, discussed and passed by the Faculty Council: (1) faculty responsibility for curricula - Faculty has the
responsibility and obligation to ensure curricula meets high standards of performance expected of a comprehensive university and that no administrative officer of OSU arbitrarily impose limits on the number of credit hours in any degree program; (2) unit-based course fee structure - Faculty Council wants to retain the current structure of itemized unit-based fees for courses; and (3) sabbatical leave policy - Faculty Council wants serious consideration given to sabbaticals that do not require extended time away from campus, OSU contributions to OTRS at the level of full-time salary of faculty who are taking a reduction in salary for their sabbaticals; changes in the way royalties are treated for all copyrighted materials produced by faculty while on sabbaticals; immediate and high priority action to solicit funds for the endowment to supplement sabbaticals so as to avoid financial hardship for faculty taking sabbaticals; that a report on sabbaticals be produced and disseminated to the general university, the Regents, and to the legislature and general public; and require the Deans to report on the robustness of the sabbatical activity in their colleges annually.

Anyone interested in having copies of these resolutions or Marilyn’s slides, contact Duane at 744-5371.

Branch Campus Reports

OSU-COM – No Report
OSU-Okmulgee - No Report
OSU-OKC – No Report
OSU-Tulsa – No Report

Report of Standing Committees

Awards & Recognition – Trisha Gedon

There are still service pins that have not been picked up from Whitehurst. Trisha will have a flyer sent around for SAC members to post requesting those that have not received their pins to do so.

The A&R Committee agreed in our last meeting to change the cut off date for service pin eligibility. Instead of going on a fiscal year, we will now give pins on a calendar year. This means that at next year's Staff Awards Day, we will be giving pins to employees who met a 5 year increment from July 1, 2003 to Dec. 31, 2004. This will keep employees from having to wait up to a full year past a 5 year increment anniversary in order to receive their pin. For example, a person is hired July 1, 2000. Under the old guidelines, s/he wouldn't get a pin until Nov. 2006, nearly a year and a half past the 5th anniversary. Under the new guidelines, the employee would get his/her pin in the same year in which the 5 year increment was met.

For Staff Awards Day in 2005, it will only be from Jan. 1-Dec. 31. This first year we have to play "catch up" for the people who missed the July 1 cut off date.
A&R has decided not to recognize any breaks in service in regards to service pins. All pins will continue to be distributed on a continuous service basis.

Carnation sales are scheduled for April and will be working with the Public Relations committee on that. A different vendor for the carnations is being discussed.

**Policies, Benefits and Budget – Leslie Miller**

We had several members who were unable to make the committee meeting this month, so we decided not to make any final decisions on anything. However, we did discuss the following issues:

**Employee Evaluation Form** – Based on feedback received, we plan to separate the Supervisors/Management evaluation into a separate form. This is so people won’t see an eight-page evaluation form and automatically think, “It’s too long!” We also corrected some grammatical problems.

**Performance Evaluation Program for Staff (Policy 3-0741)** – We’re looking at this policy to see if we have any recommended changes such as including an appeals process or putting a time limit on how quickly copies of evaluations must be provided to staff.

**Definition of Continuous Service (Policies 3-0705 and 3-0725)** – A staff member asked us if we could look into OSU’s definition of continuous service. Policies 3-0705 (Classified Staff) and 3-0725 (A/P Staff) essentially say that if you leave employment at OSU for any reason other than an “authorized leave of absence” or “a reduction in workforce” (layoff), it is considered a break in continuous service. That impacts the tally for service pins as well as leave accumulations, etc. The committee members present at our meeting felt that these policies could be amended to give at least a 30-day window before a “break in service” is considered to be a break in “continuous service” for purposes of service pins and leave. I expect to have a recommendation to that effect for the January SAC meeting.

**Generic vs. Name Brand Drugs** – A staff member approached a PB&B committee member in regards to an issue that she ran into with her pharmacist when getting a prescription filled. Apparently, in this particular case, the generic brand turned out to be much more expensive than the name brand. She was concerned that, because most people automatically assume that the generic is cheaper than name brand drugs, some OSU employees may be paying more than they need to for their prescriptions. While PB&B does not believe that SAC could do anything about the pricing of prescription drugs, we did feel that it might be appropriate to request Human Resources to include an article or note in their next “News You Can Use” (or other appropriate venue) reminding OSU employees that they need to ask their pharmacists for the least expensive choice when it comes to their prescriptions. We also felt that there might be confusion about “preferred drug lists” between the different service providers, etc., and that these issues could be reviewed in the article as well. With winter coming up, and flu season already here on a national level, we believed that such a reminder would be very timely.

**Public Relations – Hank Welliver**
Presenters and greeters are needed for the next New Employee Orientation.

**Rules & Procedures – Donna Whitmore**

The committee is reviewing the constitution and bylaws for errors in grammar and typos. Donna passed out rough drafts to SAC members for any suggestions or changes that they saw needed to be made. Any changes to the bylaws can be made by SAC. Changes to the constitution must go out to a campus wide vote. Duane suggested that any changes that member’s thought needed to be made should be done by recommendation.

**New Business - Sheryl Beeler**

Sheryl read the letter of resignation from Kathy King. This leaves a vacancy on SAC. Sheryl posted this to the list serve and received a letter of interest from Randy Kelly of the Physical Plant. Since his was the only interest shown for this vacancy, a motion was made to accept Randy, was seconded. This motion was voted on and accepted by SAC. Sheryl will contact Randy.

Sheryl received another concern from a constituent regarding the termination process and the “At Will” policy. Sheryl made copies of a letter and made them available for SAC to look over. The unnamed person outlined their concerns. After some discussion it was agreed and a decision was made to allow the Policies, Procedures & Benefits committee, who is already reviewing all aspects of the evaluation process, to also take into consideration proper evaluation/termination procedures by supervisors for A&P staff. Sheryl will notify the person of SAC’s decision.

**Announcements:**

The meeting with the President on November 25 went well. It was a brief meeting and various items such as the holiday schedule, fundraising, and the “whistleblower” recommendation were briefly discussed.

Sheryl and Duane have access to the OSU Events calendar in order to post announcements. The website address is [http://calendar.okstate.edu/](http://calendar.okstate.edu/).

Sheryl will e-mail SAC with the 12th installment of the retirement newsletters that Dr. Raff has been writing. These letters to staff and faculty were to keep everyone informed of the progress of the class action lawsuit regarding retirement benefits.

Kathie Tanner will represent SAC and staff on the Long Term Care committee.

Sheryl received a letter from Lionel Raff regarding a recommendation that has been sent to Dr. Bosserman from the Flexible Compensation Benefits Committee regarding employee access to TIAA-CREF vested accounts. The E Team at the next meeting on December 18 will discuss this matter.

Sheryl also informed SAC that as the Chair, she will be attending the Cotton Bowl and reminds everyone of the perks of being Staff Advisory Council Chair and to think about running for that position in the future.

Meeting was adjourned.