

The regular meeting of the 2003-2004 Faculty Senate was called to order at 3:30 p.m. by President Nancy Reincke. The following senators were present for all or part of the meeting: Alexander, Allen, Bartschat, Clapham, Courd-Houdi, Dougherty, Esposito, Lyons, Morrow, Petersen, Rankin, Reed, Reincke, Rozycki, Schaefer, Sheehy, Shulman, Soltis, Vitha, Wade  
Absent: Lovell

The October 2003 minutes were deferred until the next meeting.

#### Reports from President Maxwell

-- Two significant overseas trips on university business have taken place in the past couple of months, President Maxwell reported. There were broad agreements of understanding signed with two institutions in the Hebei province in China and a visit to Germany's University of Tuebingen. He expects both of these locations to become exciting exchange opportunities for faculty and students.

-- President Maxwell brought to the Senate the serious issue of the recent attacks in the neighborhood. He indicated there are aggressive investigative actions taking place on the part of the Des Moines police and campus security concerning these developments.

-- To date, there are a record number of undergraduate applications submitted (20% ahead of last year) for the upcoming year. There are conversations being held concerning enrollment to capacity issues in the Senior Advisory Council (SAC) and at the Dean's Council. Drake does not want to grow out of the kind of institution that Drake is known. The Dean's Council is taking the leadership role in preparing the data and promoting the discussion on what size Drake should be and how Admission should respond to the increase in applications.

-- President Maxwell said the faculty may have heard concerns from students regarding last week's registration problems and this is also a concern for the Dean's Council and SAC.

Senator Petersen asked a question concerning a security issue at the corner of 25<sup>th</sup> and Carpenter. The lighting there is not good. President Maxwell thanked her for that information and commented that the city and Drake security personnel were processing a lighting review.

#### Report from Provost Troyer

-- Provost Troyer comments began with noting the registration concerns. He indicated that the Council of Academic Administrative Departments (CAAD) is taking the lead role in collecting data concerning this complex situation. The Provost did not believe that any of the popular rumors concerning the problems were true. He suggested that if anyone had specific idea or concern, they should contact Wanda Everage or their Associate or Assistant Dean.

-- A recent Dean's Council discussion was the possibility of changing the faculty recruiting cycle. The current system, which has been in place for over a decade, is presenting challenges in two specific areas, Pharmacy and Business. The challenge will be to make critical staffing decisions earlier which then poses its own set of problems.

--Next Monday's announcements will include retention figures for first year students. The recent figures are promising. The Provost cited:

Fall 1999 – 81.6% came back Fall 2000

Fall 2000 – 81% came back Fall 2001

Fall 2001 – 82.7% came back Fall 2002

Fall 2002 – 83.4% came back Fall 2003

This is the highest proportion return in his years at Drake. The Strategic Plan goal is 85% and he believes it is doable.

-- The Provost complimented the Pharmacy and science faculty for their efforts over the past few weeks in clearing out a back log of outdated chemicals. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has created some national headlines this Fall with their investigations and fines at some higher educational institutions. The Provost wanted to publicly acknowledge the effort and cooperation which enabled Drake faculty and staff to bring Drake into compliance in this area.

Mr. Henderson asked what Drake's plan was concerning E-trash. The Provost acknowledged this as a coming issue and noted it is on his agenda at a meeting tomorrow. Drake will have some regulations to follow and nothing else to report yet.

Senator Bartschat asked, with the first year student applications up and some transfer student numbers are not was there a concern about the transfer student admission standards and how are the Drake transfer students doing as students compared to the national standards. The Provost replied that the Drake transfer student does not do poorly compared to the national standards of retention and graduation rates.

President Reincke offered no report.

Unfinished Business: none presented

New Business:

Human Resources Venessa Macro provided an outline of the presentation. She desired to share with the Senate and visitors the following a) an over and background of benefits at Drake University 2) discuss the health care rate structure options and gather feedback c) communicate issues currently being explored by the Benefits Committee and d) explain the proposed change in the formula for the retiree health benefit,

Ms Macro introduced Michelle Dietrich from Drake's consulting firm, Bruce Gilbert, Chair of the University Benefits Committee (UBC) and members of the UBC. Human Resources staff were also introduced. Ms Macro complimented all these persons for there hard work and diligence on this difficult set of issues.

The Guiding Principles of the Benefits were presented. These principles are used to structure all conversations concerning the benefits. Recent studies of benefits offered at peer and comparable institution were reviewed along with the local area benefit situations. Ms Macro was definite that there is no intention to gut this plan, such as the nice vision hardware section. The desire is to focus on keeping a quality health benefit plan.

Senator Esposito asked is the loss of income is regarded in the guiding principles? Ms Macro replied yes, citing the disability waiting period as a positive example.

She noted specifically that Drake's plan is our own document, a formal plan. The institution is self-insured.

Senator Shulman asked about the change to First Administrators which seems to have brought about a large amount of paperwork and whether this could be done electronically. Senator Clapham related a concern that some automatically generated letters are being sent needlessly. Ms Dietrich indicated that she would take these comments as suggestions for improvements to the company. She highlighted this direct communication as a benefit of being self-insured as there is an ability to personalize the communication.

Ms Dietrich continued that the past three years have been a challenge in health care nation wide. The UBC has not wanted to pass along to current employees all the increases. They choose to look at the plan and how the plan is designed rather than simply raising the costs. The UBC feels strongly about giving a choice to the university employees.

Senator Allen asked if consideration had been given recently to structuring the benefits premium to the salary levels. She indicated that this method would be a way for the load to be spread around the community. She would find this sort of structure consistent with the University's mission. Chair Gilbert indicated that this was on the agenda for committee discussion.

Senator Allen spoke in favor of a one tier health plan. She acknowledged that it would take some solid research to set the level and any benefit regulations. Mr. James O'Daye indicated that he saw the change to use by utilization will hurt those folks who we should their stewards.

Ms. Dietrich presented the impact of a redistribution of who pays what and yet keeping the bottom line cost the same. She highlighted the impact of changes in the distribution of the contribution dollars. The rate tiers are set at the time when the rate is set. When there are major benefit plan changes, there is an expectation of some shifts in the number of persons in each category. This shifting mostly happens during the first year.

The body then had a discussion of the Network Only Plan for active employees. There was a verbal explanation of the single plan contributions by the employee and by Drake. There is the Drake contribution which will be reduced as of next June 1, 2004. There was concern voiced from the group that this information is heavy with numbers and should be given to the group in writing for any chance to understand its full meaning.

Senator Clapham desired that the health benefit portion be reviewed against peer institution as part of the whole compensation package not as a single unit. Her concern was that this portion needs to be looked at in balance with the salary portion of the package.

Ms. Macro reminded the body that Drake is looking at a 33% increase in costs and this proposed plan does address this drastic increase. Chair Gilbert presented a handout of current items being reviewed by the UBC. These included having more flexible spending of the benefit dollars and a

review of what a retiree pay. He said that they are looking at how to divide up the benefit pie and who pays for the benefit pie. The issue of setting up a three tier structure was brought to the committee by Drake employees. The committee desires to do no harm and that may be to keep the present tiers. The pricing of the tiers needs to be family friendly according to Mr. Gilbert.

There was a question as to whether or not the compensation package will include a day care option. This issue has been of interest for many years and even with two comprehensive plans, it has not come to completion.

Senator Allen offered that she sees it as virtually impossible to separate our Drake values in this discussion. She felt it is important to care as a group and that would be a reality if there was a one tier option. She used the example of the fact that many pay taxes for school whether or not they actually have children in those schools. It is done as a philosophy and for the betterment for the whole. Senator Petersen agreed with Ms Allen's comments.

Senator Reed acknowledged that this is a complicated, far reaching issue and wanted to know what the plans were to communicate the particulars with the faculty. She believed this to be information that needs to be talked about to the whole community. Ms Macro offered that today's discussion is the first step in this important discussion.

Several senators asked about the number of employees in any one category now and how many would be switching to a possible new tier. There was a concern that the Senate is not the place to pick apart all the numbers to a proposal but to set the core values and ensure that the guidelines are being followed.

Upon proper motion and second, the Senate voted to extend the meeting time.

Senator Vita offered that as he looked at this total dollar amount for Drake's portion, he can not help but think of other uses for those funds, such as faculty lines.

Ms Sandi Smeltzer raised the issue of retiree health benefits. The reply was that this issue was supposed to be discussed today, but would need to be rescheduled to the December 10<sup>th</sup> Faculty Senate meeting.

The Senate reiterated the desire for the UBC to continue to explore the one-tier system with regard to premiums if and when there is a survey to collect employee preferences.

The meeting adjourned by 5:30 p.m.

Submitted by Secretary, Nancy Geiger