Personnel Services Committee
March 18, 2004

Members Present: Judy Benavides, Jean Braden, Gene Brown, Charlie Errico, Fran Emory, Patti Hill, Joe Horobetz, Barbara Howard, David Lavis, Kurk Lew, Ella Moore and Ellen Wertman.


Guest: Virginia Graves

1. Call to Order: Dr. Errico called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes: The minutes were approved as distributed.

3. Chair’s Report: Charlie Errico reported that he had written to President Templin asking that the College reconsider its policy of requiring new nine-month faculty to take their pay over a 12-month period. In addition, he asked that there be a period of time during which those faculty who have not had a choice about being paid on either a nine-month or a 12-month basis could opt for nine-month pay. Charlie hopes for a favorable response to this request.

4. Vice President’s Report: Vice President Baker said that the budget negotiations in Richmond were complex and that there was no telling how they would be resolved. The College would do better under the Senate budget, and staff would get a salary increase in both years under that plan. If the House budget passes, the College would do better than this year, but not as well as under the Senate version. There would be salary increases in FY 2006, but not in FY 2005 under the House budget.

There is recent concern at the VCCS and at VRS about IRS code regulations that require a “break in service” between a retirement and a return to work in a part-time capacity. VRS is suggesting that one must remain in unpaid status for 30 days before returning to work. That would make current policy regarding summer session teaching and the Enhanced Retirement Plan difficult to continue. NVCC is seeking advice and counsel about this situation and will give plenty of notice if any policies have to change to comply with VRS and IRS regulations.

On April 8, there will be a meeting for all faculty who are in the Optional Retirement Program to learn about and discuss changes in that program. Effective July 1, there will be fewer companies offering programs and fewer options within those companies for faculty to choose from. Importantly, the social choice option within TIAA/Cref is not available. Faculty in the ORP are encouraged to attend to learn about program changes.

5. Guest Presentation: Jenny Graves described a proposal from her division at Alexandria. The idea would be to establish a category of educational leave that would permit faculty members to take on externships and work in their professional areas while receiving pay and benefits from the College. She said that gaining real world experience would assist the faculty in bringing fresh and relevant ideas to the classroom.

The process would require that a faculty member bring ideas for externships to the division dean and to the provost, who would review the proposal and approve it if appropriate. A schedule of work would be developed if the externship were not full-time, to allow part-time teaching and released time for the externship. Jenny imagined that the company employing the extern would reimburse the College for the salary paid.

Jenny is hoping that NVCC would be willing to establish a pilot project through the VCCS to see how such a program would work. Current VCCS policies do not permit this kind of leave, but a pilot project, if authorized and successful, could result in those policies being changed.
Under the educational leave policy, a faculty member can take leave every three years. While a sabbatical leave would work, sabbaticals can come only every seven years. Leave without pay would also work, but a faculty member on leave does not accrue paid time toward retirement while on leave.

Jenny said that there is a program through the Department of Labor that some administrative faculty have participated in that might be similar. Louise Raines, Stuart Werner and Deborah Rosen all participated in this program.

Jenny said that she doubted that faculty in externships could be involved in any activities that would increase the College’s liability for actions taken by the employing company while the faculty member was working there.

The Committee expressed interest in the idea and asked Jenny to give them additional information about it. Jenny agreed do some research on what constitutes a break in service and how that would affect the program and also on questions of liability for the extern’s actions.

6. Old Business:

A. Uniform Faculty Evaluation Form: The VCCS Chancellor has set a goal of having a uniform faculty evaluation form and process in place across the 23 member colleges. Ray Bailey has expressed some concern about this. The evaluation process will certainly affect faculty, but there was no one at the meeting who could speak to the matter. Charlie said he would talk to Ray and bring this back for a subsequent meeting.

B. Faculty Recognition Program: The subcommittee on faculty recognition has not met. The issue is tabled until the next meeting.

7. New Business:

A. Dave Lavis suggested that the hiring ranges for classified staff vacant positions be posted on the website. These salary ranges have not been published, and supervisors do not have what they need to set an entry salary for advertising purposes. Alison said that HR would post the ranges.

B. Patti Hill said that the Faculty Handbook on the web has last year’s salary ranges. These will be corrected.

8. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.