Personnel Services Committee  
January 18, 2007

Members Present: Richard Bautista, Myrtho Blanchard, Charlie Errico, George Gonchar, Barbara Hatheway, Zina Jemison, Dan Lewis, Bruce Mann, Mitch Markon, Irene Osterman, Jennifer Reynolds, Charles Scarborough, Libby Vick, Sherrill Wharff, David Williams, and Nancy Wyatt.

Members Absent: David Babel, Janet Bush, Keith Wynn.

1. Call to Order: Chairman Errico called the meeting to order at 2 p.m. He welcomed new members Dan Lewis, who replaces Fran Emory on the committee, and Libby Vick, who replaces Bill Shannon.

2. Review and Approval of the Minutes: The minutes were amended to show that Richard Bautista was present at the November meeting and were then approved as amended.

3. Chair’s Report: Charlie reviewed the committee’s recommendation regarding teaching loads for 12-month administrative faculty and reported that because the maximum teaching load is not set by the College, but is a VCCS policy, there is no action that can be taken to increase it by College policy. The Academic Deans’ Council will consider whether this is an issue they would like the President to take up at the VCCS level.

4. Old Business:

   A. President’s Sabbatical: The faculty subcommittee agreed that this year’s applicant pool was the strongest ever. The decision was very tough, with four candidates rising to the top. The subcommittee requested that the President approve four leaves rather than three. The President did not do that, but there is an obvious alternate should any of those selected not be able to take the sabbatical. The winners were Patricia Daron, Robert Petrella and Patrick Reed.

   B. Classified Emeritus: Janet Bush was not at the meeting, but other members of the classified subcommittee reported that there were seven excellent nominees for the emeritus honor and that the committee agreed to recommend all of them to the president. Those recognized are: Geraldine Bridge, Ann Carro, Joyce Cain, Anita Gulbrandsen, Lois Koehnkoe, Mary Beth Montemerlo and Merrillee Scida.

   C. Faculty Salary Increase Process: The PSC will be called upon to make recommendations regarding the process by which faculty should receive salary increases next November/December. For the past two years, based on a PSC recommendation endorsed by the Senate, teaching faculty have received different salary increases based on rank in an effort to reduce salary compression. The committee’s recommendation was based on work done by the Faculty subcommittee
of the College’s accreditation self-study, which was ratified by research done by the Segal Company, the College’s human resources consultant. The committee will want to know whether further action needs to be taken to assure that salaries are competitive by rank. Answering this question will again be on the list of tasks for the Segal Company, which has been contracted to do a follow-up to the original study. The next study is expected to be completed in March.

Myrtho Blanchard reported on the scope of the next study. Our salaries will be compared with 21 other “peer” colleges, with variation in the cost of living taken into account. On the administrative faculty issue, there will further detailed information sought in the effort to benchmark more of the various positions administrative faculty hold. Rank is not a factor in benchmarking administrative faculty.

The March salary student results will come rather late to the committee which will need to make its recommendations to the Senate as to salary increase policy in time for that recommendation to affect faculty contracts due out in May. A special meeting of the Committee might be necessary, since our regular meeting would take place during Spring Break. The Committee agreed to meet on March 29 to consider the salary issue.

Jennifer Reynolds suggested that an employee survey be conducted to reach all employees in an effort to gauge morale. She thought morale was not good as a result of the recent salary increases and their limited application. Myrtho agreed a survey would be a good idea and said she would look into it.

D. Telecommuting: Charlie reported that Bev Blois and Diane Wilson have indicated their willingness to work on teaching faculty telecommuting policy. They will work with Myrtho and Charlie will try to get a teaching faculty member with experience in distance education to join the group. He hoped that the group could do its work quickly and report back by the March meeting.

E. Enhanced Retirement Program: Interest remains high at the College for an enhanced retirement program along the lines of the one that was determined to violate VRS policy a few years back. While Chris Lee, the assistant vice chancellor for human resources, is interested in the possibility of a resumption of the program under the terms of the new Pension Portability Act, the committee agreed that some kind of political action was necessary. The faculty generally do not have the time or the expertise to frame the legal issues and to develop draft legislation, so the suggestion was made that the Committee recommend to the President the appointment of a consultant to do the research and draft possible legislation that would permit the resumption of an ERP at the College. The Committee unanimously endorsed such a course of action.

5. New Business:
A. Ten Month Contracts for associate and assistant deans: Some associate and assistant deans have substantial responsibilities in the summer, and for their areas to work properly, they must put in many hours while they are not compensated or on contract. The VCCS does not have a ten-month contract, but the State Board has the authority to create one. The Academic Deans are considering this matter, so the Committee need not take action while this deliberation is going on. Dan Lewis, who serves on the Academic Deans’ Council, will report back on any action or recommendations that might come out of that group.

B. Faculty Overload Pay: Apparently, faculty eligible for overload pay in February must request payment at that time or wait until the full-year’s overload is paid out in May. The Committee agreed with Len Palumbo that the assumption should be that the faculty member wishes to be paid, and if he or she wanted to wait until May, that is the request that should be made, not the reverse. Myrtho agreed to look into the process and to revise it if possible.

C. Unlisted Telephone Numbers: Charlie Errico expressed concern that the College Records Office does not list numbers for issues that advisors must deal with. The question of whether a course would transfer in to satisfy a requirement came up and could not be answered because CRO staff are not accessible to faculty. Charlie agreed to pursue this issue with Dr. Dever to get telephone numbers for specialists who deal with critical advising matters.

D. Pandemic Planning: Alison Baker described the College’s efforts to develop a continuity of operations plan to deal with the possibility of an avian flu pandemic. She briefed the group on the scenarios that are being described by the Center for Disease Control and how the College’s emergency planning committee was approaching these issues. The Administrative Council will be dealing with the major policy issues involved, but there are many issues that affect human resources that could be important for the PSC to be familiar with.

6. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.