June 2, 2004 Minutes of the General Faculty Committee Meeting

Members In attendance:

Bruce Wessels, David Buchholz, Clarke Caywood, Dennis Chong, Abraham Haddad, Hamlin Jennings, Martin Mueller, Eva Redei, Mario Ruggero, Sigmund Weitzman

1. Approval of May minutes

The minutes from the May GFC meeting were approved by all GFC members present.

2. Sub-committee reports

Benefits: Abraham Haddad discussed current and upcoming sub-committee topics, which included HMO benefits and retirees, vision care benefits, and increasing tuition benefits. Sub-committee members are planning to meet and discuss the plan of action for next year, specifically focusing on ways to get better rates on health insurance.

Budge and Policyt: Martin Mueller (for Deborah Lucas) gave the summary. The sub-committee had four meetings and several discussions with central administration regarding the University budget and budget planning. These have been very beneficial and productive. The meetings made for a great forum to discuss the University budget. In September Deborah Lucas will be putting together a report outlining these discussions.

Education - Athletics: Bruce Wessels discussed the on-going Coalition On Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) initiative. The GFC had previously voted this year to support the initiative. Bob Eno of U. Indiana, coalition leader, was notified of our support. The GFC sub-committee will move forward with the COIA initiative activities. President Bienen indicated at the last Senate meeting that he is pleased with the intercollegiate athletics program and its governance at NU, but would consider concrete proposals for reform stemming from the COIA initiative.

Research: Eva Redei discussed some of the remaining research issues. She indicated that while the NU research activities are robust, the research infrastructure has not kept pace with this development.. NU's biggest challenge is to implement a plan that satisfies the federal compliance issues while helps the individual investigators to carry out their research.

The GFC research sub-committee email initiative on research issues is working. Currently 33 responses were submitted by faculty and some have multiple issues attached. A monthly reminder needs to be sent to all faculty members, letting them know that this avenue is available. Eva Redei is planning to meet with the Associate Vice President for Research for Compliance to discuss the sub-committee's activities.

Faculty Development: Hamlin Jennings briefly discussed faculty development issues, mainly focusing on faculty diversity. Diversity remains a real issue at NU and one that is tough to fix. He recommends that the sub-committee continue the dialog and develop a plan to increase diversity in the next year.

3. Sub-committee chair nominations

All GFC members present voted in favor of the proposed sub-committee chair nominations for the academic year 2004-05. They include: Martin Mueller, faculty development, Deborah Lucas, budget and policy, Bruce Wessels, education, Abe Haddad, benefits, and David Buchholz, research affairs. In addition to sub-committee leadership, these sub-committee chairs along with the GFC Chair will serve as the GFC steering committee that meets with the top university central administrators.

Prof. Redei will also serve as the chair of the GFC committee on committees.

4. Update and final comments form Chair and Chair/elect

GFC Chair Bruce Wessels thanked the retiring GFC members. He also thanked the sub-committee chairs and their committee members for their work on these important issues facing Northwestern. He introduced Eva Redei, the new GFC chair for 2004-2005. Eva thanked Bruce for his active leadership over the past year. She indicated that she looked forward in September to serving as Chair, since there are a number of important continuing and new issues that need to be addressed by the faculty leadership.

In Conclusion:
a. The first GFC meeting of FY2004-05 will be held on October 6, 2004 at 7:00 pm in Scott Hall room 201 (the Ripton Room).

Minutes Submitted by:
Diana Snyder