Report of the Summer Ad Hoc Committee for OP Review

September 7, 2011

Committee members: Chair: Senator Lewis Held. Members: Senators Gad Perry, Jonathan Marks, Sandy River, Jimmy Davis, David Weinberg, Carolyn Tate, and former Senators Michael Farmer, and John Howe

The committee was formed to provide timely response to administration requests that the Faculty Senate review proposed changes to operating policies. President Nathan asked the committee to review the following during the summer months.

OP 70.37: Disclosure of Significant Business or Financial Interests that May Represent Conflicts of Interest

The revisions proposed extended the application of the disclosure requirements to "dependent relatives or household members," detailed procedures for review of disclosures and reporting to external agencies, and presented two new forms: the basic disclosure form and the supplemental disclosure form. While there was concern that the procedure will now be somewhat cumbersome, the committee did not see issues that needed the full Senate's consideration. The committee voted its approval with comments for future improvements and sent the draft back to President Nathan. The revised OP was posted on August 9.

OP. 32.21: The Chancellor's Council Distinguished Research Award

The revisions proposed increased the number of possible awards each year to four with two in each of two categories: science/engineering/technology/and math and social science/humanities/creative arts. The chief concern of the committee was a statement that allowed the Chancellor's office to make changes to the selection procedure outside of the normal OP amendment process. This concern was expressed to President Nathan, who discussed it with Vice President for Research Taylor Eighmy. The passage was removed. The committee approved the OP revision and attachment and sent it back to President Nathan.

Regents' Rule Chapter 10: Intellectual Property Rights

The revisions proposed appeared to be mainly housekeeping to make the rule reflect changes that have already taken place. No one on the committee felt they had the expertise to evaluate the substance of the rule, so Senator Held referred it to law professor Wesley Cochran. Professor Cochran saw no red flags. The committee returned the document to President Nathan with editorial suggestions and the concern that, as written, the rule stresses technology transfer and commercialization and treats other intellectual property as an afterthought. We have not received a response from the administration.

OP 32.13: The Chancellor's Council Distinguished Teaching Award

As was the case with the Distinguished Research Award, the proposed revisions increased the possible number of awards each year to four with two each in the two categories. The committee noted that Attachment B, which outlines the procedure by which recommendations for award recipients are made, contained language similar to that in 32.21 allowing the Chancellor to change the procedures outside the OP amendment process. Award recommendations are made by the Executive Council of the Teaching Academy, the Faculty Senate President, and a former award recipient. Senator Held contacted the Council's chair, Audra Morse. She worked with the committee on extensive revisions to Attachment B, some of which reflect discussions that she had had with Senior Vice Provost Rob Stewart, and the Executive Council reviewed the attachment and made additional changes. The Executive Council strongly felt that awards should not be divided by categories because good teaching is not related to discipline and edited the document to reflect that. The ad hoc committee voted its approval of the new draft and sent it on to President Nathan with a request that Dr. Stewart be asked to respond to the draft as soon as possible, so that it might be presented to the Senate at its September meeting.