

APSCUF MEMBERSHIP MEETING

December 1, 2009 – 12:30 p.m.

SWC Auditorium

Minutes

President Jace Condravy called the meeting to order at 12:30

- I. **Approval of Oct. 1 Minutes** Meztli/Massey motion to approve; passed unanimously.
- II. **Winners of Wilma J. Cavill Service Award/Retiree Celebration – Dec. 11, 4 – 6 p.m., Ski Lodge** Dr. Condravy reminded membership of the end-of-semester celebration and announced the winners of the award. She stated that there are no known retirees at this time.

State Class Size Task Force – Carolyn Steglich The committee (consists of 3 APSCUF representatives, 3 chancellor's office representatives and other interested parties) met 1/09 for the first time, had a conference call, and then met 11/09 to generate a study of the effects of class size, particularly large undergraduate classes. They intend to look at student achievement, retention, and overall satisfaction, as well as faculty satisfaction and retention. Efforts will then focus on enhancement of positive effects and reduction of negative effects. A particular focus is planned for first-semester, first-year students and efforts to reduce class size during initial semesters. The committee plans to look at published research as well as data from SSHE universities to determine whether additional study needs to be undertaken at public universities of our size. It was noted that research on class size at SRU must pay careful attention to learning clusters that are listed as separate sections though they are combined to meet at one time and in one place as these practices may be deceptive in terms of reported statistics. There are currently 9 large-size (i.e., over 150 students) classes at SRU. It was also noted that accrediting bodies often regulate class size and we are required to maintain these professional standards.

The question was raised as to the lack of funding for internal research on this matter. There is currently no funding available although the governor initiated this project in 2003. Cosgrove/Cooke motion: A resolution that State APSCUF pursue funding for the State Class Size Task Force so that it can conduct studies of class size as charged; passed unanimously. It is important to complete this research before next negotiation cycle. Student satisfaction ratings (course evaluations) and the variety of teaching/learning methods are both negatively correlated with larger class sizes.

- III. **Professional Development Day – Jennifer Keller** Attendance reports indicated that 151 participants signed up for Professional Development Day, some for more than one session. Attendance increased over 2008 but decreased from 2007. However, this year we had the highest keynote attendance over the past 3 years.

The APSCUF Professional Development Grants RFP was sent from PASSHE; proposals are due locally on 1/25/10. An announcement on 2/8/10 will indicate whether proposals will move forward to the state on 2/17/10. It was noted that the grants are APSCUF negotiated funds not solely PASSHE funds. Grant proposals should be sent as email attachment to Nancy Cruikshank as per new procedures for online submission.

A new program, the Grant Writers Fellowship Program, will take up to 10 faculty/staff to work with a national consultant to write an externally funded grant proposal of at least \$50,000. Successful applicants will receive \$500 for submitting a proposal and an additional \$500 if the proposal is funded. Applications for this program are due 1/25/10.

- IV. Local Negotiations Committee – Patrick Burkhart** The goal for this year is public relations as this is the year prior to negotiations year. Current PR efforts include a monthly column in *The Rocket*. Dr. Condrary reported that APSCUF executive committee distributed hand sanitizers with the APSCUF logo printed on each and she encouraged faculty to print a statement on their syllabi regarding APSCUF membership. Dr. Burkhart reported that we do not plan to come on too strong with PR now but rather to build to a crescendo as negotiations draw near. He noted that if students don't know the value of APSCUF then parents won't know either. A difficult negotiations year is anticipated and we must be proactive on the value of unionized faculty. Students need to understand appropriations and funding issues. Dr. Burkhart asked for input from membership particularly for *Rocket* articles. He made two specific suggestions:
- 1) Encourage junior colleagues to join APSCUF, if they are not already members;
 - 2) Encourage colleagues to begin saving from each paycheck in anticipation of pay interruption. He noted that we will hold stronger negotiations and more leverage if faculty are prepared for pay interruption. Also, newer faculty are the ones who will reap the most benefits or suffer the most in the future dependent upon the outcome of current negotiations. Dr. Condrary added that we have the highest ever membership count and it is enough to earn an additional delegate for next year.
- V. Spring Elections: Right to Know Positions of Candidates for Tenure and Promotion Committees – Patrick Burkhart** Last year candidates voluntarily submitted a position statement. The question was raised as to whether such a statement should be required in light of the administration's acceptance of committee recommendations. It was noted that all promotion portfolios reflect excellence in teaching and the number of publications appears to be the tie-breaker because it can be quantified. However, funding, time and resources for the conduct of extensive research and publication is lacking at SRU. The proposed position statement should include full disclosure of candidates' stance regarding requirements for promotion and tenure. Dr. Condrary noted that if the position statement is required potential candidates may not run for election. She reported that of 7 responding SSHE institutions, one doesn't require any sort of statement, 5 allow for voluntary position statements, and one requires a biographical statement. She suggested that we can ask candidates about their position. It was noted that a voluntary position statement may increase competition for positions. A standard questionnaire for all candidates was suggested as a voluntary response. Steglich/Cavill motion: Ask the nominations and elections committee (chaired by Gary Roberts) to devise a voluntary questionnaire for candidates for the Tenure/Sabbatical and Promotions committees; passed unanimously.

- VI. Announcements:** Hope to see you on 12/11!

Meeting adjourned at 1:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Frances Russo, SRU-APSCUF Secretary