

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS,
JULY 13, 1994,
1:30-3:00 PM, 400 BURRUSS HALL

PRESENT:

Wyatt Sasser-Chair, John Ashby, Jeanette Bowker,
Marge Dellers, Betty Greene, Paul Metz, Neal
Shambaugh, Chuck Shorter, Joyce Smith, Tony
Sutphin, Wayne Worner

VISITORS:

Dennis Eavey, Muriel Flynn. Mary Holliman, Susan
Webb, Personnel Services; Clara Cox, Spectrum

Wyatt opened the meeting with a welcome to the group and asked everyone to introduce themselves. He then reviewed the charge of the commission, which is to deal with issues affecting classified employees. A schedule of the year s upcoming meetings was handed out and he asked that everyone add these meetings to their calendars. The regularly scheduled time is the second Wednesday of each month at 1:30 PM in 400 Burruss.

1. Grievance Procedures:

Mary Holliman, a Staff Senator, was appointed to the state task force that is working on revising the state s grievance procedures. She provided a handout that highlighted the major changes being recommended. These include:

- a. Anything related to the job now can be pursued through the grievance process. It does not have to be a grievable offense.
- b. Sets steps at no more than three; first step has to be someone who can make change or affect a resolution
- c. A colleague or friend may attend with the employee
- d. Instead of three-person panel, a hearing officer, appointed by the Department of Employee Relations Counselors (DERC); employee and management will be given three names, each may eliminate one.
- e. Hearing officers will be trained in Virginia law and will not be a state employee
- f. Pay, job description, and evaluations are not grievable; however, they can now be taken through the grievance resolution process. If still unsatisfied, the employee can apply to DERC for decision on grievability. If it is ruled not grievable, only recourse is legal action.
- g. Employees will must receive written answers at each step, thus making managers more accountable. The plan also sets time limits; especially when employees are being terminated. The process can be accelerated so the employees are not left in limbo about their job. Six weeks is the goal for resolution.

Hearings on the new plan have been held throughout the state. The task force will meet in August and September to finalize report, then present it to the governor and legislature for approval. The new policy becomes effective

July 1, 1995. DERC will start training sessions as soon as possible. They are also required to evaluate how agencies carry out policy. Dennis Eavey added that it is not known how DERC will conduct their evaluations. Managers will also have to be trained in the process. It was suggested that current employees need updating. While new employees learn about the procedures in orientation, current employees should also have access to training.

There was a question about the mediation process if the decentralization plan goes through. The plan calls for Virginia Tech to use the state process for the first year while the university's plan is designed. The governance system will be included in designing the new process.

2. Decentralization:

This will be a regular item on the agenda each month. Since Ann Spencer was not able to attend the meeting, discussion of this item will be postponed to next month.

3. Layoff Policy:

Muriel provided an update on the exceptions that the state recently approved for Virginia Tech regarding layoffs. All of the exceptions are related to restricted employees. He first gave a brief overview of the current layoff policy for commission members, then explained the three exceptions that have been granted:

- a. If during a layoff an employee is placed in a second restricted position, the individual will no longer lose layoff rights.
- b. Employees will no longer be placed in restricted positions that are expected to end within 12 months.
- c. Full-time classified with less seniority will no longer bump more senior restricted employees with layoff rights.

4. Goals and Objectives for 1994-95:

Wyatt handed out a list of goals and objectives that were suggested by last year's commission and the Staff Senate. He would like for commission to pick two to three of the topics to work on to develop policy or comment on policies that go through the governance procedures. The group should look at issues of major importance to the university as a whole. He asked for suggestions and additions in line with the charge to committee.

It was noted that the areas listed are broad. The group needs to know which topics are under discussion or study at this time. They would also like to have information to review before meeting. When policy issues are being discussed, it was suggested that the group bring in person(s) close to the subject for discussion. The commission would discuss, then make resolution to go forward to the appropriate person or group. A set of procedures should be set up to present a formal report with count of support and then track what happens to it.

Wyatt closed the discussion by asking that people send their ideas to him. This will be the #1 item on the agenda for the next meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM.

MINUTES,
COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS,
AUGUST 10, 1994,
1:30-3:20 PM, 400 BURRUSS HALL

PRESENT: Wyatt Sasser-Chair, John Ashby, Jeanette Bowker, Marge Dellers, Betty Greene, Paul Metz, Dianne Robertshaw for Wayne Worner, Neal Shambaugh, Chuck Shorter, Joyce Smith, Ann Spencer

VISITORS: Clara Cox, Spectrum; Muriel Flynn, Personnel Services; Elyzabeth Holford, EO/AA

Wyatt called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. The minutes were approved as amended.

1. Sexual Harassment Policy:

Elyzabeth Holford updated the committee on the current status of the sexual harassment policy, discussed at previous commission meetings. The Commission on Faculty Affairs has passed the policy, and it now goes before the University Council at their next meeting. Assuming passage, it will go before the Board of Visitors for approval, probably at their November meeting. Most of the revisions reflect changes in sexual harassment law. One change made which the commission had requested was the "assumption of guilt until proven innocent." The wording has been changed to include notification when an investigation begins. Another improvement is an independent three-member panel. Previously the investigator chaired the panel.

EO/AA is taking responsibility for training for supervisors and administrators, and getting word out about the policy. Elyzabeth will supply members with the current version of the policy. Comments and concerns are due to Wyatt one week after the date the policy is received. Wyatt is on University Council and will vote according to commission wishes.

2. Decentralization:

Ann Spencer updated the commission on the decentralization plan. The final plan submitted to Richmond followed the outline that was discussed with the commission and the Staff Senate last spring. Virginia Tech is asking for complete decentralization for the Personnel Services area, allowing the university to establish its own policies. One objective is to eliminate duplicative work and overlap. Decentralization will not necessarily save money for Virginia Tech, but will at the state level. Most comments have been positive. If Personnel Services is decentralized, Virginia Tech employees would still be state employees. The process is not far enough along to know how it will affect interagency transfers. Currently, VGEA is opposed. College and university human resource officers are trying to set up a meeting with Charles James, Director of the Department of Personnel and Training (DPT), to discuss with him any questions or issues of concern. The Secretary of Finance says the university should have some kind of response by September 15. The decentralization process would begin by utilizing current state procedures and policies, but with no interpretation or review by DPT, and gradually developing university policies. One objective will be not to diminish

any rights or benefits of employees.

There was a question about the role of the commission in this process. New policies will come to the commission for review and approval. Another role will be to facilitate communication to the university community and Staff Senate. When asked what areas are at top of list, she replied that the most likely ones are classification and compensation, the incentive pay plan, and the layoff policy.

3. Leave:

Ann also gave the commission information on the rumors currently circulating on campus regarding possible changes to the leave policy. The Governor's Commission on Government Reform (also known as the Blue Ribbon Strike Force) is reviewing many areas of state government, including benefits. DPT was asked to submit some alternative plans. However, no specific recommendations have been developed and several alternatives are being discussed. Ann will contact DPT to see if any more information can be made available to the university community.

4. Internal/agency Only Recruitment Options Within the Revised State Policy:

Muriel Flynn briefed the commission on the latest change to the state's recruitment policy. Since March 1992, state agencies have been required to advertise all job openings to the general public. In 1989, the university had developed an internal staff and recruitment policy that included the ability to advertise openings internally only. Now state agencies can again advertise openings internally only. This type of advertising encourages promotion of employees and staff development, as well as assisting with affirmative action goals. The previous internal recruitment policy required that all wage and entry level positions be advertised externally as well as internally, with other positions advertised internally only if the department wished. Concern was expressed that internal only advertising may cause the university to miss employing exceptional candidates. Muriel stressed that the policy is optional. Unless there are affirmative action goals, departments may advertise most positions in either manner. He is requesting that the commission approve his request to develop a new recruitment policy to bring back to them for approval. It was moved and seconded that Personnel Services develop an internal recruitment to bring to the commission for approval. The motion carried.

5. College of Education Re-engineering:

Wyatt informed the commission that the College of Education is being re-engineered. The Budget and Planning Committee has requested the commission provide two members to serve on a review committee for the restructuring and give input on proposals. The first meeting will be August 31, 3:00-5:00 PM. Neal Shambaugh volunteered to serve. Wyatt will appoint one other member.

The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS

OCTOBER 12, 1994

PRESENT: Jeanette Bowker, Marge Dellers, Wanda Garrison, Betty Greene, Paul Metz, Fred Phillips, Mary Rhodes, Wyatt Sasser, Chuck Shorter, Ann Spencer, Wayne Worner

VISITORS: Clara Cox, Spectrum; Larry Moore, Plant Pathology
Wyatt Sasser called the meeting to order at 1:35 PM. He introduced a new member of the commission, Mary Rhodes from the Department of Entomology. He then introduced Fred Phillips, who was elected Vice President of the Staff Senate, and is now chair of the commission. Phillips told the group that he was looking forward to working with them. The minutes were approved as written.

1. Restructuring: University Council has requested a response from the commission on the College of Education restructuring plan that goes before Council at the October 17 meeting. John Ashby attends the Budget and Planning Committee that has been working with the college on the restructuring plan. He feels that careful consideration has been given to staff and human resource concerns. Ashby moved that the Commission on Classified Staff Affairs affirm its support for the College of Education restructuring plan. The motion was seconded and passed with one abstention.

2. Decentralization: Ann Spencer reported on a meeting which college and university human resource officers recently had with Charles James, Director of the Department of Personnel and Training (DPT), and several members of his staff. The purpose of the meeting was to get an idea of where DPT is on the decentralization plans and a sense of how much support the university can expect from them. Overall, she felt it was a good meeting. The direction of this administration seems to be toward more accountability and less control. DPT is looking for a variety of approaches in the pilot programs. A decision will be made at the end of each program on making the program permanent. A major objective of the administration is the ability to measure success in the pilots. Several areas have been identified as non-negotiable:

a. Recruit System for advertising vacancies: DPT will continue to require that all vacancies be on the Recruit System so that there will continue to be a single source for all state vacancies. However, they will consider the possibility of using the Virginia Employment Commission as the single source.

b. Benefits information: The state requires some basic information that is maintained on a central system.

c. Management information: Again the state requires access to basic management information maintained on PMIS.

DPT will consider accepting the affirmative action plan Virginia Tech has for federal government. Currently the

university must maintain separate state and federal plans. They will also consider eliminating the post-audit function by DPT since the university is currently audited by state and internal auditors.

DPT also has concerns about colleges and universities using administrative/ professional faculty positions as a way to increase salaries. The university uses these type positions because they allow more flexibility in professional staff positions than the classified system.

DPT will work individually with each school on the decentralization plans and is looking for more specific information on measurement and cost savings. They will be contacting the schools over the next three weeks, then will submit recommendations to Secretary of Administration Thomas by the end of November. The plans must be approved by the secretaries of Finance, Administration, and Education.

Mr. James also shared information on the new health insurance contract. The state has awarded a four year contract to Trigon; however, there will be a new provider for mental health services effective 1995.

3. University Council - Constitution and By Laws Changes: Sasser introduced Larry Moore, who has been working on revising the governance system. Changes to the system begin in 1988 with the self-study. University Council was reorganized to include all groups and areas of the university. There are eight university-level commissions, with all committees reporting through them. Currently, he is working on streamlining the university standing committees. Changes will be effective July 1, 1995. The vice presidents of the senates serve as voting members on University Council. Each committee has a member from each commission who reports back to it.

He reviewed the governance process and how the commission and committees are designed to work in the process. He emphasized that the commissions are the most important groups as far as governance at Virginia Tech. Commissions are the only group that can prepare resolutions for University Council. The commission can make policy and, therefore, needs a solid understanding of what its responsibilities are to the classified staff and university as a whole. The university is only as good as its leadership.

4. Internal Staffing and Recruitment: A draft policy was handed out for comments at the October 6 Personnel Advisory Committee meeting. The policy will come before the commission for review before implementation.

5. Academic Year Appointments: Spencer gave an update on academic year (AY) appointments for classified staff. Virginia Tech was one of first schools to request AY staff appointments. Discussions were begun in the early years of budget reductions, since AY appointments would be preferable to layoffs. The proposal did not get any action from DPT at that time; however, they have now approved AY appointments. The plan is needed under restructuring to match employees with nine, ten, and eleven month positions and allow more flexibility. A task force will be set up to develop a plan on how the

positions will be used at Virginia Tech. Classified staff will be represented on the task force.

6. University Council Update: Sasser explained to the commission his vote on the sexual harassment policy. Policy was changed to be in line with current state and federal law. Sasser met with Elyzabeth Holford to discuss concerns of the commission. After further discussions with other members, he decided that it was a good policy and that he could support it. The policy passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS

NOVEMBER 9, 1994

PRESENT: John Ashby, Jeanette Bowker, Marge Dellers, Wanda Garrison, Betty Greene, Larry Hincker, Fred Phillips, Mary Rhoades, Chuck Shorter, Joyce Smith, Ann Spencer, Tony Sutphin

VISITORS: Clara Cox, Spectrum; Wyatt Sasser, Staff Senate

Fred Phillips called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. The minutes were approved as written.

1. Academic Year Appointments for Classified Staff Update: Wyatt Sasser was appointed to this committee and updated the commission on the first meeting held November 4. The committee is charged with coming up with guidelines on how to implement the program. Currently, they are looking at the program as voluntary rather than mandatory. They must also decide on target dates for implementation. It is hoped that the positions can be implemented in the 95-96 academic year. Changes to payroll system will be required; Fred Medley is investigating this. Ann Spencer added that a major area of concern is the payroll system. While it would be best to implement these positions at the beginning of the academic year, very little changes are being made to the existing system since university's new Human Resource Information System is scheduled to be implemented on January 1, 1996, including a new payroll system. Converting to a new payroll system is easier at beginning of the calendar year.

It is expected that Culinary Services would be a primary user. Currently, employees go on leave without pay voluntarily in the summer. The academic year appointments would benefit them during the summer leave period. Employees in these positions would get full benefits. Spencer added that the current expectation is that AY appointments would only be mandatory if the department were facing a layoff situation. Radford University implemented the program this year.

2. Decentralization Update: Spencer brought the commission up to date on the status of the decentralization plans submitted to Richmond. The Department of Personnel and Training (DPT) is working on coordinating responses, but has not issued any individual responses. At a recent meeting of state college and university human resource officers, they were advised to go ahead and submit pilot plans in the compensation area. Charles James, Director of DPT, can approve these projects. One area that the university will probably consider for a pilot is performance management. Spencer stated that the university would like to come up with something very different, a much simpler format which supervisors and employees can understand. She also needs to find out from DPT how much flexibility will be allowed in these plans.

3. Governor's Blue Ribbon Strike Force Update: Phillips informed the group that the complete report is available on-line on the Virginia Tech Gopher System. After public hearings, a final report will be issued; November 15 is the end of comment period. The report has 28 different recommendations; some are state level and others are agency level. Spencer briefly reviewed recommendations pertaining to the work force. She has also talked with Delegate Jim Shuler about where this is going; he is not sure either. Employees should write to delegates with comments and concerns. Sasser added that the Staff Senate has formed an ad hoc committee to study the Blue Ribbon Strike Force

report.

4. Internal Staffing and Recruitment Policy: Phillips asked when the policy was presented to the commission. Sasser said that Muriel Flynn had made a presentation about updating the policy at the commission's August 10 meeting. The commission gave him feedback and voted support for the direction of the policy. No further action is required at this time.

5. Representation on Employee Benefits Committee: Phillips asked for a volunteer from the commission to serve on the Benefits Committee. Mary Rhoades volunteered to serve.

Phillips asked that anyone with agenda items or ideas for speakers to send them to him. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS

DECEMBER 14, 1994

PRESENT: John Ashby, Marge Dellers, Wanda Garrison, Paul Metz, Fred Phillips, Chuck Shorter, Joyce Smith, Ann Spencer, Larry Harris for Wayne Worner

VISITORS: Clara Cox, Spectrum; Wyatt Sasser, Staff Senate

Fred Phillips called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. The minutes were approved as written.

1. Academic Year Appointments Update: Wyatt Sasser reported on the committee meeting held December 12. They continued to work on the wording of the policy. When completed, the policy will be sent to the appropriate commissions for approval. There is still a question of whether or not the policy requires University Council approval.

2. Decentralization Update: Ann Spencer said that there is nothing new to report. Some projects are moving ahead in the accounting area. She has asked Minnis Ridenour to contact his counterpart at UVA to see if they can get some action in Richmond.

3. Guidelines for Classified Employees Teaching University Courses: Spencer reviewed the proposed policy on classified staff teaching courses. She said that many individuals have been asked to teach courses outside their own departments. The university currently has no guidelines or policy. Administrative and professional faculty positions can have teaching built into the job descriptions. The policy would allow classified staff to be paid at the same rate as adjunct faculty. The policy is mainly intended to cover classified staff who are the primary instructor, not employees who assist someone else or guest lecturers in classes. The main application will be classified staff who teach courses outside their own department and not as a part of their regular job duties. Spencer asked that this item be put on the agenda for the next meeting to allow commission members time to review the policy.

4. Status of Governor's Hiring Freeze: Spencer said at this time there is nothing new. The university is requesting blanket exemptions for several types of positions, including student wage, graduate assistants, sponsored funding, temporary and part time faculty, and non-student auxiliary wage. The Secretary of Education's office has said they will attempt to respond within 48 hours. Spencer's office will coordinate the process. Departments will complete the forms and forward them to their dean or vice president for approval. They then must be approved at the senior management level by the Provost, Executive Vice President, or President. Spencer's office will fax the requests to Richmond and receive the responses. The responses will then be faxed to the originating department.

The executive order also froze layoffs. Spencer noted that an area of concern for the university is Sponsored Programs. There are individuals working in restricted positions who have layoff rights. The university will ask to be allowed to place those individuals in another sponsored program position.

The university will also request that administrative and professional faculty have the opportunity to participate in some type of incentive plan. Currently they are not eligible to participate in the early

retirement plan for teaching faculty or the incentive plan being offered by the state.

Spencer also noted that the state had changed the layoff policy. The options for placement have been broadened. She feels that it is a much better policy and will give the university much more flexibility in placement options. Several commission members noted there is a great deal of concern among long-term employees about the elimination of bumping. Spencer noted that bumping has rarely been used. It creates a very difficult situation for the department and, especially, the employees involved. The order of layoffs is still by seniority. It was suggested that when the new policy is received, it should be distributed to employees to help alleviate concerns.

5. Status of Smoking Paper: Spencer said that Minnis Ridenour and Paul Torgersen are considering the appointment of a task force to address the smoking policy on campus.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS

January 11, 1995

PRESENT: John Ashby, Marge Dellers, Wanda Garrison, Larry Hincker, Paul Metz, Fred Phillips, Mary Rhoades, Chuck Shorter, Joyce Smith, Ann Spencer, Tony Sutphin, Wayne Worner

VISITORS: Clara Cox, Spectrum; Wyatt Sasser, Staff Senate
Fred Phillips called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. The minutes were approved with two corrections.

1. Removing Computer Games from State Computers: Phillips said he had received several phone calls regarding the recent order from the Governor to eliminate all computer games from state computers, but had not seen a copy of the memo. Tony Sutphin said he had a copy of the memo that Minnis Ridenour had sent out to deans, directors, and department heads and that he would share it with the commission. It contains essentially the same language as the Governor's memo. Ann Spencer noted that compliance with the order would be left up to the departments.

2. Working with Fewer Resources: Joyce Smith voiced the concerns of many employees in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences and Extension Service about possible layoffs and the effect on the employees remaining. She asked if there were plans to assist the remaining employees to deal with added work loads and other problems. Spencer said that in reviewing the last layoff, they had recognized that a program for the remaining employees was needed. If the university experiences another major layoff, such a program will be a part of the process.

3. Status of Layoff Policy: Spencer said the new policy eliminates bumping or displacement as a part of the layoff process. The new policy will allow placement only to vacant positions, but is intended to make re-employment more flexible for an employee who is laid off. The new policy should be on the mainframe and Gopher soon if not it is not already. Spencer suggested that Muriel Flynn be invited to a future meeting to explain the application of the new layoff policy if the commission is interested.

Spencer also informed the commission that the university had received approval for some decentralization projects. Decentralization of the layoff policy and grievance procedures were not approved. She had only just received the information and had not yet had an opportunity to review it. She will update the commission at a future meeting.

Wayne Worner commented that the proposed cuts to the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences are much larger than the cut the College of Education experienced and will require the college to go through the same major restructuring process, but in a much shorter time frame. Spencer noted that the cuts will affect the entire

university since every college has some funding from agriculture.

4. Other Business: Wyatt Sasser updated the commission on the work of the committee working on implementation of the academic year appointments. The major concern is still the payroll issue. The policy will be presented to the faculty and staff senates and the commission.

John Ashby asked about the incentive buyout plan and the option of a payment or working through the end of the calendar year. Spencer said the intent is to protect employees who have expressed interest in the plan from being laid off. She added that an employee information session was held yesterday; about 60 people attended. Another session is scheduled for today. Employees need to talk to their department heads immediately if they are interested in the plan.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:25 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS

February 8, 1995

PRESENT: John Ashby, Jeanette Bowker, Marge Dellers, Wanda Garrison, Betty Greene, Fred Phillips, Mary Rhoades, Chuck Shorter, Joyce Smith, H. B. Whitt for Ann Spencer, Tony Sutphin, Joyce Randall for Wayne Worner

VISITORS: Dennis Eavey, Personnel Services; Netta Eisler, Spectrum; Spencer Foster, Personnel & Administrative Services; Wyatt Sasser, Staff Senate

Fred Phillips called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. The minutes were approved as written.

1. Peer/Reverse Evaluations:

Since some areas have expressed interest in this topic, Ann Spencer asked Dennis Eavey to attend to update the commission. Eavey said that reverse evaluations are being used in some areas including the College of Education, Veterinary Medicine, and Personnel Services. He said the first step is for the department or unit to write a set of objectives and decide why the evaluations are being done. He handed out samples of different evaluation formats used by areas both on and off campus. He emphasized that the evaluations are used for personal development and are not part of the formal evaluation. The results should go directly back to employee, no one else. For further information, contact him at Personnel Services or send note to training@vt.edu.

2. Guidelines for Classified Employees Teaching University Courses:

Spencer Foster presented the revised draft policy that addressed those areas about which the commission had expressed concerns. Under Section 1.0, Purpose, more details were added to clarify that the policy applies to persons with full responsibility for teaching a class outside their regular job. Section 3.5 includes guidelines for payment to be negotiated by the employee and department, with rates similar to those paid adjunct faculty. Mary Rhoades noted that Section 3.2 states it must be discussed with supervisor and Section 3.4 requires department head approval. She wondered why it was necessary for department heads to be notified since the classes are not part of the employee's normal job. Foster said that this policy is based on Policy #4070, Additional/Outside Employment Policy. Ashby noted that teaching a class is working for the university. Sasser said that if the course is taught during work hours, the supervisor needs to know. Phillips felt that perhaps a distinction needed to be made between normal work hours and after work hours. Whitt noted that exempt employees do not necessarily work 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. It was moved and seconded that the wording be reviewed and revised before proceeding. The motion was unanimously approved. Phillips appointed an ad hoc committee consisting of Smith, Ashby, and Rhoades to work with Foster on revisions.

3. Academic Year Appointments:

Sasser informed the commission that a draft policy had been

sent to committee members for comments. Personnel Services will also solicit input from other groups before putting the procedures into place. The decision on converting positions to academic year appointments will be left to department heads to allow them to better use limited resources. Vacant positions can be advertised as academic year. If there are no vacant positions in a unit, then the department looks at similar positions. The position is offered to employees by seniority. If no employees want the position, it then goes to the position with lowest seniority. Employees in positions to be converted to academic year will get six months notice. Positions can be converted back to full time with 90-day notice. Currently there will be only 9-month positions, August 15, 1995, through May 15, 1996, and will be limited to approximately 50 positions. This is necessary since they have to be entered manually on the current university system. When the new Human Resource Information System goes on-line in 1996, more flexibility will be possible.

4. Bicycle Traffic Petition:

Joyce Smith was asked to share a petition with the commission regarding bicycle safety. This petition is being circulated by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Student Assembly. For more information, contact Michelle Fraser of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Staff Association.

5. Leave Issue - Governor's Strike Force Report:

Smith asked about the status of the Blue Ribbon Task Force report regarding the leave policy revisions. There are rumors that it is being implemented at various places in the state. Whitt said that he has recently talked with people in the Policy Division at the Department of Personnel and Training. They have not seen or heard anything since the recommendations were sent to the Governor. It was asked if the change could be made by executive order, or was an act of the legislature required. Whitt said changes can be done by an executive order from the Governor.

6. Other Business:

Ann Spencer has requested two volunteers from the commission to work on planning for the 1995 Staff Appreciation Day. She will also request two volunteers from Staff Senate. Joyce Smith and Betty Greene volunteered to serve.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS

March 8, 1995

PRESENT: John Ashby, Marge Dellers, Wanda Garrison, Betty Greene, Paul Metz, Fred Phillips, Mary Rhoades, Chuck Shorter, and Ann Spencer

VISITORS: Spencer Foster, Personnel & Administrative Services; Wyatt Sasser, Staff Senate

Fred Phillips called the meeting to order at 1:35 p.m. The minutes were approved as written. Guidelines for Classified Employees Teaching University Courses: John Ashby reported on the ad-hoc committee's review of the guidelines for classified employees teaching university courses. Ashby listed several wording changes suggested by the ad-hoc committee and discussion followed on each of those points. In order not to tie up the meeting with discussion of the proposed changes, Ann Spencer requested that the ad-hoc committee meet with Spencer Foster to work out the wording differences. Fred Phillips asked the committee members to schedule a meeting to discuss the proposed changes. Phillips also noted that the last day to bring a resolution before University Council for consideration this year is April 17. He asked the committee to be prepared to present the revised guidelines and a resolution for the commission's approval at our April meeting.

Employee Benefits Committee Report: Mary Rhoades presented a brief report to the commission on the Employee Benefits Committee's organizational meeting of March 7, 1995. The new committee chair is Jim Bohland. This committee has been inactive for some time, and Jim wants to begin meeting on a regular basis. Mary reported that Ann Spencer and Doug Martin presented information to the committee on a number of relevant topics.

Open Enrollment for Health Plans: Marge Dellers asked if the university was planning to hold any meetings to brief staff on the new options available under the health care plans. Ann Spencer advised that sessions on the open enrollment will be held later this month. Spencer stated that the sessions will provide an opportunity for people to learn about the health care options that are available. She also indicated that this is the first time in a long time that employees have had options to consider. Spencer also advised that among the options will be an HMO in the New River Valley that will include dental care.

Other Business: Ann Spencer advised that the tight budget has placed the pay-for-performance merit plan in jeopardy this year. Spencer stated that it is not clear if the option is still there for an agency to fund the plan. If the option is there, the university would need to fund the proposed across-the-board increase of 2.25 percent for classified staff. Spencer stated that the university does not have the money to fund it; and, with the budget constraints, it would be hard to argue for the plan. The state will fund the proposed pay increase for faculty. Spencer advised that the evaluation process will continue, however, with or without funding.

In a discussion of the Work Force Transition Act (WTA), Ann Spencer advised that WTA could become law only three days before the March 31 deadline for applying for the voluntary severance program. Spencer stated that the governor's proposal differs from that approved by the General Assembly. The governor's plan involves only classified employees. The legislature's version includes better voluntary separation options and also includes severance pay for involuntary separation.

Spencer advised that approximately 800 administrative and professional faculty and classified staff are eligible for early retirement under the proposed plan. Spencer also indicated that the cost is to be borne by the university.

Marge Dellers asked if the positions vacated by employees leaving under the act would go away. Spencer stated that it was not clear for higher education exactly what would happen to the vacated positions.

Spencer indicated that approximately 20 university employees had applied for separation under the governor's plan. Fred Phillips asked what would happen to those employees if the General Assembly's plan becomes law. Ann Spencer said that the employees that applied under the governor's plan would have the option to switch to the General Assembly's version if it becomes law. She also advised that grant-funded employees are not included under either of the programs.

Spencer advised that the application window for voluntary severance closes March 31, but the separation date can be as late as June 30, 1996. Involuntary severance will be ongoing. There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:55 p.m.

MINUTES

COMMISSION ON CLASSIFIED STAFF AFFAIRS

May 10, 1995

PRESENT: John Ashby, Marge Dellers, Betty Greene, Paul Metz, Fred Phillips, Ann Spencer, and Wayne Worner

VISITORS: Clara Cox, Spectrum; Wyatt Sasser, Staff Senate

Fred Phillips called the meeting to order at 1:40 p.m. Since a quorum was not present, the minutes could not be approved.

Academic Year Appointment Guidelines: Wyatt Sasser distributed a handout with the guidelines for the academic year appointments. Since it is a state policy, not a Virginia Tech policy, it does not have to go through the governance system. The biggest problem the task force encountered was converting before the new HRIS system is in place. With possible budget reductions, many departments may need to use the positions as a way to manage costs. It will be left up to Payroll and Personnel Services as to how many positions will be allowed until after the new HRIS system is in place.

Guidelines for Classified Employees Teaching University Courses: Phillips informed the commission that the policy was passed by the University Council at the May 1 meeting.

Appointment of Representative to EO/AA Committee for 1995-96 Term: Phillips announced that Tony Sutphin has agreed to serve as the commission's representative on this committee.

Retirements: Two commission members, Joyce Smith and Wanda Garrison, have retired from the university. Phillips expressed his appreciation for their service to the university and the governance system.

Workforce Transition Act: Ann Spencer informed the commission that the university had received a letter from the Secretary of Education regarding procedures for appeals in connection with the Workforce Transition Act (WTA). Persons whose applications were denied may appeal the decision to their agency head. If the decision is not changed at that level, the appeal will be forwarded to the Department of Employee Relations Counselors (DERC) for consideration. Persons who feel they were denied the opportunity to apply may appeal directly to DERC.

Other Business: Spencer also updated the commission on decentralization. No real discussion or planning has yet taken place. She plans to meet in the near future with Charles James, the Director of the Department of Personnel and Training, to get a feel for the amount of latitude that the state will allow in decentralization plans.

John Ashby asked about the status of the Blue Ribbon Strike Force and possible changes in employee benefits. Spencer replied that given the current contentious atmosphere in Richmond, the legislature had put the report on hold.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.