November 12, 2020

TO: Faculty Senate Executive Committee

FROM: Michelle Husbands, Chair, GBC Faculty Senate Compensation and Benefits Committee,

Kara Coates, Jonathan Foster, Steve Garcia, Danny Gonzales, Eleanor O’Donnell, Tamara Mette, Laura Pike, John Rice, Dakota Woolever, committee members

RE: Workload Policy Recommendations

The GBC Faculty Senate Compensation and Benefits Committee acknowledges the challenges facing Great Basin College and the Nevada System of Higher Education during the COVID-19 Pandemic. The committee appreciates the steady line of communications coming to faculty through regular updates presented by President Helens. The committee accepts the temporary steps taken by administration to mitigate the dramatic loss of revenue to NSHE and to Great Basin College as justified. Faculty members have contributed more than $300,000 in collective pay cuts, along with more than $100,000 in savings to the state of Nevada through furloughs of all professional and classified staff. The committee acknowledges and appreciates its fellow faculty members’ willingness to temporarily absorb this considerable cost savings from our salaries in order to ensure the strength of the service we provide our students.

After thoughtful discussion and a 5-0 vote in favor, the committee is pleased to make four recommendations to the Faculty Senate for consideration and acceptance, and requests the accepted recommendations be forwarded to Leadership Council for consideration and action.

1. RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends administration begin its comprehensive strategic planning process in order to help with the establishment of meaningful and equitable workload policies and compensation.

Significant growth at the college and the COVID-19 Pandemic warrant the process. The committee recognizes the Faculty Senate has among its ranks several members with considerable experience in formulating and implementing strategic plans. Therefore, the committee further recommends the Strategic Planning Committee include experienced junior and senior faculty recommended by the Faculty Senate to assist administration in this important effort.

1. RECOMMENDATION: The current workload policy is to remain intact until such a time that strategic decisions about workload and compensation can be made. The committee may make recommendations for additional compensation in instructional areas where significant change and responsibility has occurred.

The current workload policy was a result of multiple years of collaborative effort between faculty and administration. Provisions outlined in the current workload policy continue to be valid. Significant changes have occurred in a number of areas of the college which may warrant additional provisions in order to provide equitable compensation for all faculty in all areas of the institution. Comprehensive strategic planning must take place in order to assure the responsible development of a meaningful and equitable workload policy.

1. RECOMMENDATION: Faculty Overload Payments. The Committee recommends the Faculty Senate formally request administration compensate overload for full time faculty members at the rate established in Section 4 of the current workload policy.

The workload policy states full time faculty members are to be compensated for overload at the same rate as the “highest paid part time faculty per credit pay rate.” Currently, that number is $800 per credit. However, fulltime faculty members are being compensated at $750 per credit. This unwarranted practice has been brought to the attention of administration on multiple occasions and has never been addressed. As a result, over the course of several years, full time faculty members have been under-compensated by tens of thousands of dollars. The committee further recommends a discussion of compensating in arrears full-time faculty who were underpaid under the current policy provisions.

1. RECOMMENDATION: The committee recommends faculty senate invite the Nevada Faculty Alliance to review the current workload policy and to make comparisons to the collective bargaining contracts agreed to at other NSHE institutions. The committee further recommends the Nevada Faculty Alliance make a detailed presentation of the collective bargaining process to faculty members.

In March, 2020, the NFA conducted a climate survey of professional staff at GBC. Survey invitations were sent to all academic and administrative faculty (N=121) at Great Basin College. A total of 77 responses were collected, a response rate of 64% overall. 86% of respondents supported the establishment of an active NFA chapter at GBC. 76.6% of respondents support the formation of a collective bargaining unit (union) for faculty at GBC to negotiate for improved compensation, benefits, and work conditions, and to protect faculty rights. Interest in collective bargaining is demonstrably high. The survey results warrant an invitation to NFA from the GBC Faculty Senate to address the option of entering into a collective bargaining process.